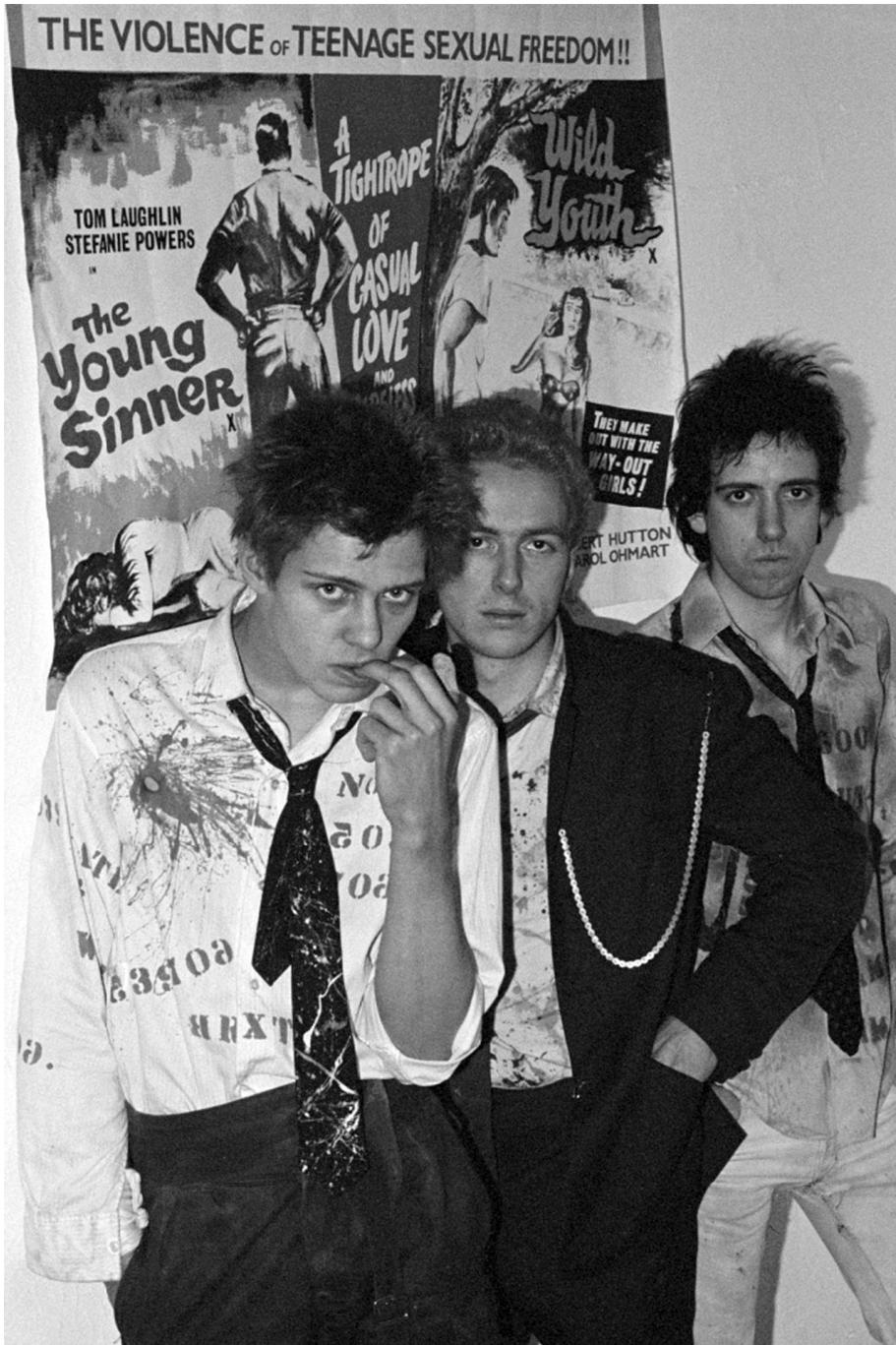


## Sheila Rock Celebrates Punk Spirit

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- Ella Alexander



Picture credit: Sheila Rock

LEGENDARY music photographer Sheila Rock will launch her new book, *Punk +*, on April 25 at Browns with an exhibition and book signing from 6 until 8pm. The picture-based tome is a visual documentation of the punk movement in London, featuring never-seen-before shots of pivotal musicians including The Clash, Chrissie Hynde, Paul Weller and The Sex Pistols. The collection of photos had previously been stored in a box in Rock's garden shed.

"I looked at how much work I had actually done at the time and realised that I had actually captured an interesting moment in time on many levels," Rock told us. "The photographs expressed so much about youth culture and how music and fashion merge. It was a testament about young people and the ways people need to be creative."

The book is divided into five chapters - fashion, crowd, scene, music and another cryptically named + - and explores both designer and street style. She hopes that it acts as a tool to uncover what she perceives to be the most important aspect of punk.

"It was such a huge catalyst for change," she said. "This wave of creative energy enabled so many of us to become what we really wanted to be, because we could just get up and have a go. This book is a document of that time and I think that you can feel the unpretentious raw energy, which is exciting."

Rock found her way into the punk world organically. Having moved to London in the Seventies, she became involved in music and culture "as part of the [David Bowie](#) scene". Her friend and Patti Smith guitarist, Lenny Kaye, invited her to join him at a gig of a then-unknown band called The Clash.

"That was the first time I was introduced to the punk scene," she said. "I decided to take my Nikon camera with me and my photography career began. In the book, many of those we spoke with said that without the catalyst of punk, so many would not have had the chance to become as creatively expressive as we are now."

Although Rock's favourite pictures are of "the kids in the streets and how they expressed themselves with every detail", she adds that her photos of The Clash for famed Seventies punk fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* also reflect their rebellious individuality.

"They had a strong sense of their own identity and this comes through in the photographs," she said. "I think that they had natural iconic status even then."

Rock's book is launching at a time where punk is seeing a resurgence. The [Met Museum](#) will open its dedicated punk retrospective, *Punk: Chaos To Couture*, next month, while the spring/summer 2013 catwalks were full of luxe references to the anarchic movement - from Christopher Kane's gaffer-taped separates to Rodarte's leather laced bondage trousers.

"The spontaneity and immediacy of punk has really influenced so many people, not just musicians but filmmakers, artists and fashion designers too," said Rocks. "It was very much music-based, but had strong political and social threads too. There was something

dangerous and violent and exciting about punk. It was rough, but at the same time alluring.”

See *Vogue's* take on punk's latest incarnation in [the May issue](#), available to buy now.