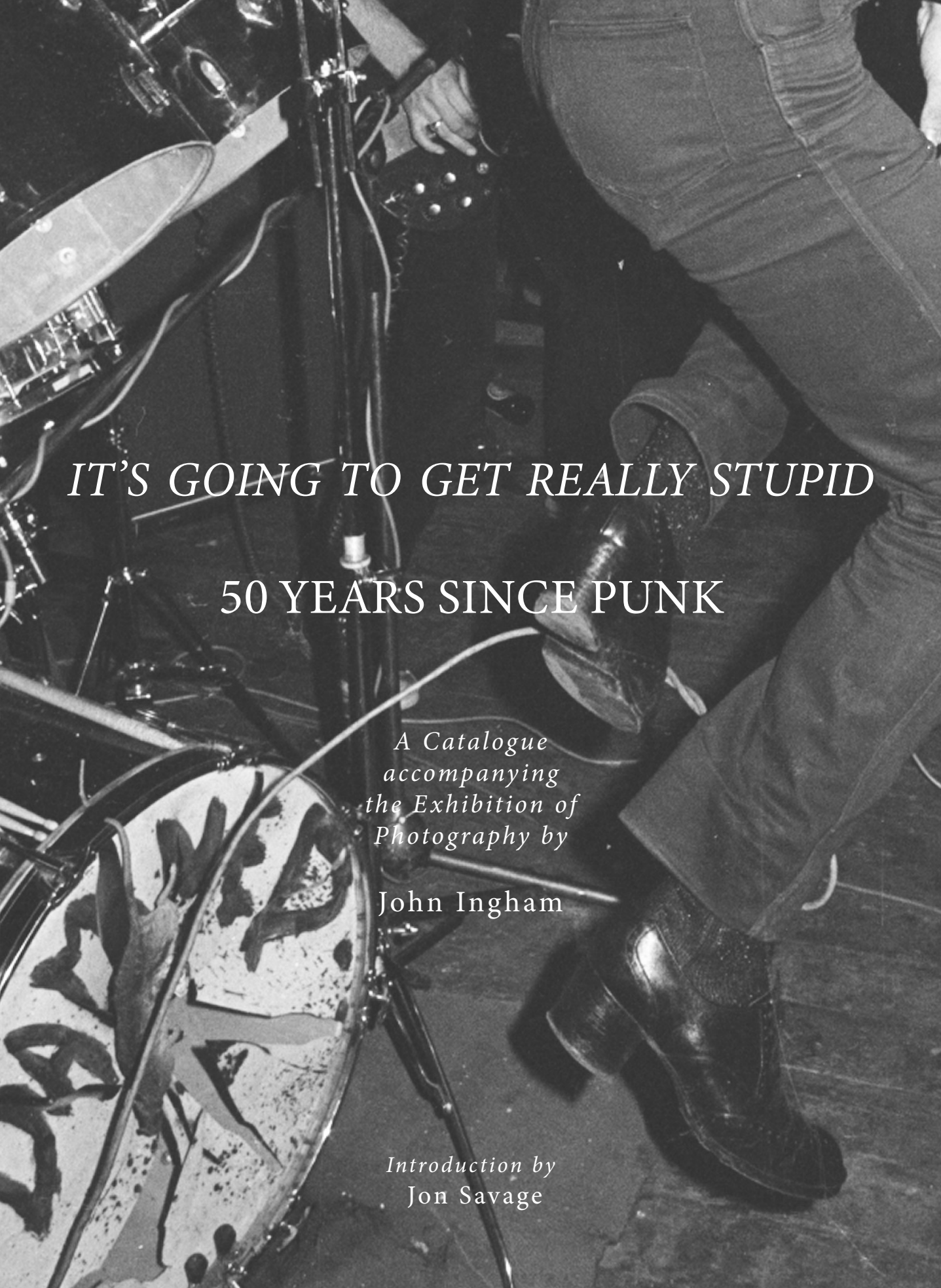


IT'S GOING TO GET REALLY STUPID

50 YEARS SINCE PUNK

A Catalogue accompanying the Exhibition of Photography by

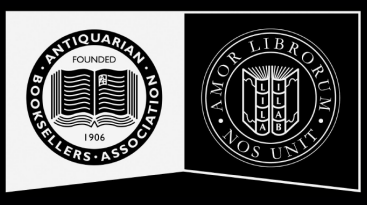
John Ingham

Introduction by
Jon Savage

Cover image detail from [18]

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Sotheran's

IT'S GOING TO GET REALLY STUPID

50 YEARS SINCE PUNK

Sotheran's Athenaeum

Friday, 27 November 2026 – Friday, 29 January 2027

This is an exhibition of twenty photographs, each taken almost exactly fifty years ago, documenting four nights of early Punk performance. There was 'A Night of Treason' at the Royal College of Art where Ingham captured The Clash in their 'Jackson Pollock' shirts on 5 November 1976; the night of 15 November 1976, with The Sex Pistols in the basement of Notre Dame de France, the church five hundred metres from Sotheran's Athenaeum; at The Roxy, Soho, on New Years' Day 1977, with Joe Strummer gyrating across the stage; with The Damned, jumping in heels, on 2 January 1977, in another basement, the Hope & Anchor, Islington.

Tom Winter
Curator

Introduction

'My week beats your year'

– Lou Reed, sleeve note to Metal Machine Music, RCA Records 1975

These photos capture an incredible velocity: a subterranean world being exposed to the glare of the media, a self-conscious cultural revolution on the point of explosion. Everything is still in flux, but things are coalescing fast: identities are being tried on and affirmed, hair is being freely chopped, while old clothes are being jettisoned and new ones applied – after all, like trousers, like brain. 'You just can't help getting into it', Sniffin' Glue's Mark Perry wrote that year, and that's how it was. So exciting.

Taken between November 1976 and January 1977, John Ingham's photos record a crucial moment in British Punk. Three of the first four groups are here (excepting Buzzcocks). The Clash are a riot of Jackson Pollock colour, a blur of motion. The Damned enact their amphetamine-fast, jumble sale gothic personae. And The Sex Pistols are seen being televised by London Weekend Television at Notre Dame Hall, a crucial moment of crossover. Johnny Rotten looks alternatively amused and bored while Steve Jones and Glen Matlock throw heroic shapes.

Best of all, there are the fans. Most rock photography of the time, quite understandably, concentrated on the performers not the audience. But the young people here are a revelation: not all of them have the requisite punk cool and costume of Siouxsie, Billy Idol. Kenny Morris or Jo Faull – captured at Notre Dame Hall – but with their longer hair, disarrayed shirts and general air of abandon, they're getting there. It's that exciting, unsettling moment when something private goes public.

The main revelation is contained in the colour photos. Almost all rock photography at the point was in black and white, aimed at being printed in the three music weeklies, *Sounds, NME, the Melody Maker*. Colour was reserved for glossy pin-up shots for the teen press. We have become accustomed to seeing Punk in black and white, an aesthetic that suits its rhetoric, but the colour here restores much of the original complexities: sure there's a lot of black, but primary colours abound – just nothing that's green or brown or denim.

John Ingham took these photos because he knew that what he was seeing was extraordinary and that it was not being fully documented. Both The Damned and The Sex Pistols had records coming out into the world, but nobody knew how they would be received. The Clash did not have a record contract. Everything was up for grabs, including failure, but you know from these portraits of people, all in their lower twenties, that they are confident that the future is theirs. What a wonderful moment.

Jon Savage



Featured Works

[1] The Clash. Royal College of Art, 5 November 1976 *
[2] Sid Vicious. Royal College of Art, 5 November 1976 *
[3] Paul Simonon. Royal College of Art, 5 November 1976
[4] Johnny Rotten. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[5] Simon Barker. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[6] The Sex Pistols. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[7] Tilde. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[8] The Sex Pistols and Audience. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[9] Captain Sensible. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976 *
[10] Siouxie Sioux. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[11] Sex Pistols Fan. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[12] Johnny Rotten and Steve Jones. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[13] Tilde, Mick Jones, Tony James, Billy Idol. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[14] Paul Cook and Johnny Rotten. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[15] Johnny Rotten and Cameras. Notre Dame de France, 15 November 1976
[16] Joe Strummer and Mick Jones. The Roxy, 1 January, 1977 *
[17] Mick Jones. The Roxy, 1 January, 1977
[18] The Damned. Hope & Anchor, 2 January 1977 *
[19] The Damned's Guitar Lead. Hope & Anchor, 2 January 1977
[20] Dave Vanian. Hope & Anchor, 2 January 1977

Works accompanied by [*] have been included in the exhibition in Sotheran's Athenaeum

All prints are signed and numbed by the photographer



‘A Night of Treason’

The Royal College of Art
5 November 1976



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[1] The Clash *

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,250**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,750**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,500**



[2] Sid Vicious *

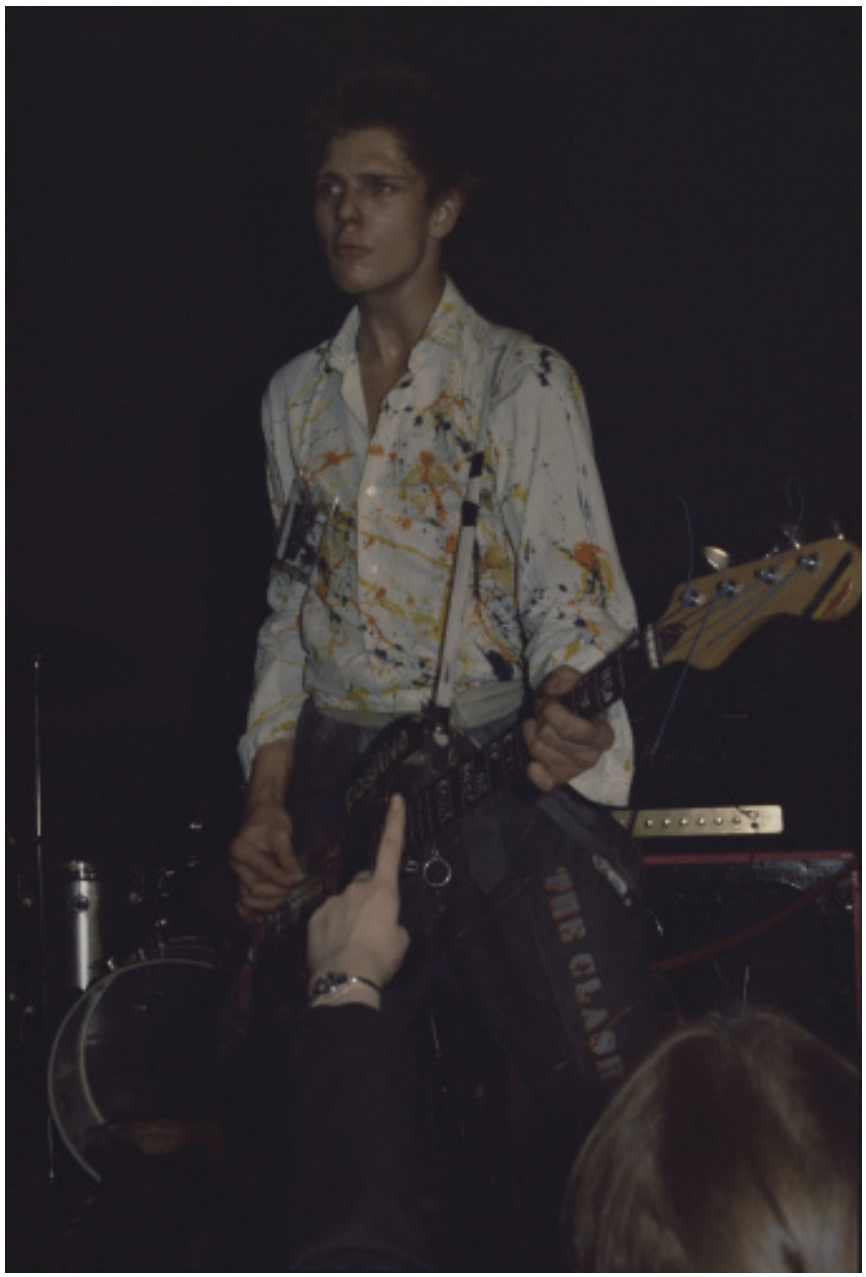
Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



[3] Paul Simonon

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**

Notre Dame de France
15 November 1976



[4] Johnny Rotten *

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,250**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,750**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,500**



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[5] Simon Barker *

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



[6] The Sex Pistols *

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



[7] Tilde *

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**



[8] The Sex Pistols and Audience *

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



[9] Captain Sensible *

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**



[10] Siouxsie Sioux

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



[11] Sex Pistols Fan

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**



[12] Johnny Rotten and Steve Jones

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,250**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,750**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,500**



[13] Tilde, Mick Jones, Tony James, Billy Idol

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**



[14] Paul Cook and Johnny Rotten

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,250**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,750**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,500**



[15] Johnny Rotten and Cameras

Modern Giclée print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**


SEX

The Roxy
1 January 1977



[16] Joe Strummer and Mick Jones *

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,250**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,750**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,500**



[17] Mick Jones

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

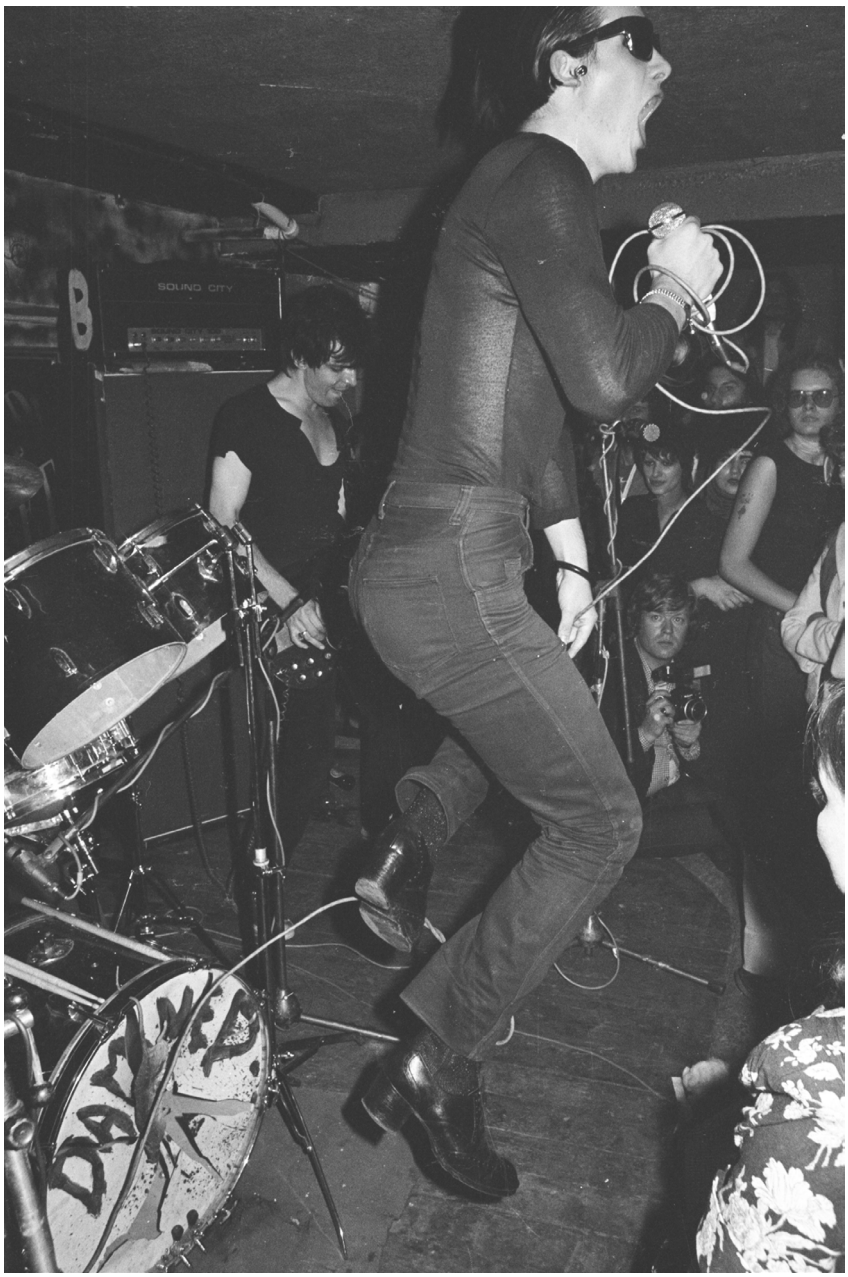
24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



The Hope & Anchor
2 January 1977



[18] The Damned *

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

24 x 20 inches, edition of 20 - **£1,000**

40 x 30 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,500**

60 x 40 inches, edition of 5 - **£2,000**



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[19] The Damned's Guitar Lead

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**



[20] Dave Vanian

Modern Giclée print on Harman Resin paper

Available Sizes:

20 x 24 inches, edition of 20 - **£750**

30 x 40 inches, edition of 10 - **£1,200**

40 x 60 inches, edition of 5 - **£1,700**

John Ingham was born in Australia and moved as a child to the USA. Settling in California, he enthusiastically participated in the teen subcultures of the day and studied film and popular culture at Cal Arts and photography with Ansel Adams at the Sierra Club. As an eighteen-year-old student he started writing music criticism for *CREEM*, *Rolling Stone* and other music magazines.

Moving to London in 1972 he wrote on music and took occasional photos for the *NME, CREEM* and *Sounds*, where he did the first interview of The Sex Pistols and became a propagandist for the emerging Punk subculture. Observing the speed at which Punk was changing and the lack of colour images documenting it, he realised that the colourful clothes and look of the audience and bands in these early days would soon be replaced by the next iteration and there would be no record of it. This prompted him to take his camera and start documenting. As predicted, Punk soon took on another look.

His images have been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the British Library.



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