

# maximum rocknroll

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FEATURING:

BEST RECORDS OF 2007

AUTISTIC YOUTH

WHITE LUNG

KARMA SUTRA

GLUSTERFUXX

SHARON CHESLOW

SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENT



is similarly imagistic if not always clearly defined. With this particular book, I think you know what you're getting into. It's poetry, which scares off a sizeable portion of readers.

From a tiny publisher—his name is Eddie Kilowatt & some of the poems were previously published in journals like *American Drivel Reviews*, *Cherry Bleeds*, *Outside Writers*, and *Thieves Jargon*. Poems here have titles like "Sarah Vaughan after a shit". But, I staff the monthly open-mic at the downtown public library, so my threshold for all kinds of poetry is pretty high.

Aside from the opening poem, "Daddy Went to Harvard," the poems here are anecdotal. Conversational, like the verse that Black Sparrow (Bukowski, et al.) put out. Adjectives are rare. Multiple readings aren't needed to decode the abstruse symbolism. But the poems probably sound pretty good read aloud. None are more than a page or two. You could finish the entire book over a few refills of coffee.

Most people probably won't want to read any book of poetry straight through though. It's too much to acclimate. Here the formula gets a bit repetitive. His end lines tend toward zingers—like bartender punchlines. Some of which are funny enough, and some are real groaners. What you might find more compelling is the occasional dialogues that pop-up like in "Mad at Miles" wherein you get:

"So you're mad at Miles too? He didn't beat you, did he?"

...and... the poems here are more like 100 watt, which, you know, is still useful just not blinding.

—Travis Fristoe



Live at the Masque: Nightmare in Punk Alley

Compiled by Brendan Mullen

328 pages • \$45.00

Gingko Press

www.gingkopress.com

I feel sometimes as if we are living in a post-*Fuck You Heroes* world, where Henry Rollins is wheeled out on demand to comment on something that happened 30 years ago or else *it didn't happen*. Coffee table books now exist covering every aspect of youth culture from kid's rocking Sergio jeans and Run DMC Adidas to a book of photos of Jay Adams skating taken by his step-dad, pre-

Dogtown. If something hasn't been turned into a coffee table book does that mean it didn't actually happen? Nothing's real unless someone writes about it in a book. I am feeling kind of ambivalent about the historical society of punk rock happenings, recording everything and making their reports. I like the disposable aspect of punk culture. The fact that fanzines and tapes are transient and disappear and the newcomers have to make their own things or perish under the weight of reverence. But I guess the '80s and '90s were an endless baby boomer nostalgia party, and now turns out it's time for the punks to exhume their ancient relics for public consumption.

OK lecture over, this book rules. *Live At the Masque* was put together by the same publishing company that did the *Fucked up and Photocopied* books, so it looks amazing. It is similar to said book in that it covers a specific aspect of punk culture, a very short-lived venue. It also reminds me of the amazing *We're Desperate* book that came out a few years ago. *We're Desperate* is comprised of photos of punks at shows in the late-'70s with no identifying labels, thus giving the same importance to a random kid at a show as it did to say Exene or Darby, which obviously is one of the greatest things about punk rock. DIY! It is super clear that the audience is just as important as the bands in terms of scene construction and creativity.

Anyway, back to the book at hand. There are obviously pictures of bands playing music, and this is LA at it's earliest most creative art damaged time so we're talkin' Zeros, Dils, Screamers, Germs, Weirdos, Avengers, Mau Mau's, X, Go Go's, Dickies, Bags, Eyes, Black Randy & the Metro Squad, Plugz, Skulls, Controllers, The Alleycats, and many more. But in reference to my earlier reference (*We're Desperate!*) there are lots of photos of kids hanging out just being punks. And not only kids—this book captures an era before aggro beach town hardcore eradicated the weirdo "old" people. The older crowd gravitated towards art damaged sounds and ideas of hanging out. I love seeing the photos of people with weird '70s puffy long hair who haven't quite figured out how to dress like a punk, and haven't yet managed to shed their old stylings completely. The graffiti is also amazing, and seeing all the fliers and random ephemera that make up the punk rock experience is enough to make the least librarian types nerd out completely. I didn't know that Charlotte Caffey of the Go Go's was initially in The Eyes... and there's photographic proof in here that she was! There's a great shot of a pre-icon Darby Crash, or rather Bobby Pyn? and he looks so young and not yet formed—it's kind of mind blowing.

*Live at the Masque* is a great documentation of a vivid period in music and cultural history that might not be possible in a post message-board-MySpace-overblogged world. But that is kind of a depressing way to look at things. It may be the age of MySpace crust but that doesn't mean you can't make something as rad with your weirdo friends, as these people did so long ago. Don't let the weight of history and nostalgia documented in books like this keep you from making your own future, your own version of punk.

—Layla Gibbon