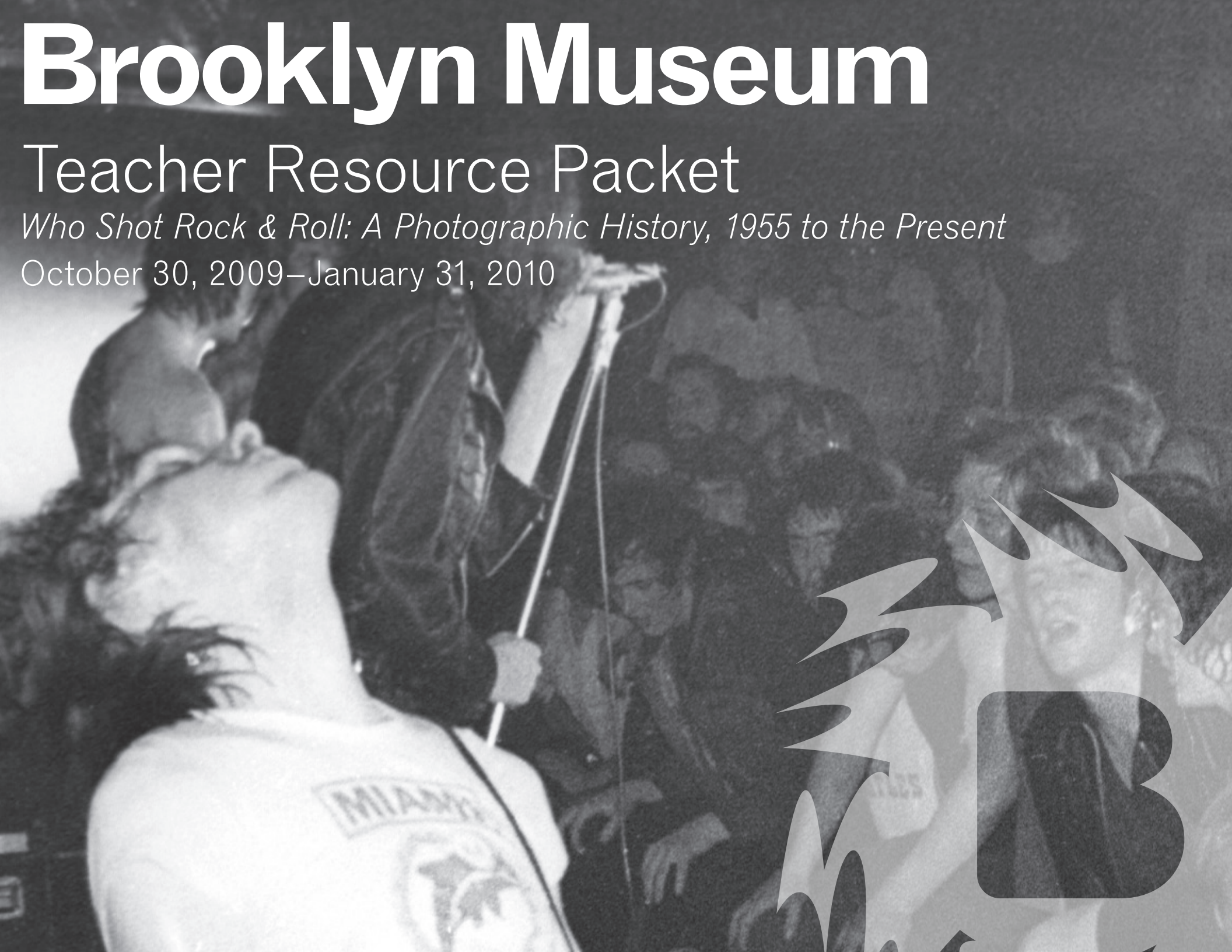


# Brooklyn Museum

## Teacher Resource Packet

*Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present*

October 30, 2009–January 31, 2010



# Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present



Ian Dickson. Photograph by Shoko Fujiwara

## About the Exhibition

*Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present* is the first major museum exhibition to investigate the role photographers have played in communicating the social and cultural transformations brought about by rock and roll. There are six sections: Starting Out, Behind the Scenes, Performance, Fans and Crowds, Portraits, and Constructing an Image.

## About the Photographer

Born in 1945 and raised in a shipbuilding town near Glasgow, Scotland, Ian Dickson has photographed some of the world's most iconic rock musicians, including Led Zeppelin, Bob Marley, the Rolling Stones, and the Clash. He launched his career as a rock photographer in 1972, photographing performers such as Rod Stewart's band the Faces for a major local rock venue in Newcastle, England. In 1976, he documented the exploding punk rock scene in London, where he photographed the short-lived and highly influential band the Sex Pistols and their touring American counterparts the Ramones. Since then, his photographs have been exhibited across Europe and highlighted in shows such as the 1994 MTV Awards in Berlin. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum has recognized Dickson for his photographs of Rod Stewart, Muddy Waters, and Eric Clapton. His book *Flash, Bang, Wallop!* (2000) features his prolific documentation of the first year of the punk movement.

## Background Information

The Ramones are often regarded as the first punk rock group and a major influence on the punk rock movement in the United States and United Kingdom. The band formed in Queens, New York, in 1974 and toured virtually nonstop for two decades. Although they were commercially unsuccessful, the Ramones were a popular fixture of the underground punk scene on New York's Bowery. Their live act was known for the fast, hard-edged music with short songs and pared-down instrumentation that became typical of the genre. The Ramones were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002. The same year, *Spin* magazine listed them behind only the Beatles as the greatest rock band of all time. In 2004, *Rolling Stone* named them among the fifty greatest rock artists of all time.

## Description of *The Ramones at Eric's Club, Liverpool, England*

This black-and-white photograph depicts a crowded room. A young man with his feet set wide apart and his head tossed back plays an electric guitar. Behind him, another musician wearing a black leather jacket grasps a microphone stand with his right hand and holds the microphone close to his mouth with his other hand. A drum set is visible on an elevated portion of the stage. A crowd of young men stand a few feet away, separated from the performers by a low barrier. Two men kneel onstage, staring at the guitarist. Many of the onlookers have open mouths, which suggests they may be singing or cheering. Several have raised fists. The hazy atmosphere and dramatic lighting contribute to a moment of pure intensity.

## Questions for Viewing

The following questions can be posed in large or small group conversation or used as entry points for written work:

What's going on in this photograph?

Who are the main characters? What role does each character play in the scene?

Where might this scene take place? What do you see to support your idea?

Describe the level of energy. Does each person have the same amount? What is different about them?

Describe the viewer's point of view. Why do you think the photographer chose this vantage point?

Imagine you could step inside this photograph and listen to all of the sounds being made. Describe the different sounds.

What kind of relationship do the musicians have with the audience?  
What choices did the photographer make to represent this relationship?

## Activities

### Lyrics and Image

Read or listen to the lyrics of "Rockaway Beach," written and recorded by the Ramones:

Chewin' at a rhythm on my bubble gum  
The sun is out, I want some  
It's not hard, not far to reach  
We can hitch a ride to Rockaway Beach

Up on the roof, out on the street  
Down in the playground the hot concrete  
Bus ride is too slow  
They blast out the disco on the radio  
Rock Rock Rockaway Beach

What do these lyrics remind you of? Compare the lyrics with the photograph. What similarities can you find? What differences do you notice?

### Diamond Poem

Create a diamond-shaped poem inspired by the photograph. Identify two nouns in the photograph that you consider to be binary (opposite). The first noun will become the top of the diamond (Line 1), and the second noun will become the bottom (Line 7). Complete the remaining directions:

Line 2: Describe the noun in Line 1 with two adjectives.

Line 3: Use three verbs to describe the action of the noun in Line 1.

Line 4: Find four nouns that the noun in Line 1 and the noun in Line 7 have in common.

Line 5: Use three verbs to describe the action of the noun in Line 7.

Line 6: Describe the noun in Line 7 with two adjectives.

Line 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
Line 7 \_\_\_\_\_



## Curate an Exhibition

Step into the role of a museum curator by collecting several photographs of musicians and moments in music history. In the exhibition *Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present*, Gail Buckland chose to focus on the photographers who took the photos. Identify a theme for your exhibition. Decide which photos to include. Collect background information to share with visitors, such as details about the subject matter; the different techniques the photographers used in creating a point of view, mood, and meaning; and ways that the photography connects to the time period in which it was created. Choose a location for your exhibition and decide where each photo will be located. Invite others to view your exhibition.

## Debate

"In the day of downloading, the art for CDs, albums, and posters has become a thing of the past."

—Jennifer Schero

Divide into two small groups. Identify one group to refute this statement and one group to defend it. Develop three ideas to support your stance. Use these arguments to structure a debate between the groups.

## Resources

Buckland, Gail. *Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009.

A collection of more than two hundred photographs that capture and define rock and roll from 1955 to the present. Buckland highlights the photographers, their influences, and their connections to their subjects.

[www.late20thcenturyboy.com/](http://www.late20thcenturyboy.com/)

This Web site focuses on the photographic work of Ian Dickson.

*End of the Century: The Story of the Ramones*. Film by Michael Gramaglia and Jim Fields, 2005.

This documentary takes a candid look at the Ramones. Please note: Teachers are advised to preview this resource.

[www.rockhall.com/inductee/ramones](http://www.rockhall.com/inductee/ramones)

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame provides information about the Ramones.

*Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present* is organized by the Brooklyn Museum with guest curator Gail Buckland.



The exhibition is sponsored by **America's Most Convenient Bank®**

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Cover (detail) and page 5: Ian Dickson (British, born 1945). *The Ramones at Eric's Club, Liverpool, England, May 1977*. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of Ian Dickson/[www.late20thcenturyboy.com](http://www.late20thcenturyboy.com)

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