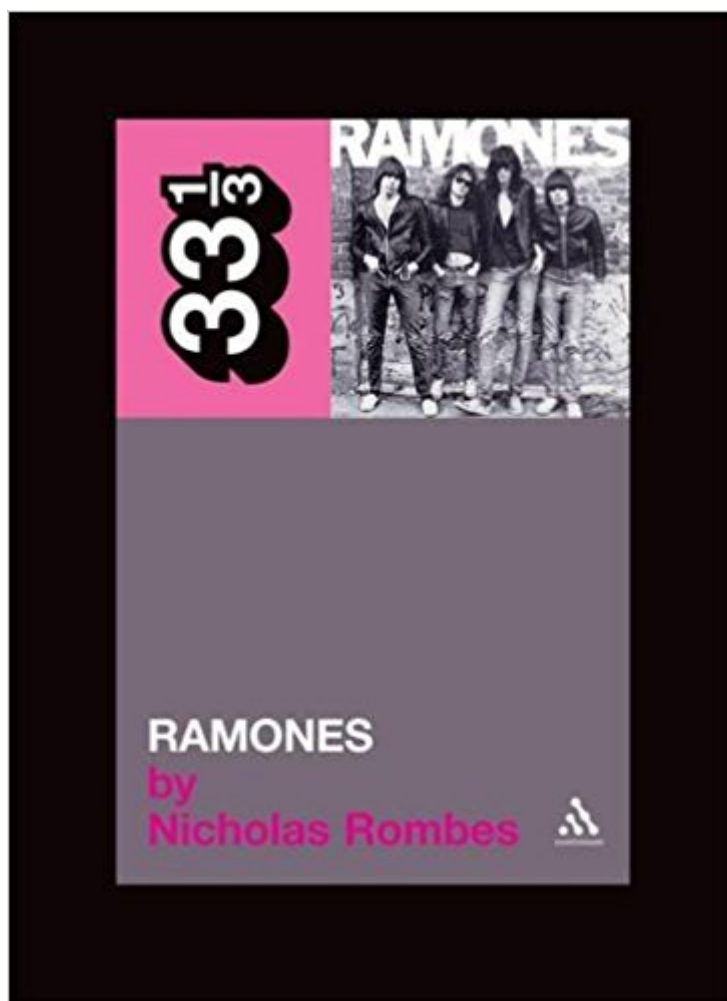


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The Ramones' Ramones (33 1/3)



Synopsis

What could be more punk rock than a band that never changed, a band that for decades punched out three-minute powerhouses in the style that made them famous? The Ramones' repetition and attitude inspired a genre, and Ramones set its tone. Nicholas Rombes examines punk history, with the recording of Ramones at its core, in this inspiring and thoroughly researched justification of his obsession with the album.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lucid. Each volume provides insightful commentary.

Nicholas Rombes is a professor of English at the University of Detroit Mercy. His books include *Ramones* (Continuum), *New Punk Cinema*, and the forthcoming *Cinema in the Digital Age*. He has written for *Exquisite Corpse*, *McSweeney's* online, and *CTheory*.

The 33 1/3 series is a great idea, but theres ups and downs- the best i read so far are the *Throbbing Gristle- 20 jazz...*, *Richard Hell- blank gen...* and *Wire- pink flag*. The *Richard Hell* one is what this *Ramones* book could be- it covers the recording process, the ideas in the songs and their making from its roots (50s and 60s rock, free jazz and literary influences) trough the final product and it's impact on the author, the world and on the artists, and it add something to the story with the writing, better yet, it doesn't lose a single line in re telling *Please Kill Me* or covering old ground on punk as

movement. Then there's this Ramones book, the opposite. This book aim for something good-The Ramones as a concept, but it doesn't go anywhere from there, it's just re-telling of info we have somewhere else and are tired to know. Unless you never read anything about 70's punk or the Ramones, don't waste your time here. For the best analysis on Ramones first album, i strongly recommend the article by Tim Sommer published in 2016 in the observer (the Ramones debut album is still the best punk album of all time).

A great concept for a series, I have read several of these album-books, and particularly enjoy the diversity of prose. "Ramones" is one of my favorite albums by one of my favorite bands. Nicholas Rombes describes the zeitgeist of the mid-late 70s with his book. Unlike so many boring books and films about the era, Nicolas does not default to hyperbole about punk saving the universe. Instead, the author paints a picture of why The Ramones were an interesting band and how they fit in to the cultural landscape of the 70s. I started reading this on a plane and found myself devouring it within a couple hours and wished that it kept going. I got the sense that the author has a deep appreciation for this simultaneously perfect and flawed band, and put a great deal of heart behind each paragraph. I don't know anything about Nicholas Rombes, but I sure hope he continues writing!

Great way to kick off--I guess you can say--the 40th anniversary of the Ramones' self-titled debut album. Good read too. :)

A little dry, but an excellent short read about the founders of the Punk Rock Ethos.

This book was purchased after having read the same series installment on Exile On Main Street (which was excellent). This one disappointed somewhat. Most of the book discusses the scene at the time and the Ramones place in shaping that scene and the sound. This is fine and somewhat interesting, but grows long-winded. It then goes downhill when discussing the album itself. Yes, the songs are short but so too is the analysis and the stories. And the author makes a halfhearted stab at defending the quality of the second side of the record (vis-a-vis the first side) in an ineffective manner that serves mostly to put a finer point on the claim he's attempting to refute. Overall it is an OK read for serious fans.

I am increasingly enjoying this series of books. While I have not been so motivated as to pick up the volumes on albums I don't know or much care about, I am more and more drawn into those looking

at albums I do know, care about, enjoy, and sometimes love. Here's one now. I was just the right age for the first Ramones album. I was 15 years old and my friend Tony and I had been following stories about these leather-jacketed oddball-looking guys in Rock Scene magazine for close to a year ("Takin' a Subway Ride with the Ramones", and so forth) when we found out they had a record coming out. We had no idea, sitting in our little town north of Indianapolis, what on earth these yahoos might sound like, but we knew we HAD to have the record when it came out. We had to beg the local record store to bring in copies for us. I bought it the day it came in, went home, put it on the turntable (an old BSR record-lathe), turned it up and had my mind blown. Blitzkrieg Bop was over before I got my lower jaw off the floor, but once I did, I started laughing and didn't stop until side one ended. Not mocking laughter, not what-the-hell-is this laughter; Joyous laughter. This-is-what-I-never-knew-I-was-waiting-for laughter. Spontaneous outpouring of I'M ALIVE laughter. I didn't listen to anything else for at least three weeks. Uriah Heep was never quite coming back again, you know? Nichols Rombes' little book on the album is a lot of fun. Not nearly in the same league of fun as actually listening to the record fun, but it served the purpose, as have all the books in the series that I've delved into so far, of sending me back to the record and reminding me some of why I love it so much. Avoiding the temptation of rehashing the history and lineage of the NYC music scene, and the CBGBs scene in particular, Rombes instead puts his focus on how the Ramones (album and band) fit into the changing musical, and musical/social, framework of the day. He does, to his credit, and out pleasure, also spend some time with the actual record itself, which is, in some of these volumes, sort of an afterthought. His writing is clear, interesting, thought-provoking and he has a point of view. He looks at how the Ramones chose to present themselves to the world and, in turn, how the world viewed the Ramones at the time. This is a worthy look at the world the album was thrust into, how the world reacted, and why, to some degree it reacted the way it did. It took the Ramones to make the world safe for the Ramones. Think about their place now, then read about their place then. You'll see.

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