

Touch Me I'm Sick

By Jennie Boddy, Eddie Vedder

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Poised at the epicenter of an explosive underground scene, photographer Charles Peterson witnessed the birth of a brash new era of music that grabbed the world by its throat and refused to let go. Grunge, the bastard child of 60s garage and 70s punk, revived the original, gritty spirit of rock and roll: rebellion ain't pretty, but it sure is fun.

Featuring ninety-two photographs—eighty of them never-before-published—spanning sixteen years, ***Touch Me I'm Sick***, Peterson's third monograph, documents the raw power of live performances by the soon-to-be-famous artists and their dedicated fans. Yet Peterson's photographs don't rely on the cult of celebrity to tell this compelling tale of angst, anxiety, and acoustics. Rather, they capture the cathartic ritual between musician and fan played out in seedy clubs reeking of sweat and stale beer. Bored, alienated youth with nothing better to do than bash their instruments and mosh their bodies in a barrage of sound, song, and furious energy are captured through Peterson's signature style of wide-angle intimacy, swirling lights, and strange sense of grace. Peterson creates timeless, artistic imagery out of this swiftly passing frenzy, and shatters the godhead of the rock star, revealing the band and audience as co-conspirators in rock's latest, greatest revival.

Featuring photographs of Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Sleater-Kinney, Mudhoney, Sonic Youth, L7, Hole, and Black Flag, among others, as well as excerpts from Your Flesh, Flipside, Melody Maker, B-Sides, Swellsville, and Chemical Imbalance, ***Touch Me I'm Sick*** is the perfect mix of art and journalism for music purists and connoisseurs.

"And you know what? I think other photographers secretly want to be like Charles and Charles secretly wants to be like other photographers. And it's a hard call—would you rather have that street cred, punk rock hipness, and respect from all the cool bands, or industry suave that gets major magazine editors and record exec dorks to fly you all over the world for photo shoots and pay you outrageous amounts of money?"
—Jennie Boddy, *Your Flesh #25*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Picture an image from the grunge movement of the 1990s and odds are it was Charles Peterson who clicked the camera's shutter. As unofficial photographer of the SubPop record label, Peterson put a face on the scene that began in Seattle and shaped the landscape of popular music. With its title taken from Mudhoney's anthemic underground hit, *Touch Me I'm Sick* is more than a rehash of Peterson's 1995 *Screaming Life*. This high-quality collection includes an introduction by Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder and over 90 photos of the stars before they became household names, plus many who never reached notoriety beyond the Seattle city limits. There are classic photos that have been seen before--Kurt Cobain sprawled across Chad Channing's drum set, the roiling mosh pit of Seattle's Endfest, the blacked-out teeth of L7's Suzi Gardner--but more than 80 have never been published. Peterson's open shutter technique stretches spotlights and blurs movement, bringing still images to life, while his black-and-white photos abound in texture: from the rubber soles of Converse high-tops to the ripped and frayed knees of worn-out blue jeans and greasy knots of flailing hair. *Touch Me I'm Sick* is a required title for music fans who wore the flannel as well as those who only watched in awe from the edge of the pit. --*Ben Reese*

Review
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About the Author
Charles Peterson was born in Longview, Washington, in 1964 and received a BFA in photography from the University of Washington in 1987. In the permanent collections of the Experience Music Project, Seattle, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland, Peterson's photographs have also appeared in top publications worldwide, including The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Newsweek, People, Rolling Stone, Spin, Interview, and Playboy, among others. The author of Screaming Life (Harper Collins, 1995) and Pearl Jam: Place/Date (Universe, 1999) , Peterson's work has also appeared in ten other photography books and video documentaries. Peterson's work has also appeared in ten other photography books and video documentaries. Peterson currently lives in Seattle.; Eddie Vedder (Introduction) was born in Evanston, Illinois, in 1964, and relocated to SEattle in 1989. Vedder is lead singer of the multi-platinum rock band Pearl Jam, which has played sold-out arena shows from Turkey to Thailand. "Riot Act," Pearl Jam's sixth album, was released in the winter of 2002. Vedder has also appeared in Cameron Crowe's film, Singles, and collaborated with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan on Sean Penn's Dead Man Walking soundtrack.; Jennie Boddy (Essay) was born in Detroit, Michigan, and moved to Seattle on the cusp of thr grunge explosion, at which time she was publicist for the label that started it all, Sub Pop Records. She also wrote for independent magazines including Your Flesh and Alternative Press. Currently living in New York City, Boddy is a high-ranking executive for Interscope Records.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rebecca Burks:

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