

Press Release - For Immediate Release
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BOB GRUEN

Rock Seen

December 1, 2011 through January 14, 2012

Reception for the Artist Thursday, December 1, 7-9 p.m.

The Fahey/Klein Gallery is pleased to present a selection of photographs from Bob Gruen's newly released monograph, "Rock Seen" (Abrams, 2011). For forty years, Bob Gruen has been documenting the rock scene, capturing now iconic images of The Clash, The Sex Pistols, Led Zeppelin, New York Dolls, Blondie, The Ramones, and John Lennon and Yoko Ono among others. Bob Gruen says of his career and recent publication, "Photography has led me to some great experiences and enduring relationships. Blurring the line between work and play, many of the people I met through my work have become friends; some are like family to me. You can look at ["Rock Seen"] as a collection of my work, or simply as the family album of my life." ("Rock Seen" Book Introduction by Bob Gruen).

Bob Gruen's career began in 1965, when he shot his first concert photos at the Newport Folk Festival. "I was still a kid and a big Bob Dylan fan." Bob Gruen recalls, "I talked my way into getting a photo pass so I could be down front. That was when Dylan played electric guitar and claimed rock'n'roll was American folk music and got booed off stage for it. After that I began taking photos a lot." (Bob Gruen, Interview with Carlo McCormick, *The New York Trash*)

While shooting freelance work and photo stories for the underground rock magazine, "Rock Scene" Bob photographed local New York City bands "on stage, off stage, at home, at parties, and during time off". "Many photos I was taking then weren't used until years later; they weren't considered to be news at the times, but now they are 'history' " Bob says of his early photographs which document the very beginnings of what would later become a monumental rock scene at the now infamous New York City clubs CBGB and Max's Kansas City where bands such as the Ramones and Blondie got their start.

"We'd all appreciate it when Bob would show up at a gig 'cause we knew the pictures would be used somewhere, and our bands would get some press. But it was in the candid situations that he took most of his photos. Getting these types of shots isn't easy with all the variables of light and movement, but Bobby would show up in the most unlikely places, smiling away, holding his camera, and ready to capture a piece of the action." ("Rock Seen", Book Introduction by Debbie Harry).

Many of Bob Gruen's iconic photographs began with unassuming introductions that became the catalyst for honest and enduring friendships. A hurried introduction to Ike and Tina Turner on a street corner began a friendship that resulted in Gruen's first album cover, and later Gruen's first concert tour. In 1972, Gruen met John Lennon and Yoko Ono at a benefit concert, and later dropped some prints at their nearby apartment. This simple gesture began a close friendship between Bob Gruen, John Lennon, and Yoko Ono. Throughout the 1970's Gruen worked as their personal photographer, documenting concerts and press conferences, as well as capturing serene moments between John and Yoko, and the first images of their son, Sean Lennon. In 1974, Gruen suggested photographing John Lennon on top of his New York apartment building, which would later become the hugely iconic image of John Lennon wearing the New York City T-Shirt.

Gruen's photographs are in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London, and have been shown in the Museum of Modern Art's 2009 exhibition, "Looking at Music: Side 2" and the Brooklyn Museum of Art's 2009 exhibition, "Who Shot Rock & Roll". Bob Gruen lives and works in New York City.