

George DuBose began his relationship with the Ramones in the middle of their 20 year career. This 10 year collaboration continued until the end. In this memoir, the stories about how the concepts for the different covers came about, how and where the covers were shot and many unpublished images never seen before. It is hoped that old and new fans will enjoy the insights gained here and add to the respect that we all have for one of the world's most famous and enduring rock bands in history.



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I SPEAK MUSIC ✕ RAMONES ✕ BY GEORGE DUBOSE ✕ AN IMPRINT OF WONDERLAND PUBLISHED BY LULU.COM

# I SPEAK MUSIC

## RAMONES



BY **GEORGE DUBOSE**  
FOREWORD BY **GLENN O'BRIEN**

A HISTORY OF THE OFFICIAL RAMONES PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE STORIES BEHIND THE IMAGES

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## Foreword

Tennessee is interesting for its hillbillies. South Dakota is interesting for the Oglala Sioux. New York is interesting for New Yorkers, but it's different because New Yorkers aren't just born here. Many important New Yorkers are natives, especially of Brooklyn, however many of the most important New Yorkers were born elsewhere, often far away, and then one day they realized that they were actually New Yorkers and they left Cleveland or Minneapolis or South Carolina and presented themselves to the Big Apple for psychic repatriation. If they lasted seven years here, then they were New Yorkers and would remain so forever, no matter their location. New York isn't just a place, it's a society, an attitude, a bunch of ideas about life. This book is by a New Yorker from South Carolina about a bunch of New Yorkers from Queens. It's a New York story about the whole world.

New York has a vibration. It's a wavelength, a magnetic message that beats through the ether, saying “What the fuck are you doing in nowheresville? Signed, somewhere.” History, like life, exists in time. But where does time begin?

I think time actually begins in New York City, probably in the vicinity of Times Square, and is transmitted from here around the world at various rates, from the speed of light to the speed of ketchup

Punk, Debbie Harry once told me, is a time signature.

The Ramones, more than any other band, expressed that time signature and I think the New York vibration can be apprehended directly through the music of the Ramones. It can also be absorbed through the photographs of George DuBose.

New York has long been a source of planetary vibration and its rhythmic ambiance and harmony and dissonance are integral parts of such things as doo wop and bebop. Charlie Parker and Miles Davis had to come here to hear themselves right. Jimi Hendrix came from Seattle to New York to develop the “axis bold as love” theory of geological rock. It was through the study of Hendrix that I realized that music could, in fact, directly express planetary and stellar realities. For several years my own band, Konelrad, experimented with rhythms and vibrations with geological ramifications which I cannot discuss here, but I will say that the Ramones sound had a profound effect on several generations around the world, perhaps to the extent of inducing physical and psychic mutations that will could to increased chances of survival for humans in densely populated civilizations. Whenever you see them forming in a straight line or going through a tight wind you can be sure that a Ramones influence is at work.

The Ramones are the sound of nuclear New York. And these guys were New York natives who felt the subway in the womb and were exposed from conception to magnetic fields vibrating at 60 cycles per second. They picked up the hyper beat on busy streets and understood the importance of precision,

velocity and directness. Above all they transformed rock and roll through the elimination of excess, the acceleration of pace and the abbreviation of form. They demonstrated that the full effects of a rock song could be reduced to two minutes and that a full adult dose of rock and roll could be contained in less than a one hour set. They revolutionized the pace and density of rock, adapting it to survival an era of overkill and meltdown.

That extraordinary period now known as Punk is of great significance today, as young artists experiment with social chord change and vibrational motivation. They study so called punk because it was the last musical and aesthetic movement that can be perceived as revolutionary in potential and in partial effect. The Ramones retain extraordinary interest for us because of their significant departures from conventional forms, because of their lasting aesthetic effect, and because of the potential for change they still represent.

DuBose's "I Speak Music - Ramones" is an intimate, honest account of his encounters with the band in words and pictures. The Ramones were native New Yorkers, as urban and wise-guy as the Dead End Kids before them. George DuBose, a native of South Carolina who became a New Yorker, reacted to their music instinctively. He was one of those who became a New Yorker by instinct and desire. In fact DuBose moved to New York to experience directly what the Ramones and other bands of the period had to offer. He could have stayed in the South and listened to Black Oak Arkansas and ZZ Top, but he felt

compelled to explore beyond the land of cotton and peach, into the land of leather and contraband.

Like others who become New Yorkers by choice or chance, DuBose saw original power and transformative exoticism where New Yorkers inured to excess and outrage might have missed it. This gift ensured that George would always photograph the most interesting artists and it also made him into a great amateur A & R man. He could scout talent and he could explain it in his pictures.

Rock and roll photographers are an interesting category of artist, because often they have ulterior motives. Many of the good ones have been women, women perhaps interested in relating closely to rock stars as well as photographing them. And many of the guy photographers did it as a paying gig, hoping to graduate to fashion or combat. But for George DuBose it was about the rock and roll; he was interested in the spirit of the thing. He saw in these bands, perhaps especially the Ramones, a kindred spirit of rebellion. At heart George is a benevolent pirate, a sort of nautical Robin Hood.

An ex-Navy man, he understands the lure of foreign ports, the sublime power of the sea, and he knows the gig of the brig. George was always a top technician. He was widely sought after as an assistant, and even after he was making a good living taking pictures, other photographers would seek him out to do printing. George knows the ropes. He knows engines. He knows the value of "ship shape," but he also sails under the jolly roger and has a fine appreciation engines. He knows the value of "ship shape,"

but he also sails under the jolly roger and has a fine appreciation of booty, flotsam and jetsam and contraband. Recognizing a congenial freebooter and kindred spirit when they saw one, New York's top punk bands would always give DuBose permission to board. And being a man actually gave him some advantages as a portraitist. You can see it here in Johnny Ramones eyes, the reasons he was called "the meanest man in rock and roll." No insult that, but a tribute to a force of nature.

The Ramones were extraordinary beings, but also the quintessence of ordinary beings. They made the ordinary glamorous. They made simplicity look easy. (It's not.) They explored clichés making them resonate with pop art drollery and cold steel irony. They animated themselves with cartoon attitudes, painting everything in black and white, wrong and not right, becoming funny monsters, a rock and roll Addams family, that celebrating every stupid thing they saw, making fun of it.

In their leather motorcycle jackets and ripped jeans the Ramones looked ready for some heavy duty abrasion. They posed like a gang, and adopting the same last name Ramone, they pretended to be a family. It was silly, but it was symbolically anarchist—leaving the old family for the new family, the chosen family. The Ramones posed as hustlers, junkies, fascists, idiots, glue sniffers, mental patients, and lots of other things that they might have been part time, and putting it all to music they staked out the attitude that became known as punk better than anyone. They

were the voice of the new lumpen proletariat and you could dance to it. People are still dancing to it, even if the Ramones are mostly out of here. But that's the job of the avant garde—do it and get the hell out of here.

Not everybody got them at first. You had to have vision.

Sort of like Captain DuBose, the last guy I ran aground with.

— Glenn O'Brien — NYC 2007

## Testimonials

“One thing about the Ramones, once you start to work for them and they liked what you did they would always come back to you for more. Look at me, I started working for them at a few shows in 1974 and the next thing I knew it was 22 years later, WOW what a ride. Over the long career of the Ramones we had the great privilege of working with George on many, many albums and photo shoots. Johnny always hated to go to photo sessions so the faster it took the better he liked it. George understood this fact and was able to get great shots in a limited amount of time, a thing that would have driven most photographers crazy.

He always came up with interesting and inventive ideas for the albums and that had the band coming back for more. I still have a long lasting friendship with George. I always enjoyed sailing on his sailboat The Defiant and have the great honor of calling him Captain.”

– Monte Alexander Melnick  
Ramones tour manager

“George DuBose is a fucking genius at recognizing talent before the talent recognizes itself.”

– Kevin Tooley  
master drummer and producer

“I always lose count when it comes to how many Ramones covers are the work of George DuBose. Did he shoot six, seven or even eight album covers? And should we include the back-covers as well? And what about “Ramones Mania”? Well, he did that, too! Fact is: George DuBose shot six Ramones covers. And a lot of live pictures and promo pictures and even the ones with Elvis Ramone. He worked with The Ramones for twelve years. I never heard of another photographer being as long and as closely connected to a band like George was connected to The Ramones. He was like a fifth member, Flashy Ramone or something. People say that Johnny liked the fact that George was so quick. But in order to take a good picture in a very limited amount of time, a photographer needs to be prepared. Well prepared. And George as I know him spends a lot of time arranging details and settings, thinking about new ways of how to capture a still life, a face, a person or a band. He’s always up for weird ideas and strange locations. In contrast to The Ramones, he liked to improvise and to experiment. The Ramones album sleeves without George’s impact would all look like this: Four guys, one brick wall. So thanks, George, for failing strobes in the dark tunnels of Central Park. Thanks for the ducks in that window in China Town. Oh, and the monkeys, nice one. The story of how to get Mark in the window seat of the B train? A classic! Funny that Clem Burke was a Coco Chanel guy. And last but not least THANKS! for all your support and help with the Ramones Museum!

For us, the fans, your photos are a not just part of The Ramones career, they’re part of our lives. We still stare at them, for hours. Like we used to.”

– Florian Hayler

Director – Ramones Museum Berlin  
www.ramonesmuseum.com  
www.myspace.com/ramonesmuseum

“George DuBose was an good friend of the Ramones. He was one of the few people allowed access to recording sessions, rehearsals, videos and other “insider” events related to the Band.

His photos helped capture the essence of The Ramones.”

– Daniel Rey

Ramones co-writer and producer

I have met George DuBose a couple of times. Like in New York and at the Rampe3 Ramones festival/ exhibition in Augsburg, Germany in 2003. There were his photos at the exhibition. Also Dee Dee Ramone’s close friend and workmate Paul Kostabi (Youth Gone Mad etc.) had hired George to photograph the Willowz set there. George DuBose is a real gentleman like I wrote in my second book “Rock In Peace: Dee Dee and Joey Ramone”.

I honestly like George’s work with the Ramones. Many great covers, booklet promo photos etc. Cover of Roberta Bayley’s debut album is the most classic Ramones cover. In my opinion, the Too Tough To Die cover (by George) comes really close. Both covers show effectively (but

still simply) the many strong sides of the Ramones.

Animal Boy and Mondo Bizarro are my favourite Ramones albums, together with the two first albums (Ramones and Leave Home). The Animal Boy cover is different than any other Ramones cover. For the same reason, I don’t care for the cover of the Mondo Bizarro album, but regular promo photos of the guys are good on booklet.

George DuBose used his imagination well when working with the Ramones.

His work speaks for itself. And the amount of work that he did with the Ramones. Ramones members really accepted him to be one of them. George is important part in the Ramones family.

– Jari-Pekka Laitio-Ramone

Jari-Pekka is running the most big Ramones homepage since 1995 (<http://ramones.kauhajoki.fi>).

He has done two books, Heaven Needed A Lead Singer: Fans Remember Joey Ramone (2002) and Rock In Peace: Dee Dee And Joey Ramone (2004).

The Ramones changed my life. Forever.

After seeing them early on, I suddenly realized who and what I was. One of them. Not actually on-stage with them, but in the “Gabba Gabba Hey” sort of way. Although I did come pretty close to playing with them and was a roadie for them for a very short while. What I mean is, I was a smart-ass kid from New York, with a wicked sense of humor, a real love

for aggressive rock n' roll, and really loved the city like my Puerto-Rican last-named brethren.

I also had the need to feel like I belonged somewhere. To some family. Because mine was as fucked as they come. And the family of The Ramones offered that. To everyone.

So I was hooked.

With the purchase of a leather jacket, the addition of two U.S. Air force pins, and some torn jeans my mom ripped for me, I was in the club.

And to this day, I still am.

I was lucky.

Most fans never got to know and be friends with these guys. But I sure did. I hung out with Joey and listened to bad bands. Was Dee Dee's best man at his second wedding. Had Johnny help me carry home my Jewish pine tree one Christmas Eve, and became good pals with CJay, and my favorite drummer of the Ramones, Richie.

I even became friends with all those who worked with the Ramones on a daily basis. There was Monte Melnick (their long time road manager) and Bubbles (Mitch Keller – who was my roadie mentor), and Arturo Vega (lighting and t-shirts), I also got to meet the talent behind the cameras. And none was more creative than George DuBose. While I loved George Seminara's videos of the band, I felt they never really captured who these guys were and what they

meant. It was probably due to budget. Johnny and the management were very, very cheap. And it showed.

But the album covers, that was a different story.

Besides John Holmstrom's "Road To Ruin" cover, Roberta Bayley's first cover, nothing said RAMONES more than the cover of "Too Tough To Die". While it sure paid homage to "A Clockwork Orange", it also said "we'll scare the shit out of your parents" more than any album cover I've ever seen. The band looks dark, menacing, lurking, yet to fans, familiar.

When I saw that George DuBose did the cover I knew this guy understood what the Ramones were about. Forget that Phil Spector matched t-shirt shit, or that silly drawing on the cover of "Pleasant Dreams", this photo said it all. I felt the same way about the follow-ups, "Halfway to Sanity" and "Animal Boy". Very Ramones. Very much the band I knew and loved.

Very New York!

So here's to you, George, for breathing life back into the band's creative process and giving us images that not only said "Ramones", but said who we were and are as well.

— George Tabb, NYC 2007



## Punk'd

When I first moved to New York City in January of 1975, I had never heard of “punk rock”. The only “punk” I knew of was a derogatory word meaning “some kind of wanna-be bad ass, but too weak to back anything up”. I had heard that it was also a “jailhouse fuck-boy”, but I had no first hand experience of that.

My grandfather told me that a punk was camel shit on a stick that was to be used to light fireworks.

Later I learned that a “punk” was a short piece of burning hemp rope that was used on 18th century sailing warships to fire their cannons. Smoke that!

I actually lived in a bedroom community of NYC called Cliffside Park, NJ, but on Friday or Saturday nights, I would take a 20-minute bus ride into “the city” and check out “Les Jardins”, a popular, trendy disco in the basement of the Hotel Diplomat.

In the late '70s, disco music was a viable alternative to the heavy metal and progressive rock that was popular. I think some of the most innovative sounds were coming out of disco music and I think around this time, techno was born and new wave was just beginning.

Punk rock was still off my radar screen.

I heard about a hard rock club on the Bowery called “Great Gildersleeves” and would occasionally check that scene out. Eventually, I heard about another club that was supposed to be a “happening scene”. The club was called CBGB’s and was just a block or two further down The Bowery from Great Gildersleeves.

One night, I decided to go to CBGB’s. I didn’t have any idea who was on the bill. Arriving at the club on The Bowery, I paid my \$3 admission and saw that a band called Television was the headliner and had just started their set.

As a teenager, I had taken several years of guitar lessons, I could read music and all that. What I saw on the stage at CBGB’s that night was incomprehensible to me. Focusing on the guitarist Richard Lloyd’s playing, it became quickly very clear that this guy was apparently worse than me and I hadn’t picked up a guitar for 5 years.

I couldn’t imagine that someone would be allowed on any stage, playing that badly. It certainly didn’t dawn on me that anyone would “try” to play so poorly.



I went back to the entrance and asked the doorman if I could please have my money back!

## First Break

It took me two years to find an apprentice position in a NYC photo studio and I was lucky enough to find a job in a studio where there were two partners that owned the business. I was to be the main assistant for both of them. This meant I got double instructions. That both of my new bosses had graduated in the same class from Rochester Institute of Technology, one of the two schools in the US that had programs for training professional photographers, was convenient for me. Their instructions and procedures were usually the same. I wasn't being told to do things different ways.

Shortly after landing the full-time assistant's job with Lane Pederson and James Erwin, I moved into Manhattan with a college pal and shared a huge apartment in Yorkville, formerly Germantown.

Although my job at the photo studio was very low paying, part of the "deal" with my bosses was that I was allowed to

have keys to the studio. I was allowed to use any of the cameras and lighting equipment that was there, as well as the darkroom and all the film and developing materials that I wanted. I also got free lunches...

So there I was, 27 years old with my "own" photo studio in Manhattan. The late '70s was a time when the city was full of struggling artists, actors and musicians and having my own studio was pretty cool. It certainly enhanced my social status.

Going out to parties and art show openings in the evenings, I met some of the young staffers at Andy Warhol's Interview magazine. They began to give me darkroom work developing Warhol's snapshots from all the parties that he went to, along with other little photo jobs for the magazine that I could shoot in "my" studio. I started with shooting models for the Interview magazine t-shirt ads and eventually graduated to shooting the musicians that Glenn O'Brien, the Interview music editor interviewed or featured in his monthly column on music. Glenn is one of the best writers in history and I could count on his music column informing me on the coolest up-and-coming acts.

The Interview connection led to my being invited to see the debut performance of a new band from Georgia called the B52s, who were making their NY debut at Max's Kansas City, the famous nightclub. When my friend at Interview, Richard Cramer, called me and asked me if I wanted to see a new band from Athens, Georgia, I was really curious. I had lived in Atlanta as a child. I had to tell my friend that although I would love to go, I didn't have any money for the admission. He said not to worry, as he could put me on the guest list.

Shit, I didn't even know what a guest list was.

Evidently, I could get into the concert for free.

## Second Break

So after work on December 12, 1977, off I went to Max's Kansas City with my camera and my curiosity fully loaded.

The first band on stage that night was Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, headed by the original punk grrrl, Lydia Lunch. This was the second punk band that I had

ever seen and again, was totally unimpressed by the material and the performance.

Here was another band that was either "trying" to be horrible or weren't "trying", just were.

However, the second band, this unknown band from Athens, Georgia, was to change my life. It was clear that they weren't the most accomplished musicians in the world. They played old Ventures' Mosrite guitars (my favorite guitar and apparently, Johnny Ramone's), toy pianos, walkie talkies and an old Farfisa keyboard. The remarkable point is that although they were pretty bad musicians, they were trying to be good. The overall result was that they were great.

The B52s began their set with the music from Henry Mancini's "Peter Gunn Theme", TV theme music from a popular detective series on television in the late '50s. It was also the first tune I ever played. When I got my first guitar, I couldn't tune it, but I could pick out the theme from the "Peter Gunn" show. The B52s had written lyrics to the Mancini composition and called the song, "Planet Claire". I fell in love with the band and their sound immediately. If I were A&R

for a record company, I would have signed them on the spot, immediately, right there that same night.

I went up to the dressing room after their set and invited them to come to “my” studio for a free photo shooting, but they told me that they were going to drive directly back to Athens, Georgia.

Legend has it that the B52s drove up from Athens with all their equipment in a VW Beetle and turned around after their gig at Max’s and drove right back.

They were soon to return to Max’s and to play other Manhattan clubs, CBGB’s and Hurrah’s. I began a two year relationship with the band, photographing their concerts and getting them to come to “my” photo studio several times for portrait sessions.

Interview magazine eventually published two of my studio shots of the band and by the time the B52s had signed their recording contract with Chris Blackwell of Island Records, I had amassed quite a catalog of images of the B52s.

## Third Base

Tony Wright, the long-time

creative director of Island Records had the task of designing the debut cover for the B52s. He called me (at the band’s instructions) to review my images with the intention of using one for their debut album cover. The band had selected a shot that I had taken and printed up for street posters a year earlier. I guess he just wanted to make the choice for their cover seem like it was his.

Mr. Wright asked me how much money I wanted to allow Island Records to design a record sleeve with one of my studio portraits of the B52s. I gave it a long thought, but before I could come up with a dollar amount, he offered me \$750, which I calculated as being around 5 weeks of my assistant’s salary. I quickly agreed and that is the short story of how I got my first album cover.

## Home Run

Tony Wright began to give me album cover commissions. Lydia Lunch, Kid Creole and the Coconuts, but because of the connection to the B52s, Gary Kurfirst, who was also the Ramones, Talking Heads and B52s manager, asked Tony to art direct the jacket of the sixth Ramones album,

“Subterranean Jungle”. Only this jungle wasn’t going to be green and leafy.

I hadn’t listened to any of the previous Ramones recordings, but I did a little homework and discovered that these guys were the innovators of this music called “punk”. I was sure that this “punk” rock was on it’s way out. After listening to a couple of the Ramones’ better known songs, I thought that although the lyrics were catchy enough, the musicianship was subpar and not really anything to get excited about. Sounded like a bunch of yelling and thrashing about on guitars.

At the first creative meeting that Tony and I had with the Ramones, the band explained to Tony and me that they wanted to be photographed standing in a door of a subway car, but the shot had to be through the open door of a grafitti-covered NYC subway car. Johnny Ramone suggested that we just go to the train night storage yard in the Bronx, where all the subway cars were parked.

Sounded simple, but to me it sounded like a total logistical nightmare.

First, somebody would have to get permission from the Transit Authority; that alone I imagined to be a singularly daunting task.

Second, we would have to get a maintenance worker to unlock and open a subway door, requiring a substantial location fee.

Last, I would have to be shooting from quite a tall ladder to be on the same level as the band standing inside the subway car. Plus there would be no platform in the picture.

I came up with a better and much simpler idea. The Coney Island-bound “B” train would originate at 57th Street and 6th Avenue in Manhattan. An incoming train from Coney Island would enter the station and then sit there for 20 minutes before reversing for its long return journey back to Brooklyn. During the holdover time between trips, I could get the band to jump on the train, pull off a few quick shots, jump off and then wait on the platform for another train to come into the station to get some more shots.

I didn’t know the band at this time, never saw them perform and hardly knew any of their songs, they weren’t on the radio in those days at all, there wasn’t the comraderie that would develop in the later years of my relationship with the band. I set up my two battery-powered Norman 200B strobe lights and my Hasselblad camera on the



subway platform and waited for the band to show up. The Ramones arrived on the platform, the four of them and their ever-present tour manager, Monte Alexander Melnick. I asked the guys to stand in the open doorway of an idling subway car. I was able to shoot a few rolls with the Hasselblad, before the train doors chimed, closed and the train left the station.

I had just finished the second round of photos, when a policeman approached us on the platform.

He asked me if I had a permit.

“Permit? For what do I need a permit?” I politely asked.

“You need written permission from the NYCTA to do a professional photo shooting in the subway system”, the policeman replied.

“I am a student at The School of Visual Arts. (I really was, at night school...) I am shooting this band for the magazine, East Village Eye. I don’t know about permits.”(Actually, from all my assisting work with fashion photographers, I knew all about location permits, but didn’t feel like hassling myself to get one for this commando raid photo session in a NY subway station).

“Well, I will have to call this into

the precinct station”, the officer said.

A few minutes later, the police officer summoned me to the payphone (this was in the days before cell phones and when radios didn’t work in the subways). “The desk sergeant wants to speak with you.”

“What’s going on?” the sergeant asked me over the phone.

“I am shooting a band for the East Village Eye, I didn’t know I needed a permit. We are shooting only when the B train stops for the 20 minute layover in the 57th Street station. We are not holding the doors open or in any way delaying the trains. I am not using any subway electricity.” (My strobes worked on batteries.)

The sergeant asked, “Who is the band?”

I replied, “The Ramones.”

To my total surprise the sergeant immediately said, “Go ahead. Let me speak to the patrolman.”

It turned out that the Ramones had recently played at a benefit concert for the NYC Police Department in order to help the Department raise money to buy bulletproof vests. The Ramones were and still are very popular with the NYPD.



I was about to resume shooting with the policeman looking on, when Monte Alexander Melnick told me to wait a minute.

Monte Alexander Melnick told me in a low voice and with his back to the band, that the Ramones were kicking out Marky the drummer, but he didn't know it yet.

"How could we isolate Marky from the rest of the guys without Marky getting suspicious?", Monte asked.

I suggested first putting Dee Dee in the small window at the end of the car, with the other three band members looking out the open door of the car, then we put Marky in the small window.

It all seemed so weird to me. I mean, if you're going to kick the guy out, just tell him.

I had a lot to learn about band politics, especially the Ramones internal political structure.

I had shot everything with a Hasselblad camera and 2-1/4" color print film. Tony Wright wanted to clean up the train and airbrush grafitti on a photo enlargement in his own style.

I thought the finished cover of "Subterranean Jungle" looked

reasonably cool, but it turned out the Ramones hated it.

"Subterranean Jungle" was the first Ramones record I actually listened to and then only because I recognized "Time Has Come Today", originally by The Chambers Brothers, as one of the tracks listed on the back cover. That song was one of my favorite psychedelic songs from my glorious, misspent youth during the late '60s.

## Too Tough To Die

A year later, a call came from His Rockin' Royal Highness, Johnny Ramone, the boss Ramone himself. He told me that he definitely wanted me to shoot another cover for them, but he asked me if I knew any other art directors that we could work with.

"What was wrong with Tony Wright?" I asked.

"The grafitti on the cover he did for "Subterranean Jungle" really looked fake, we didn't like it." Johnny said.

Having worked with Tony on many projects by this point, I knew the range of his talent and capabilities.

"Don't write Tony off so quickly. Tony is extremely versatile. He will design the cover any way you want, you just have to be clear and tell him what you like and what you want."

I felt an allegiance to Tony. After all, I would never have shot "Subterranean Jungle" or probably even met the Ramones, if Tony had used another photographer.

At the following creative meeting with Johnny and Joey about the upcoming cover session for "Too Tough To Die", Johnny asked me if I had ever seen

"Clockwork Orange", the Stanley Kubrik film.

"Not completely," I said, not elaborating that I found the film kind of boring and didn't appreciate the excessive sadism that the film projected.

Johnny told me that in the film, there was a scene of a mugging in a tunnel in London and that the band wanted to recreate that scene or at least the feeling of it.

I asked my by now ex-boss and mentor, professional fashion photographer Lane Pederson, where in NYC could a small pedestrian tunnel be found. Lane told me there were lots of tunnels in Central Park and suggested one near the Children's Zoo. I checked that tunnel as well as a dozen other tunnels in Manhattan, but Lane was right, the small diameter of the tunnel at the zoo lent a scale to the shot that would be perfect. The tunnel was small and would make the guys in the band look bigger in relation...and more imposing.

As this was a job for Warner Bros. Records and the budget was quite substantial, we rented a Winnebago to use as a dressing room. I asked the band what they wanted in way of refreshments and they said, "Pizza and beer!"