

The Rolling Stones

1960–present



The iconic "Tongue and Lips" logo was designed by John Pasche. It first appeared on 1971's *Sticky Fingers* LP.

"The Beatles want to hold your hand," observed journalist Tom Wolfe in 1965, "but the Stones want to burn your town." In prim early Sixties Britain, the Stones seemed surly, dangerous; their hair was outrageously long; initially, they played outlaw music—R&B and blues—that was joltingly out of step with contemporary chart fare. The songs Jagger and Keith Richards wrote during the Stones' first breathless rush of success—"Satisfaction," "Get Off My Cloud," "Paint It, Black," "Let's Spend The Night Together," "Sympathy For The Devil," "Gimme Shelter," "Brown Sugar"—brought revolt, hot-blooded lust, and brooding darkness to the charts as never before.

They couldn't have done it without a maverick iconoclast for a manager, though. In truth, the Fab Four and Fab Five had much in common, not least a love of US rock'n'roll and rhythm and blues, but The Beatles' manager Brian Epstein took pains to blot out the less palatable aspects of his boys, whereas Stones supremo Andrew Loog Oldham took pains to magnify them. Oldham's vision helped turn his quintet from purist blues and R&B acolytes into antiestablishment icons—the most clearly defined in UK rock until The Sex Pistols the following decade. The Stones were a brilliant band, but their take on Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, and Willie Dixon could have been fatally limiting. Oldham helped turn Jagger and Richards into a class songwriting team. His brilliant marketing plan included planting eye-catching quotes in the press ("Would You Let Your Daughter Marry A Rolling Stone?" is perhaps the best known), and releasing the Stones' first two albums in striking sleeve sans artist name or title.

With the demise of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones confidently assumed the mantle of The Greatest Rock'n'Roll Band In The World. The Stones have stayed the course, pulling off ever more spectacularly successful tours and—even more remarkably—still cutting it live, as attested by Martin Scorsese's 2008 movie *Shine A Light*. They remain rock's greatest survivors, capable of negotiating line-up changes and challenges from newer rebels (The Sex Pistol, Guns N' Roses) without breaking stride. They are currently on course to fulfil Keith Richards' professed aim of following in the step of countless bluesmen before them, and playing until they drop into the grave.

1969: On their US tour, The Stones are billed as "The World's Greatest Rock'n'Roll Band."

September 2, 1969: *Stones in the Park*, a documentary filmed at the concert in Hyde Park, London, is released.

1 May 1975: The Stones announce their Tour of the Americas by playing "Brown Sugar" on the back of a flatbed truck as it is driven down Broadway, New York.

1977: The band is recorded live at the El Mocambo Club in Toronto.



The Rollin' Stones (1960–1962)

Childhood friends Keith Richards and Mick Jagger meet by chance on a commuter train near London. Jagger is currently playing with Richards' fellow Sidcup Art College student Dick Taylor (on bass) in a blues outfit called Little Boy Blue and the Blue Boys; Richards soon joins. Elsewhere, Cheltenham boy Brian Jones has been playing guitar with Blues Inc., but wants to strike out on his own and advertises for bandmates; blues keyboardist Ian Stewart joins him. Appearing at west London pub as "Elmo Jones," the Cheltenham musician encounters Jagger (now singing with Blues Inc.) and Richards; soon the five (Richards, Jagger, Jones, Taylor, and Stewart) are playing together. Under the moniker of The Rolling Stones (Jones devises the name—initially "The Rollin' Stones"—inspired by a Muddy Waters song), they play the Marquee Club on July 3, 1962. At this early stage, drummer Tony Chapman (though some argue future Kink Mick Avory, who certainly rehearsed with the band), plays the gig. Taylor leaves prior to the Marquee gig, then re-joins, then leaves again to be replaced by former Cliftons bassist Bill Wyman. By the end of the year, Charlie Watts (drums, ex-Blues Inc.) becomes a full-time Stone.



- October 1960:** Richards meets childhood friend Jagger on a train from Dartford to London. Both had been school children at Wentworth Primary School.
- June 1962:** Brian Jones, who has already impregnated two girls, lived in Scandinavia, and plays saxophone and guitar, joins the band.
- June 1962:** Jones names the band The Rolling Stones.
- Late 1962:** The sextet secures an eight-month residency at the Crawdaddy Club in Richmond, run by their nominal manager, Giorgio Gomelsky.
- August 1962:** Richard, Jagger, and Jones move in to a flat together in Edith Grove, Chelsea.
- July 3, 1962:** The Stones play their first gig at the Marquee (not July 12, a date that is often erroneously given).
- 1963:** Richards changes his surname to "Richard."
- 1964:** "It's All Over Now" becomes their first No. 1 hit.
- March 18, 1965:** Jagger, Wyman, and Brian Jones fined £5 for urinating on wall of a gas station.
- July 27, 1965:** Allen Klein takes over as business manager.
- December 3, 1965:** Richards is electrocuted when his guitar touches an ungrounded mic during a gig in Sacramento.
- January 1967:** Appearing on US TV, group agrees to alter title of latest hit to "Let's Spend Some Time Together."
- February 12, 1967:** A party at Keith Richard's Sussex home, Redlands, is raided by police.
- July 3, 1969:** Jones dies in his swimming pool under mysterious circumstances.
- 1969:** Jones is denied a US visa, ruining their tour plans, and decides to leave the band.

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The Glory Years (1963–1969)

Andrew Loog Oldham spots The Rolling Stones at the Crawdaddy Club, on April 28, 1963, and becomes their co-manager (with Eric Easton). One of his first steps, that same month, is to oust Stewart. Oldham's tenure coincides with the Stones' early glory years. Signed to Decca, they first chart in 1963 with a Chuck Berry B-side ("Come On," a No. 21 hit), then break the Top Twenty with a cover of The Beatles' "I Wanna Be Your Man." They embark on their first UK tour in late 1963, supporting Bo Diddley, Little Richard and The Everly Brothers. Their string of era-defining singles begins in 1964—starting with covers of Buddy Holly's "Not Fade Away" (UK No.3) and "It's All Over Now," their first UK No.1—and defines them as the anti-Beatles. Their albums initially comprise purely covers. However, Jagger and Richards develop into a superb songwriting partnership which is reflected in the strength of LPs *Aftermath* (1966) and *Beggars Banquet* (1968), and storming comeback single "Jumpin' Jack Flash." In-between, 1967's *Between The Buttons*—often overlooked—is their poppiest offering to date, though henceforth their releases will frequently be characterized by greater darkness, weariness, aggression, and raggedness.



The Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band In The World (1969–1974)

The Stones continue from strength to strength, releasing critics' favorite *Let It Bleed* (1969). Liberated, in a way, by Jones' demise, they embark first on a free live concert in Hyde Park, London, on July 5, as a tribute to the late guitarist (Mick Taylor, formerly of John Mayall's *Bluesbreakers*, is his replacement), then a US tour during which they shatter attendance records. It represents a triumphant comeback, at least until another free concert—at Altamont Speedway, California—where Hells Angels are employed as security; amid increasingly ugly vibes, one audience member, Meredith Hunter, is stabbed to death.

Sticky Fingers (1971) is another strong set ("Brown Sugar," "Wild Horses," "Sister Morphine" co-written with Marianne Faithfull) and boasts an iconic Andy Warhol-designed sleeve. The Stones remain a potent live force throughout the early Seventies, and their notoriety is rekindled with an exceptionally indulgent 1972 Stones Touring Party (S.T.P.) concerts in the United States, which scales new heights of sexual and narcotic excess, some of which is captured in Robert Frank's (unreleased) documentary, *Cocksucker Blues*. The album the tour promotes—*Exile On Main Street*, a double LP—is now regarded a ragged but thrilling triumph, perhaps their greatest album—though at the time, critics are divided over its merits. The recording, in Keith Richard's chateau Nellcôte, in the South of France, is marked by more indulgence and sees splits in the Stones' camp between hedonists and non-indulgents. *Goat's Head Soup* (1973) is less well received, but boasts the memorable ballad "Angie," a worldwide hit.

July 5, 1969: Two days after Jones' death, the Stones play at a free concert in London's Hyde Park. Jagger releases thousands of butterflies in memory of the guitarist.

December 6, 1969: Stones headline at the Altamont Speedway free festival. The rock concert is marred by violence with one person killed and three others injured during the event.

January 1970: Cult movie *Performance*, starring Jagger in probably his most successful screen appearance, opens.

1977: Strung out on heroin, Richard is late meeting up with other Stones for a tour in Canada. When he flies in, he is detained in Customs for possessing hash residue and a burnt spoon. Later, he is arrested in his hotel after being found with 22 grams of heroin.

1977: Richards faces charges of trafficking, which are subsequently dropped.

1975: Wood specializes in playing slide guitar, lap steel, and pedal steel guitar, and contributes one half of the "ancient art of weaving," Keith Richards' term for the interchange between guitarists that blurs the boundaries between rhythm and lead.

1970: The band's contract with Decca Records ends and they form their own record company, Rolling Stones Records.

1974/1975: Ron Wood replaces Mick Taylor, and participates in the band's March 1975 recording sessions for their album *Black and Blue*.

1971: The Stones decamp to the South of France, for tax reasons.

December 1974: Mick Taylor becomes increasingly dissatisfied with his role in the band and decides to quit.

April 1971: *Sticky Fingers* is released. It is the band's first release on the newly formed label, Rolling Stones Records, after having been contracted since 1963 with Decca Records in the UK and London Records in the US. It is also Mick Taylor's first full-length appearance on a Rolling Stones album.

December 1973: Ron Wood collaborates with Mick Jagger on the song "It's Only Rock 'n Roll (But I Like It)." Both Jagger and Keith Richards contributed to Wood's first solo album, *I've Got My Own Album to Do*, released in 1974.



It's Only Rock 'n' Roll . . . But I Like It! (1975–1993)

Numerous guitarists are auditioned to replace Taylor, including Jeff Beck and Peter Frampton, though the lucky applicant turns out to be Ron Wood, formerly of UK beat groups The Birds and The Creation, and The Faces (he and Rod Stewart had joined the former Small Faces in 1969, after the departure of singer Steve Marriott). Wood had been offered the gig previously by Jagger, but turned it down owing to his Faces commitments. He had appeared on 1974's "It's Only Rock 'n' Roll"—its title track symptomatic of the self-parody that had now become part of The Stones' stock-in-trade—though Mick Taylor played most lead guitar. The group declared the advent of punk with *Some Girls* (1978), featuring disco-oriented hit single "Miss You" alongside agreeably feisty tracks such as "Respectable." The indifferently received *Emotional Rescue* (1980) is followed up by the far better *Tattoo You* (1982), which spawns hit singles "Start Me Up" and "Waiting on a Friend." *Undercover* (1983) disappoints; henceforth, although they remain a perennially popular live draw, The Stones' LPs become progressively less vital.

October 1978: At his trial, Richards is ordered to undergo treatment and to play two concerts for the Canada National Institute for the Blind.

1989: The Steel Wheels tour grosses more than \$140 million.

1989: The Rolling Stones are inducted into the American Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

1977: Richards faces charges of trafficking, which are subsequently dropped.

1978: Richards officially changes his surname back to "Richards."

December 1985: Ian Stewart, the original keyboardist for the band, who remained with the group as a roadie and side musician, dies.

1993: Bill Wyman quits.

1994: At the Grammy Awards, *Voodoo Lounge* wins Best Rock Album.

December 1, 2003: Jagger is knighted by the Queen.

April 27, 2006: Richards falls out of tree in Fiji. Undergoes surgery in New Zealand.

2007: The A Bigger Bang tour is history's most successful, netting \$437 million.

2008: Richards appears in a cameo role as Captain Teague in *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*.

April 2007: in *NME* interview, Richards states he had snorted his dead father's ashes. Media uproar ensues.

Still Rollin' (1993–present)

Wyman leaves the band officially in 1993. Although his place is taken by Darryl Jones for 1994 album *Voodoo Lounge*, no permanent replacement is found. The *Bridges To Babylon* tour, in the late Nineties, is another huge money spinner. *A Bigger Bang* (2005) proves a hit critically and commercially (UK No.2; US No.3); the track "Sweet Neo Con," a damning indictment of President George W. Bush and his neoconservative allies, even provides the Stones with a whiff of controversy again. The accompanying tour earns the band \$162 million by the end of the year. Also in 2005, they attract a crowd of 1.5 million for a concert on Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach.





CBGB NEW YORK 1973–2006

Punk Central. But that wasn't the original idea.

Founder Hilly Kristal launched the downtown club—among a hive of flophouses at 315 Bowery at Bleecker Street—in December 1973 as a Country, Blue Grass and Blues venue, hence the acronym. (Those other mysterious initials—OMFUG—stood for Other Music For Uplifting Gormandizers.) One day, as he was up a ladder fixing the club's legendary awning in place, Kristal was approached by a group of tatty kids who told him, "Oh yeah, we play a little of that, a little rock, a little country, a little blues, a little bluegrass . . ." This was a lie, but Kristal wasn't to know that and booked them in for a Sunday (a dead night). They were Television and they stiffed—with Kristal, anyway: I thought the band was terrible; screechy, ear-splitting guitars and a jumble of sounds that 'I just didn't get.' I said, 'NEVER AGAIN.'" Dee Dee Ramone saw it differently: "At CBGB Television were really

special and created a real atmosphere of freedom," he insisted. "You couldn't imagine anyone else doing what they were doing." Soon, Dee Dee's own combo—the Ramones a quartet from Forest Hills, Queens—were appearing alongside Television in the Bowery. Did Kristal like them? He did not: "They were even worse than Television. At that first gig at CBGB, they were the most untogether group I'd ever heard."

Other rock venues in the city had closed down (the Electric Circus, fallen down (the Mercer Arts Center), or simply wouldn't host bands with no record contract. By 1974, more bands playing spiky, loud rock music with abrasive guitars (then known as "street rock") were Bowery bound: Richard Hell (ex-Television) and his Voidoids; The Stilettoes, featuring future Blondie duo Chris Stein and Debbie Harry), Patti Smith (Kristal liked her). And they brought luminaries from previous countercultural waves

with them too, including Andy Warhol, Lou Reed, John Cale, and Allen Ginsberg.

Talking Heads (originally a trio) auditioned at CBGB in March 1975 and went on to build a live reputation there. Jonathan Richman played too—just once. After that initial burst of creativity, things leveled out a bit, so Kristal kick-started the scene again in the summer of '75 by auditioning bands for the Festival of Unrecorded Rock Talent, which ran at CBGB from July 16 to August 2. Respected music mags (*NME*, *Rolling Stone*, *Melody Maker*) turned up, providing international coverage for the seventy-odd acts who appeared, including Television, The Ramones, Mink de Ville, and The Heartbreakers (featuring ex-New York Doll Johnny Thunders, and Richard Hell).

The following year saw Suicide at Kristal's club, and—as a way of pushing bands that hadn't caught on yet—the recording of a live album there. By now, word was out about the Bowery

buzz and bands flocked to appear at 315 Bleecker from far and wide, including The Dead Boys, who to Kristal symbolized, "what a punk band should be. They were loud, raw, crass, with super high energy." Blondie played on February 13-15, 1976, and The Dictators appeared the same year.

The first rush of punk was over by 1980, though CBGB continued to host hardcore bands. The violence this sometimes ensued led to Kristal banning such bands, though he later relaxed that rule. CBGB was still going in 2005, but that year a row over rent arose between Kristal and the Bowery Residents' Committee. The end came on October 15, 2006. A storming set by Patti Smith closed the place out.

Kristal planned to shift his club to Las Vegas, though those plans were shelved permanently when this inspirational figure passed away, from lung cancer, on August 28, 2007.

R.I.P. CBGB.



- Patti Smith
- Horses
- Nov 1975
- Ariana



- Ramones
- Ramones
- April 1976
- Sire



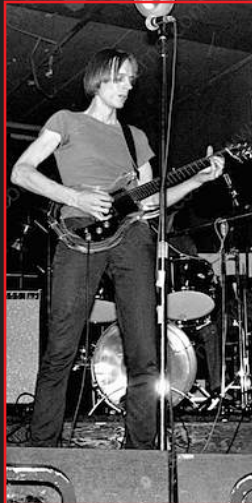
- Television
- Marquee Moon
- March 1977
- Elektra



- Talking Heads
- 77
- Sep 1977
- Sire



- Blondie
- Parallel Lines
- Sep 1979
- Chrysalis



Television

Inspired by The New York Dolls, Tom Verlaine and Richard Hell form a band. Television debuts at CBGB on Sunday, March 31, 1974, and plays a string of scene-building gigs there with Patti Smith. Eventually, the band will play over 100 sets at the club. In a memorable phrase, Patti Smith likens the sound of Verlaine's guitar to "a thousand bluebirds screaming." In another memorable phrase, *Rolling Stone* likens his singing to "an intelligent chicken being strangled."

Talking Heads

Ex-Rhode Island School of Design students David Byrne (guitar and vocals), Tina Weymouth (bass), and Chris Frantz (drums) move to New York in 1974 and debut at CBGB on June 8, 1975. Their artiness, and Byrne's quirkiness (Kristal: "A jerky motion that reminded me . . . of a chicken walking around without a head, and reminiscent of NOBODY I'd ever seen before"), helps them stand out. Jerry Harrison, ex of Jonathan Richman's Modern Lovers, joins in 1976.



February 1977: Debut single "Love Goes To Building on Fire" is released.

1974: David Byrne, Tina Weymouth, and Chris Frantz form a trio, called The Artistics, at art college in Rhode Island.

The Dead Boys

Raised in Cleveland, Ohio, The Dead Boys have their origins in cult Seventies outfit Rocket From The Tombs. They debut at CBGB on June 25, 1976, and wind up with Hilly Kristal as their manager. Johnny Blitz almost becomes a genuine dead boy after being stabbed on April 20, 1978. Kristal arranges a benefit gig for him at CBGB, which attracts John Belushi (who sits in on drums), Divine, and members of The Ramones and Blondie.



June 4, 1990: Stiv Bators dies, after a road accident in Paris. Oddly, he refuses medical attention and walks away from the scene, but passes away later in his apartment.

October 1977: release debut album *Young Loud and Snotty*.

1975: masterful debut album *Horses* is released; its iconic cover shot is by Smith's sometime boyfriend Robert Mapplethorpe.

January 23, 1977: at a gig in Tampa, Florida, Smith trips falls 15 feet into the orchestra pit, and cracks two vertebrae.

October 15, 2006: Smith plays the last-ever gig at CBGB with a stunning three-and-a-half-hour set, ending just after 1 a.m.

July 10, 2005: the French Ministry of Culture ordains Patti Smith as Commander of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Patti Smith

Established underground poet, and early champion of Television, Patti Smith brings an avant-garde sensibility and literariness to punk, along with a love of pure rock'n'roll. ("One of the few people I could listen to over and over," opined Hilly Kristal.) She and her band debut at CBGB on Valentine's Day, 1975. An immediate hit, they play for seven weeks, four nights a week, two sets a night. They are the first CBGB band to release an album: 1975's *Horses*.



CBGB & OMFUG

1976: Ex-bassist Richard Hell—the prototype punk, with chopped hair and chopped clothes—releases prototype punk single "Blank Generation."

1976: Dictators lead singer "Handsome" Dick Manitoba heckles transvestite performer Wayne County at CBGB. County hits him with a mic stand—breaking his collarbone—then carries on to complete the set.

June 16, 1978: A riot at a Belgian Suicide gig is recorded and released as flexi-disk "23 Minutes Over Brussels."

March 3, 1974: Live debut: New York's Performance Studio.

April 23, 1976: Debut album *Ramones* released. It reaches No. 111 on *Billboard*.

August 6, 1996: final gig at, The Palace, Hollywood.

1968-1973: A pre-Blondie Debbie Harry works as a Playboy Bunny. And, later, as a waitress at Max's Kansas City. And at Dunkin' Donuts.

May 5, 1974: The Stilletoos (with Harry and Stein) debuts at CBGB, supporting Television.

July 1981: "Rapture" released. Becomes the first single featuring elements of rap or hip hop to make the US No. 1 spot.

Suicide

An odd prospect for pre-New Romantic times: a duo comprising Marty Rev (synthesizer) and Alan Vega (vocals). But very loud. And confrontational. "I did a show there . . . in '72 or '73," Vega reminisced in 2007. "I used to hang out there a lot . . . there was cheap beer . . . he [Kristal] was a real nice guy, quiet." "There was a flophouse right above it," he mused, "they were taking dead people out of there every day. The whole area was crap—it was great!"



The Dictators

Exponents of *Animal House*-style larks that played an oft-forgotten part in punk, The Dictators bring a love of trash culture (cult movies, comic books, surf music) and frat-party fun (adolescent jokes, beer . . . erm, wrestling) to the scene. "People were aghast," vocalist "Handsome" Dick Manitoba recalled. "We were just so hysterically horrible!" They debut at CBGB in 1976, and set the club record for Monday night attendances that same year.



The Ramones

Seismically influential cartoon pop-punk quartet. First play live at New York's Performance Studio on March 3, 1974; first play CBGB August 16, 1974. Like Television, they return to play more than 100 sets. Perform fast, furious rock (early slogan: "Don't bore us, get to the chorus"), with buzzsaw guitars. Debut album *Ramones*, released 1976, is the blueprint for a million punk bands (and is Sid Vicious's favorite album).



Blondie

Debuts at CBGB on August 31 1974 as Angel and the Snake. Band subsequently becomes "Blondie," after wolf-whistles Harry attracts (and also because of two short-stayed blonde backing singers, Tish and Snooky), when opening for The Ramones on Independence Day 1975 and appearing at Kristal's Festival of Unrecorded Rock Talent. Their eponymous debut album is released on the Private Stock label in 1976.