
For anyone who grew up between the late 1950s and the late 1970s, or knows anyone who did, this book is a nostalgic flashback to a time enjoyed greatly and missed occasionally. POP! is a tour de force review of the best and less than best styles, fashions, highs, and lows of those tumultuous twenty years, with Peter Max colors and psychedelic styling and where even the print is an assault on your visual senses.

Historically this is a must have book for any art or media library. It is large formatted and well-constructed. While being visually pleasing, with little text other than the expository introduction, which sets the tone of what the author wanted to convey, the art pages speak for themselves with captions beneath each photo or print. While there are many other books of this style and format in the marketplace, this one grabs the reader at a more base level. The art is more gritty and not the artists’ “best” pieces. The authors show the “other” during this decade. And that other is just as artful, just as important, and just as applicable and timely as the pieces we see in the more widely printed anthologies.

It is not surprising that the years of 1956 and 1976 were used as the beginning and end points. In 1956 Eisenhower and Nixon were recovering from the Korean Conflict. The country was going into a post-war phase and the backlash to that led the world, and specifically the two most important musical and cultural countries of the world, America and Britain, into a counterculture of what was acceptable and “normal.” At the other end of the time line was 1976. Jimmy Carter is elected president with a born again Christian fervor and the world moves into the punk music scene and out of the post-Vietnam blues.

These twenty years are a focal point for politics, music, art, culture, gender, and the nuances that make up a great era. If you must have only one book in your library that gives a visual overview to these twenty years and you want a book with “punch” then this book is the one you want to purchase, catalog, and shelve. It will more than pay for itself in student and faculty use and citations.

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