

CBGB: Hey! Ho! Let's Go! [B1]

Locale iconico della scena artistica newyorkese, è stato decisivo per la diffusione dei gruppi punk e new wave più influenti della storia della musica.

What do the Ramones, Blondie and Joan Jett have in common, apart from **over-the-top hairdos**? There might be several answers to this question, but one of them has to be that they all started their careers performing at an iconic **venue**: CBGB. It all began when a music manager and club owner from New York City decided to open a music club at a **damp**, cold **venue** in Manhattan's East Village.

CBGB & OMFUG

CBGB opened its doors on 10 December 1973. Founder Hilly Kristal wanted to offer a stage for new bands that wrote their own music, so no **cover bands** were allowed. He originally wanted the **venue** to feature country, bluegrass and blues music, as well as poetry readings; **hence** its full name, CBGB & OMFUG (Country, Bluegrass, Blues, and Other Music For **Uplifting Gourmandizers**). But at that time, punk music was emerging in New York, and some punk bands found in Kristal's club a place to experiment with their sound. Ramones played their first **gigs** here, and other bands like The **Cramps**, Talking Heads and The Dead Boys followed.

FILTHY BUT FUN

CBGB wasn't a **fancy** place; it was located in the Bowery, an area of Manhattan that used to be quite **rough**. Partly due to this, drinks were cheap, attracting many locals. According to its usual clients, the club was quite **grimy**, and the acoustics weren't great either, but it was one of the few places where bands could perform live. The reputation of the CBGB quickly grew, and more bands and artists like Elvis Costello, The Police and Patti Smith Group came here to play. In an era when rock bands like Fleetwood

Mac and Led Zeppelin filled stadiums, CBGB shows revitalised the music scene with their rawness and creativity.

A PILGRIMAGE SITE FOR FANS

In the 1980s, CBGB became a temple for hardcore punk, and in the 1990s it hosted shows by bands like Green Day and the Beastie Boys. After being open for thirty-three years, seven nights a week, the club closed in 2006, and was only reopened to host a number of festivals. Nowadays it is a menswear shop that also sells vinyls: a testament to just how much the times have changed in the last fifty years.

Glossary

- **hairdos** = acconciature
- **Gourmandizers** = buongustai, intenditori
- **Cramps** = crampi
- **rough** = dura
- **grimy** = sporco
- **testament** = testimonianza
- **venue** = locale
- **damp** = umido
- **cover bands** = gruppi che fanno cover
- **Uplifting** = ispirati
- **over-the-top** = esuberanti
- **hence** = da qui, perciò
- **gigs** = concerti
- **fancy** = elegante, sofisticato
- **rawness** = crudezza, freschezza