

= End of the Century =

End of the Century is the fifth studio album by the American punk rock band the Ramones , released on February 4 , 1980 , through Sire Records . The album was the band 's first produced by Phil Spector , though he had offered the band his assistance earlier in their career . With Spector fully producing the album , it was the first release that excluded original member Tommy Ramone , who in 1978 left the band but produced their previous album Road to Ruin . Spector used more advanced standards of engineering , such as high @-@ quality overdubbing and echo chambers . These methods caused conflict between the band and Spector , since much of the recording used techniques that opposed those the Ramones had previously used . Spector emphasized the production value as well , working with a budget of around \$ 200 @, @ 000 .

The songs on End of the Century were written primarily to expand the band 's fan @-@ base , straying from the band 's original punk genre and steering toward a more pop oriented sound . The lyrics on the album deal with various different things , ranging from drug addictions to the band 's lifestyle while touring . The album also features a cover of The Ronettes ' piece " Baby , I Love You , " as well as successors to previous Ramones songs " Judy Is a Punk " and " Havana Affair . "

It received generally positive reviews from critics , though many reviewers deemed it to be less enjoyable compared to the band 's previous releases . Despite this , the album is the highest charting Ramones album of all time , reaching number 44 on the US Billboard 200 chart , and number 14 on the UK Albums Chart . End of the Century spawned the singles " Baby , I Love You " and " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio ? . "

The album 's title is taken from a couplet repeated in the first track " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio ? " : " It 's the end , the end of the seventies / It 's the end , the end of the century . "

= = Recording and production = =

In February 1977 after attending a Ramones concert in Los Angeles , music producer Phil Spector offered to assist in making Rocket to Russia . The band declined his offer , feeling as though the album would not be the same without Tommy Ramone and Tony Bongiovi producing the album . While the band refused his initial offer , they later asked Spector to help with the album because of their lack of popularity and sales . End of the Century would be the first album released without former drummer and producer Tommy . Spector had become famous through his work with The Ronettes , The Righteous Brothers , Ike and Tina Turner , The Beatles and John Lennon , among others . With these releases , Spector defined what would become known as the " Wall of Sound , " which is dense , layered , and reverberant sound that came across well on AM radio and jukeboxes . These standards are created through instruments performing identical parts in unison , using high @-@ quality overdubbing and echo chambers to aid in the production value . The producer was convinced that the Ramones had talent with lyrics and musical structure , so he intended to promote the band through more advanced methods of sound output .

Recording sessions for the album began on May 1 , 1979 at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood , Los Angeles . Gold Star Studios had become famous through its history with artists like Eddie Cochran and the Beach Boys . At the Ramones ' request , Ed Stasium helped with the album 's engineering . During the studio work , Spector 's recording methods were different from those the Ramones were accustomed to from their four previous studio albums . The band recorded their earlier compositions in the shortest time possible for the lowest feasible budget , with a relatively low production value . With End of the Century , the band experienced Spector 's infamous perfectionism , and a budget of \$ 200 @, @ 000 to fully record and produce the album . This is significant because the band 's debut album cost \$ 6 @, @ 400 total , and their second album cost \$ 10 @, @ 000 . End of the Century is the most expensive album in the Ramones ' career .

= = = Conflict = = =

This alternative method of recording caused conflicts to arise during sessions . Bassist Dee Dee

Ramone wrote of Spector 's obsessive recording techniques : " Phil would sit in the control room and would listen through the headphones to Marky hit one note on the drum , hour after hour , after hour , after hour . " During the recording of " Rock ' n ' Roll High School , " Johnny was forced by Spector to repeat his part hundreds of times over the course of several hours . Sire Records owner Seymour Stein relates : " To Johnny , this must have been like the Chinese water torture . "

Early in the sessions , Spector reportedly held the Ramones hostage at gunpoint . According to Dee Dee , when Spector took Joey away for a three @-@ hour private meeting somewhere in his mansion where the album was to be recorded , Dee Dee went looking for them . " The next thing I knew Phil appeared at the top of the staircase , shouting and waving a pistol . "

He leveled his gun at my heart and then motioned for me and the rest of the band to get back in the piano room ... He only holstered his pistol when he felt secure that his bodyguards could take over . Then he sat down at his black concert piano and made us listen to him play and sing " Baby , I Love You " until well after 4 : 30 in the morning .

However , in 2008 drummer Marky Ramone stated that no guns were ever pointed at anybody " There were no guns pointed at anybody , " he said . " They [guns] were there but he had a license to carry . He never held us hostage . We could have left at any time "

Dee Dee claimed to have left the sessions without recording anything . " We had been working for at least fourteen or fifteen hours a day for thirteen days straight and we still hadn 't recorded one note of music , " he wrote in his autobiography . After supposedly hearing that Johnny had returned to New York , Dee Dee wrote that he and drummer Marky Ramone booked a flight and returned home as well . " To this day , I still have no idea how they made the album End of the Century , or who actually played bass on it . " Dee Dee 's account contradicts much of the band 's collective account from the 1982 Trouser Press interview , where the band stated that the only track that Johnny , Dee Dee and Marky did not play on was the cover version of " Baby , I Love You , " as the band , save for Joey , had gone home after cutting basic tracks for the rest of the album .

= = Compositions = =

End of the Century was described by the band as an album written solely to gain popularity , resulting in more of a pop punk sound . Joey failed to contribute to the best of his abilities on the album , and recalled : " I think that some of the worst crap I ever wrote went on the album . That was me at my worst . " Johnny also felt that the album was far from the band 's prime .

" End of the Century was just watered @-@ down Ramones . It 's not real Ramones . ' Baby , I Love You ' ? I didn 't play on that at all . What am I gonna do ? play along with an orchestra ? There 's no point . End of the Century was trying to get a hit on each song , instead of trying to get a hit on one or two of the songs on the album and trying to make the rest as raunchy as you can . They ain 't gonna play the other ten songs , anyway . "

The album opens with " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio ? , " a throwback to the rock music of the 1950s to late 1960s . The lyrics name several famous musicians of this era , including Jerry Lee Lewis , John Lennon , and T. Rex , and also cite The Ed Sullivan Show . Many instruments that were previously rarely ? if ever ? used in punk rock were featured in the song 's score , including the saxophone and electric organ . The lyrics , written by Dee Dee , depict his childhood in Germany where he would secretly listen to rock radio stations at night .

Johnny 's part is not heard on the next track , " I 'm Affected , " as reported by Johnny himself . Joey admitted that he did not favor the song , recalling : " I couldn 't believe how awful it sounded . It was horrible . " " Danny Says , " the third track , was a lyrical depiction of what the band constantly went through while touring--soundchecks , autograph sessions , interviews , etc . The title " Danny Says " refers to the band 's tour manager Danny Fields giving the members instructions , schedules , and demands . According to Joey , the ballad was inspired by Lou Reed , who had released the songs " Candy Says " and " Caroline Says . " Joey 's brother Mickey Leigh called the song a " masterpiece " and said it " remains one of the most captivatingly beautiful songs I 've ever heard . "

Dee Dee wrote the next piece , " Chinese Rock , " in 1976 , and Johnny Thunders later revised it . Dee Dee wrote the piece in response to Lou Reed 's " Heroin , " and attempted to concoct better

lyrics on the same subject of drug use and heroin addiction . After Johnny vetoed the song , it was recorded by Thunder 's band The Heartbreakers before the Ramones , though the bands use slightly different words . The lyrics deal with the daily life of a heroin addict , and the term " Chinese Rock " is a euphemism for the drug . " The Return of Jackie and Judy " is a continuation to one of the band 's earlier songs , " Judy is a Punk , " which was released on their debut album Ramones . There were numerous studio guests involved in the song 's recording , including Spector 's bodyguard , Dan and David Kessel (sons of jazz guitarist Barney Kessel) , and California disc jockey Rodney Bingenheimer .

Side B begins with " Baby , I Love You . " Johnny constantly claims in his book Commando that he hated the song and the band didn 't even play on it , only Joey and some studio musicians . Joey exclaimed that he " hated " the song , despite it obtaining a level of popularity in Europe . The song is a cover version of the original by The Ronettes , and contained a string section arrangement that Leigh deemed " gooey " and that it " sounded right out of Redbone 's ' Come and Get Your Love . ' " He also confessed that the song " almost made [him] embarrassed . " " Rock ' n ' Roll High School " originally appeared on the soundtrack to Rock ' n ' Roll High School , a film directed by Allan Arkush . The movie depicts a story line in which the Ramones are obsessed over by female high school student Riff Randell along with other pupils attending the school . The album concludes with " High Risk Insurance , " which is a reaction to politics of that era .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical = = =

The album received generally positive reviews from critics , yet not as favorable for many of the band 's previous records . Stephen Thomas Erlewine , senior editor for AllMusic , noted that the Ramones desired mainstream success much more and were recording music in such a fashion as to expand their fan @-@ base . Another AllMusic editor , T. Donald Guarisco , noted that the " entire album is pretty controversial in the world of Ramones fandom . " Music critic Robert Christgau called the album " sad , " noting that his favorite songs were " I 'm Affected , " " Baby , I Love You , " and " Danny Says . " He also pointed out that Spector 's production failed to make much of a difference upon the band 's overall sound , saying " his guitar overdubs are worse than his orchestrations , and they 're not uncute . "

Kurt Loder , reviewing the album for Rolling Stone , called it " Phil Spector 's finest and most mature effort in years , " and said that his production created a " rich and vibrant and surging with power " setting . He noted that the Ramones are still " spotlighted , " rather than their producer . Author Richard Williams exclaimed that to " old fans the Ramones ' version of ' Baby , I Love You ' went too far , desecrating the memory of the original despite Joey 's evident devotion to the task of emulating Ronnie 's lead vocal . " Williams also said that " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio " and " Chinese Rock " maintained the principles of the Ramones ' in their earlier days .

= = = Commercial = = =

End of the Century is the Ramones ' highest peaking album on the US Billboard 200 , as well as their most successful on the UK Albums Chart and the Swedish chart Sverigetopplistan . The album became the first ? and only ? Ramones ' album to chart on Norway 's VG @-@ lista chart and New Zealand 's Recorded Music NZ . It was also the band 's first album to chart on the Netherlands ' MegaCharts , with their 1987 album Halfway to Sanity being their only other release to chart their as well .

Two singles were spawned from End of the Century : " Baby , I Love You " and " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio ? , " released respectively . The first single charted on Belgium 's Ultratop chart as well as the UK . " Do You Remember Rock ' n ' Roll Radio ? " which debuted at 54 on the UK Singles Chart .

= = Charts = =

= = = Weekly = = =

= = = Year @-@ end = = =

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Ramones , except where indicated .

= = Personnel = =

Ramones

Joey Ramone ? lead vocals

Johnny Ramone ? guitar

Dee Dee Ramone ? bass , backing vocals

Marky Ramone ? drums

Additional musicians

Dan Kessel - guitar

David Kessel - guitar

Barry Goldberg - piano , organ

Steve Douglas - saxophone

Jim Keltner - drums

Production

Phil Spector - producer

Ed Stasium - musical director

Larry Levine - engineer

Boris Menart - engineer