

= Road to Ruin ( Ramones album ) =

Road to Ruin is the fourth studio album by the American punk rock band the Ramones , released on September 21 , 1978 , through Sire Records . It was the first Ramones album to feature new drummer Marky Ramone , who replaced founding member Tommy Ramone . Tommy left due to lack of album sales and stress while touring ; however , he stayed with the band to produce the album with Ed Stasium . The artwork 's concept was designed by Ramones fan Gus MacDonald , and later modified by John Holmstrom to include Marky instead of Tommy .

The songs on Road to Ruin were considered by both fans and critics as an attempt to get the band more airplay . The album incorporated musical elements which were unheard of in punk rock , such as guitar solos and ballads . The difference in style caused for mixed reviews by critics , with many pointing out that the band was trying to sell more records through a change in form . This attempt by the band failed , as Road to Ruin debuted at 103 on the Billboard 200 , nearly 50 places behind its predecessor Rocket to Russia .

= = Conception = =

After the band 's previous album Rocket to Russia saw poor album sales , drummer Tommy Ramone left his performing position to focus primarily on producing for the band . After Tommy suggested they search for a new drummer , they began looking in New York City based clubs . While at CBGB , Ramones bassist Dee Dee Ramone approached Marc Bell ( Marky Ramone ) ? who had previously been the drummer in Richard Hell and the Voidoids ? asking him if he was interested in joining the Ramones . A month after this confrontation , Bell was invited by Danny Fields and Monte Melnick to audition for the band . Around twenty others auditioned to be drummer , with Tommy overseeing the final choice . Bell played " I Don 't Care " and " Sheena Is a Punk Rocker " and each member agreed to allow him into the band .

Three weeks after Marky joined the band , the Ramones began recording Road to Ruin in Midtown Manhattan at Media Sound Studios , a premises of a former Episcopalian Church . Album engineer Ed Stasium explained the recording process : " After Tommy left the band , we went straight into working on the Road to Ruin album with Marky . We rehearsed a long time with Marky , just getting it down . Then we went into the studio , recorded , and mixed the record at Media Sound . We spent a lot of money , and the entire summer , on Road to Ruin . " Music critic John Young of Rolling Stone called the album 's production " clean and simple , " but pointed out that the track " Bad Brain " contained " funny noises " in between drum beats , which prevents the song from having the humorous asperity that was intended .

The artwork 's concept was originated by Ramones fan Gus MacDonald , who illustrated the members performing with a lobster claw coming out of an amplifier and a snake around their feet . Following the drawing 's completion , MacDonald sent it to the band and they decided to make it their Road to Ruin album cover . This sketch did , however , include original drummer Tommy , so the drawing had to be modified to depict Marky instead . This alteration was undergone by artist John Holmstrom , a Punk magazine associate and designer .

= = Lyrics and compositions = =

The album introduced many characteristics which were previously unheard of in punk rock , such as guitar solos , acoustic rhythm guitars , and ballads . These attributes were debated on by the band 's fans as well as critics , who questioned whether these changes were to expand their musical fashion or the band was simply selling out and abandoning their punk rock edge . Though " Bad Brain , " " I Wanted Everything , " and " I 'm Against It " each serve as basic punk songs to intensify the behavior of the audience , the most popular tracks on the album are the pieces which part from their initial style .

" Road to Ruin reflected not just the Ramone 's enduring love for Sixties pop , but a nagging desire to expand beyond the confines of 120 seconds in search of a new vocabulary of harmonic hooks ,

albeit linked to the guitar @-@ crunching sonics established on their first three albums . "

The album opens with the midtempo piece " I Just Want to Have Something to Do , " which contains lyrics pertaining to ambivalence and anomie . In the song , Joey manages to rhyme " Second Avenue " with " chicken vindaloo . " The next track , " I Wanted Everything , " is compared to Merle Haggard 's song " If We Make It Through December , " being called its " punk counterpart " by Rock : A Canadian Perspective author Larry Starr . " Questioningly " is a ballad focusing on failing relationships and heartbreak . " Don 't Come Close " uses elements which can also be heard in country music , such as twang .

" She 's the One " suggests that the band will continue making records , while " Needles and Pins " is a cover of the The Searchers ' song " Needles and Pins . " Rolling Stone critic Charles Young noted that the song could have easily been a joke , but was not since Joey " really puts his guts into these antiquated but beautiful lyrics and pulls it off . " " I Wanna Be Sedated " was written by Joey while in the hospital where he was treated for burns on his face and in his throat . The injury was the result of an exploding kettle full of boiling water which served to treat sinuses . The album concludes with " It 's a Long Way Back , " which was written by Dee Dee and depicts his childhood in Germany .

= = Reception = =

With the band 's slight change in musical style , material included on the album was intended to gain a sense of mainstream acceptance , though the band members felt as though this was not achieved . Tommy relates : " Road to Ruin was a flop Stateside , even though it had been a very deliberate attempt to secure American radioplay . " The album 's lack of commercial success showed for a negative impact on the member 's morale , and this exasperation would continue into the band 's future records and tours . On the US Billboard 200 , Road to Ruin peaked at number 103 , while on the UK Albums Chart it reached 32 . The album also debuted at 25 on the Swedish Sverigetopplistan chart . The drive to sell more albums in the United States failed , which is evident when comparing the charting positions to Road to Ruin 's predecessor Rocket to Russia , which peaked at 49 on the Billboard 200 .

Initially , the album received mixed reviews from critics . Roy Trakin of the New York Rocker called the album " uneven " and " sometimes lazy , " and preferred Tommy 's drumming style over Marky 's , writing : " his light , distinctive , jazz @-@ influenced drumming is sorely missed on Road to Ruin as Marky is of the heads @-@ down basher school . " Rolling Stone critic Charles Young noted that the album is not as humorous or influential as their debut , but that the band is not at all " losing its grip . " He observes that the band modified their style because " dumb " people did not understand the music , while " smart " people did . Young also inquired that " I Wanna Be Sedated " was the album 's " killer cut , " comparing it to " Blitzkrieg Bop , " " Loudmouth , " and " Cretin Hop . "

Critical acclaim for the album did not fully transpire until many decades after its release . AllMusic senior editor Stephen Thomas Erlewine gave the album 4 @.@ 5 out 5 stars , saying the album fails to " yield the same results as the other records . " He examined that their music mostly repeated past formula and that since the band was still in its prime " such nondescript material sounds good , but the record has neither the exuberant energy or abundant hooks . " Music critic Robert Christgau wrote that the band was constantly " topping itself , " and implied that each track on the album was very listenable except " Bad Brain , " the theme of which he called " repetitious . "

= = Track listing = =

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

Notes

Tracks 13 @-@ 14 first issued on Hey Ho ! Let 's Go : The Anthology , Rhino # 75817 ( 7 / 20 / 99 )

Track 15 is from the original soundtrack album Rock ' n ' Roll High School , Sire # 6070 ( 4 / 79 ) .

Produced & Engineered by Ed Stasium . Remix Engineer : Joel Soifer

Track 16 is Previously unreleased . Outtake from Road to Ruin sessions . It appears later on the

1989 album , Brain Drain .

Track 17 was first issued on All the Stuff ( And More ! ) Volume 2 , Sire # 26618 ( 7 / 91 ) .  
Produced by Tommy Erdelyi , written by Joey Ramone . Recorded during demo sessions for Pleasant Dreams .

= = Personnel = =

The following personnel can be verified with AllMusic .