

A Brief History of *The [Real] Runaways*

From the Electronic Press Kit

- **Summer 1975:** 15-year-old Joan Jett is spending her free time at Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco in Hollywood getting turned on to glitter rock like David Bowie, Gary Glitter, and T. Rex. Around the same time, Sandy West, whose passions included surfing and drums, approaches Kim Fowley, another frequent fixture at Rodney's, about forming an all girl band.
- Kim brings Joan and Sandy together and agrees to help them find other girls to join the band. By August the band grows to four members with Micki Steele on bass and Lita Ford on lead guitar. Lita had originally auditioned for the bass player, but since the position was already filled, ends up as the band's lead guitarist. With Kim as their manager, the three-piece band decides on the name, *The Runaways*, and within a few weeks they play their first show at a local party.
- **Fall 1975:** *The Runaways* play their first public show at the famed Whisky-A-Go-Go in Hollywood.
- **November 1975:** Joan and Kim meet twin sisters Cherie and Marie Currie, not yet 16. Cherie auditions for the band with no song to sing. On the spot, Joan and Kim write "Cherry Bomb." Singing the newly written song, Cherie lands the job and becomes the lead singer. Shortly after, Micki Steele leaves the band and is replaced by Peggy Foster. By December, Peggy is replaced with Jackie Fox.
- **February 1976:** *The Runaways* sign to Mercury Records and soon enter the studio to record their debut LP, *The Runaways*. After their first album is released, the band embarks on their first U.S. tour. Highlights included the famous Agora Ballroom in Cleveland and CBGB's in NYC. The band then embarks on their first European tour. They returned to the U.S. and continue to tour. Highlights included the Royal Oak Theatre outside of Detroit with opening acts *Cheap Trick* and *Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers*.
- **1977:** *The Runaways* second album *Queens of Noise* is co-produced by Sparks' guitarist Earle Mankey. Upon wrapping recording, they hit the road for their second US tour. Meanwhile, *The Runaways* are exploding in Japan. "Cherry Bomb" hits #1 in Japan and Australia, and they become the fourth biggest selling act in Japan. The mass hysteria of the arrival of *The Runaways* in Japan, for their sold out tour, rivals the arrival of the *Beatles* in America. Jackie quits the band and flies home to the states. Joan picks up the bass for their biggest show to date, The Tokyo Music Festival. They release *Live in Japan*, which becomes one of the highest selling imports of the '70s.
- **Winter 1977:** After returning home, the band returns to the studio to work on their third album *Waitin' for the Night*. The band's lineup changes again, with Vicki Blue joining to replace Jackie Fox. Joan takes over lead singing duties replacing Cherie Currie, who leaves to pursue a solo career. *Waitin' for the Night* is the first release with Joan Jett on lead vocals. By the end of the year, the band parts ways with manager Kim Fowley.
- **1978:** *The Runaways* find new management and begin to record their fourth album. They head to the UK to begin work on *And now.... The Runaways*. Once again, they have to replace their bass player, after Vicki Blue falls ill. Laurie McAllister joins the band and *The Runaways* begin their final tour, ending with New Years Eve at the Cow Palace in San Francisco.
- **1979:** *The Runaways* decide to disband because of creative differences but not before leaving an indelible mark on rock and roll and paving the way for a number of all-girl groups to follow, including *The Go-Go's* and *The Bangles*.
- **1980 Addendum** [added by Jan]: Joan releases a new solo album, *Joan Jett*, produced by Kenny Laguna on the new Blackheart Records label. Joan and Kenny start a new group which begins recording and touring as *Joan Jett & the Blackhearts*.

Brief Bios for Prepared for *The Runaways* EPK

Text edit by Jan from John Koch's Online Electronic Press Kit

JOAN JETT: Joan Jett is a pioneer, revered songwriter and musician. Her influence is felt not only in the music world, but also in the fabric of society, penetrating pop culture with her music, her signature style, and her social activism.

Joan is not only known for her 6 platinum albums, 17 hit rock tracks, and 9 Billboard "Top 40" singles, but also because her unique style and persona has influenced countless musicians, artists, fashion designers, and authors.

Joan's legacy is not just topical; it is of social importance as well. When Joan co-founded *The Runaways* with drummer Sandy West, she made history and paved the way for all the women who came after her by pioneering a seminal all girl rock and roll band. She opened the door and inspired female musicians to pick up a guitar in the formerly male dominated landscape.

In keeping with her pioneering spirit, she became the first woman to start her own independent record company, Blackheart Records. The label continues to grow, giving emerging artists a chance to succeed.

Joan recently designed with Gibson, her signature Joan Jett Gibson Melody Maker. This is the first signature electric guitar created by a woman, and the Joan Jett Melody Maker is one of the hottest guitars on the market.

Joan's influence and music speaks to all corners of society and spans generations. She is an activist, a philanthropist and a timeless icon.

CHERIE CURRIE: Cherie Currie rocketed to international stardom as the teenage lead vocalist for the now legendary all-female rock band, *The Runaways*, alongside band mates Joan Jett, Lita Ford, Sandy West & Jackie Fox.

After three albums with The Runaways, ("The Runaways", "Queens of Noise", and "Live In Japan"), Cherie went on to record 2 solo albums ("Beauty's Only Skin Deep" for Polygram Records, & "Messin' With The Boys" with twin sister Marie Currie for Capitol Records), then as an actress, starred in numerous films including "Foxes" with Jodie Foster, "Parasite" with Demi Moore, "Wavelength" with Robert Carradine, "This is Spinal Tap", "Twilight Zone-The Movie", "Rosebud Beach Hotel", "Rich Girl" and others, as well as numerous guest spots on series television.

Cherie is the co-author of "Neon Angel: The Cherie Currie Story". Considered one of the best rock & roll biographies of all time, this treasure is scheduled for re-release and has been updated to include the years since its original release, also featuring additional stories from Cherie's days in The Runaways.

The multi-talented Cherie continues to act, record and perform around the world. Recently, she added the role of record producer to her impressive resume, and opened her own Chainsaw Art Gallery in Chatsworth, California. She is currently training to enter her first Chainsaw Art competition. Check out her online Chainsaw Art Gallery at ChainsawChick.com.

KIM FOWLEY: Over the course of his decades-long career Kim Fowley has been a true jack-of-all-trades; a singer, songwriter, producer, manager, a disc jockey, published poet and the catalyst behind much of the music to emerge from the Los Angeles area during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the mid-1960s, Fowley became immersed in the Los Angeles counterculture, befriending Frank Zappa and his band the Mothers of Invention and later appearing on their "Freak Out!" LP. A prolific songwriter, he also composed material for the Byrds, the Beach Boys, Soft Machine, Cat Stevens, and Them, and produced the likes of Gene Vincent, Warren Zevon, and Helen Reddy. In 1967 Fowley issued his own solo debut, "Love Is Alive and Well," a record that found him closely aligned with the flower power movement. A series of solo records followed, including "Born to Be Wild," "The Day the Earth Stood Still," and "International Heroes." After The Runaways splintered, Fowley launched another Runaways in the 1980s.