

# THE BUSINESS BOOKS

## GOING DEAF FOR A LIVING

Steve Lamacq  
(Omnibus)

8/10

Steve Lamacq's journey from humble fanzine writer to NME journalist and then prominent Radio One DJ is a fascinating one and will resonate with anyone who loves their music and bands. From his first gig, The Lurkers in Chelmsford, the scene is set and all he wanted to do after the gig was go to another one which has been pretty much the story of his life ever since. Lamacq's fanzine, A Pack of Lies, was always one of the brightest of the early eighties, the first issues covering much of the burgeoning UK82 punk scene with intelligence and wit. It was no surprise therefore that he would go on to write for the music press, very much maintaining a bastion of resistance for the likes of Mega City 4, Carter (USM) and the Senseless Things against a tide of writers always sniffing around for the latest craze and trends. In contrast, Lamacq was always looking outside the box and following his own path.

His encounter with the Manic Street Preachers, where Richey Edwards cut 4real into his arm in front of him, is covered in gory depth here as is his groundwork in supporting the bands who would go on to make up the Britpop movement and it was that groundwork, along with his passion and knowledge, which made him an ideal presenter of Radio One's Evening Session along with Jo Whiley. Always interesting and entertaining, *Going Deaf for a Living* is the story of a life very much not wasted listening to music.

Andy Peart

## DAYGLO: THE POLY STYRENE STORY

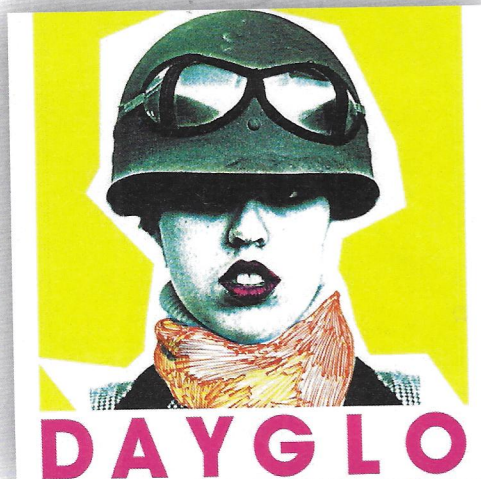
Celeste Bell and Zoe Howe

(Omnibus)

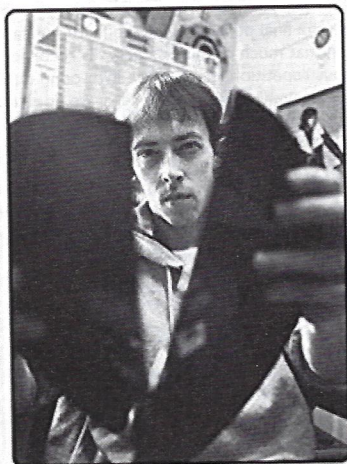
7/10

This biography of the late Marianne Joan Elliott-Said (aka Poly Styrene) - written by Poly's daughter Celeste Bell (with the music biographer Zoe Howe) - is a detailed examination of the late punk icon's life. I was fascinated to learn Poly recorded lovers rock before embracing punk and how she wrote songs like 'Germ Free Adolescents', 'I Am A Cliché' and 'Oh Bondage! Up Yours' that offer a witty expression of what it means to be young, female and revolted by our patriarchal, consumption-addicted society. Mental health problems plagued Poly and she left X-Ray Spex in 1979 for an often difficult adult life, dying of cancer in 2011 aged 53. Bell relies on her own memories, Poly's diaries and contributions from many who knew her so ensuring *DayGlo* documents how a highly intelligent and talented

teenager managed to catch lightning in a bottle. As X-Ray Spex existed for only three years the book's a quest (of sorts) for Bell to understand how a poor, brown girl made such an impact. Its also an opportunity for Bell to address her late mother: Poly's bi-polar condition made their relationship fraught. Beautifully illustrated with many photos and Poly's art work, *DayGlo* is a moving tribute to a true original. Garth Cartwright

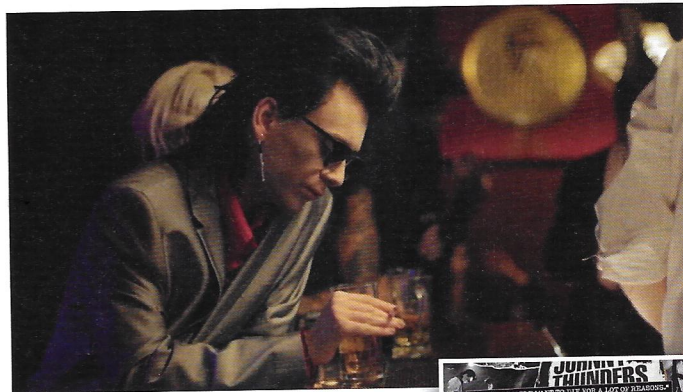


## STEVE LAMACQ



GOING DEAF FOR A LIVING

# DVDs



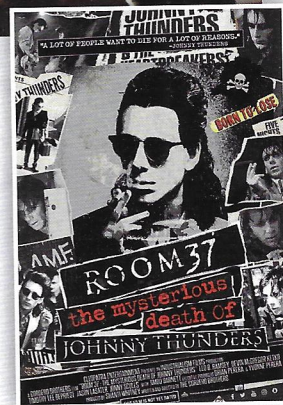
## ROOM 37: THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF JOHNNY THUNDERS

(Cleopatra)

6/10

This movie portrays New York Dolls' Johnny Thunders' trail of hardship leading to his untimely death. The wardrobe and hair of Leo Ramsey playing Thunders adds to the iconic look of the film which is attentively shot. It features an original soundtrack score alongside music from The Heartbreakers, Johnny Thunders, New York Dolls, Sylvain Sylvain and Walter Lure. Thunders arrives in New Orleans vowing to stay clean so he can see his children again. He stays at the St. Peter's Guest House Hotel and things begin to go wrong when someone robs his room and takes his methadone supply, leading him into a spirally search for heroine that sees he never checks out. The trail of horror and suspense highlights the mystery surrounding the star's final hours. It was found in the autopsy that the amount of drugs in his system was not enough to kill him. Also, he suffered from leukaemia, but did not seek treatment. 'Room 37: The Mysterious Death of Johnny Thunders' is far from a luxuriously hot film and there's moments of questionable acting but it's a fun ride.

Paula Frost



## THE 27 CLUB

(Cleopatra)

8/10

Why did Jim Morrison, Brian Jones, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and Kurt Cobain all die at age 27? A student dreaming to become a journalist joins forces with a singer-songwriter, both obsessed with discovering the truth behind the '27 Club' curse. In true horror film fashion, they quickly become enraptured in an underworld of evil spirits and séances, trying to reach their dead idols. Many of the rock stars like Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse are acted in the film through flashbacks, bringing colour to the dark tale where artists' souls are taken as payment for eternal fame. Psychedelic pioneer Todd Rundgren stars alongside Maddisyn Carter, John Hennigan, Eugene Henderson, Zach Paul Brown and Gogo Lomo-David. It's a unique horror movie for rock fans, to be taken with a pinch of salt. Certainly a unique perspective on the horror genre and on the musicians we know and love.

Tom Chance

