

The House of the Rising Punk ★★★

(1998) 60 min. DVD: \$18.95.
Music Video Distributors
(avail. from most distributors).



Many of America's finest punk bands launched their careers at New York's CBGB club. Made for German television in 1998, *The House of the Rising Punk* features leading lights of the 1970s punk scene, who explain how both the club and the groups got their start. Interviewees include CBGB's founder Hilly Kristal, journalist Legs McNeil, club manager Danny Fields, photographer Roberta Bayley, and musicians Dee Dee Ramone, Jayne County, Suicide's Alan Vega, Patti Smith and co-band member Lenny

Kaye, and Richard Hell and Tom Verlaine, who co-founded Television before Hell left to form the Heartbreakers and the Voidoids. Helmer Christoph Dreher cuts between interviews and performances, with most of the 16mm material shot by filmmaker Amos Poe. In order to widen his perspective, Dreher adds proto-punk from the Stooges and the New York Dolls, British punk from the Sex Pistols (who took their cues from the New York scene), and comments from Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore, as well as directors Poe and Jim Jarmusch (along with clips from their early films, such as *The Foreigner* and *Permanent Vacation*). Although Blondie and Talking Heads aren't part of the interview process, both bands are still featured. Songs include such punk and new wave classics as Television's "Marquee Moon," Richard Hell and the Voidoids' "Blank Generation," and Blondie's "Hangin' on the Telephone." While *The House of the Rising Punk* covers some of the same territory as Don Letts' excellent documentary *Punk: Attitude*, it's still a fine standalone addition to the ongoing oral history of punk. Long may it rage. Recommended. Aud: P. (K. Fennessy)

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