

From 1979 until 1995 Patti took time away from the stage that she loves. She moved to Detroit, married Fred 'Sonic' Smith and raised two children. She was eventually drawn back to performing but becoming a mother had an enormous effect on her as an artist and in general.

"Being a mother has had a great impact on me as a human being. It has magnified my empathy for my fellow man. I could not have written a song like "People Have the Power" without understanding the beauty and importance of our common humanity. As a mother I have a deeper understanding of the potential suffering of parents struggling to feed, teach and protect their children. These feelings drew me to respond to the immoral strike on Iraq, through the eyes of a mother, in the song "Radio Bagdad". They drew me to write of famine in the song "Somalia" and the killing of civilian children in the song "Qana". Being a mother one becomes mother of all children, and thus with the responsibility to respond, as an artist, to crimes against them."

These words hint at Patti's passion for the rights of others and she has become well-known for her activism through her music and beyond. The music scene of her early days in New York City, in the protest era of the 1960s, provided musicians with a real sense of communal activism and throughout Patti's career she has continually challenged to her mind questionable government policy and addressed important social issues in her songs. Does she see artists as having a role to play in political issues? She won't tell others what they should do but she does say, "I think that an artist has the right and the duty to be honest to the people and to always express himself or herself freely on political matters".

And what of the next generation? Is she concerned that the era of protest is gone and that it's only the

voices of her generation who are crying out for change? "Not at all" is Patti's answer. "I just think that the new generations have a different way of expressing their ideas, their protests and their right to be part of social and political life. The Internet is their CBGB. Their territory is global. The new guard will dictate how they want to create and disseminate their work. They will, in time, make breathless changes in our political process."

This does not mean however, that Patti is entirely optimistic about the future of our planet. In fact she constantly worries about it.

"The human race is betraying Mother Earth and this is very dangerous for our future. If we don't stop our wasteful and neglectful ways and most of all if governments don't assume their responsibilities then I don't know what sort of future will be ours. Everyone everywhere should be pressing their governments to act more effectively to manage our environment. I can't see a positive future without a real respect for nature and our fellow human kind."

So the time for action through music is not over, for Patti or future artists. But what does the future hold for this rock and roll legend. If life is an adventure of our design, what is the next adventure for Patti Smith?

"For me just being alive is an adventure. As far as my work, I look forward to recording a new record that will include songs written with my band, my son and daughter, and friends such as Flea and Sam Shepard. I am finishing a book about my early years with Robert Mapplethorpe, as well as my first detective novel. There is something new and inspiring every day. From the clouds to new books, new scenery, new noise, new reasons to celebrate life."

PATTI SMITH

Born in Chicago and raised in South Jersey, Patti Smith gravitated toward the arts and human rights issues from an early age. She moved to New York City in 1967 and teamed up with then-art student Robert Mapplethorpe. While they each pursued drawing and painting, Patti also began writing poetry. In 1971 she performed her first public reading accompanied by Lenny Kaye on guitar. She also co-wrote and performed the play *Cowboy Mouth* with playwright Sam Shepard.

Continuing to write and perform her poetry, in 1974 Smith and Lenny Kaye added Richard Sohl on piano. As a trio they played regularly around New York and helped to open up a restricted music scene. The group recruited guitarist Ivan Kral and drummer Jay Dee Daugherty and together recorded four albums – *Horses*, *Radio Ethiopia*, *Easter* and *Wave*.

In 1979 Patti retired from the public eye, moved to Detroit and married Fred 'Sonic' Smith. In 1988 they recorded *Dream of Life*, which included the classic anthem "People Have the Power". This album also marked her final collaboration with three of her closest companions, who all met with untimely deaths: Robert Mapplethorpe, who photographed her for the cover; Richard Sohl, who provided all of the keyboards; and her husband, who composed the music.

In 1995 Patti returned to the stage touring her album *Gone Again*, a highly acclaimed meditation on passage and mortality. By 1997 she had formed a new band with Lenny Kaye, Jay Dee Daugherty, Oliver Ray and Tony Shanahan and they recorded *Peace and Noise* and *Gung Ho*, both of which include Grammy Award-nominated songs. In 2004, Patti recorded *Trampin*, and in 2007 *Twelve* was released. In that same year Patti was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. This year Patti and My Bloody Valentine's Kevin Shields released a recording of their live performance of *The Coral Sea*, Patti's homage to her friend and photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

Patti is the author of *Witt*, *Babel*, *Wool Gathering*, *The Coral Sea*, and *Complete*, a catalogue of lyrics, photographs, illustrations, original artwork and reflections. A volume of poetry, *Auguries of Innocence*, was published in 2005. Patti Smith's drawings have been exhibited at the Robert Miller Gallery in New York, the Museum Eki in Kyoto, the Pompidou Center in Paris, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York and earlier this year the Fondation Cartier in Paris hosted a major solo exhibition of Patti's visual work drawn from pieces created between 1967 and 2007.

Aside from her recording, performing, art and writing, Patti is strongly involved in social issues; among them she is a supporter of the anti-war movement and also participates in various human rights organisations.

PATTI SMITH AND HER BAND ROCK 'N' RIMBAUD

the Arts Centre, Hamer Hall

Sat 11 and Sun 12 Oct at 9pm
1hr 30min no interval

Supported by



Patti Smith Vocals
Lenny Kaye Guitar
Jackson Smith Guitar
Tony Shanahan Bass, Keyboards
Jay Dee Daugherty Drums

www.pattismith.net

Principal Public Partner



Public Partners



www.melbournefestival.com.au



PATTI SMITH & PHILIP GLASS DEDICATION TO ALLEN GINSBERG

Friends come together for a rare and intimate evening of piano and poetry inspired by their reverence for the work of seminal beat poet Allen Ginsberg.

the Arts Centre, Playhouse
Mon 13 Oct at 8pm

Photo Akin Falope



PATTI SMITH: DREAM OF LIFE A FILM BY STEVEN SEBRING

A cinematic plunge into the creative spirit of Patti Smith, a breathing collage of her philosophy and artistry shot over a remarkable 11-year period by renowned fashion photographer Steven Sebring.

Australian Centre for the Moving Image, ACMI Cinema 2
Thu 9 Oct at 8pm
Fri 10 Oct at 8pm (followed by post show Q&A
Sat 11 and Sun 12 Oct at 4pm

Supported by



Still by Steven Sebring



STEVEN SEBRING & PATTI SMITH: OBJECTS OF LIFE

A fascinating exhibition of photographs and objects inspired by Steven Sebring's time with Patti Smith during the filming of their extraordinary documentary *Dream of Life*.

Centre for Contemporary Photography
404 George St, Fitzroy
Fri 12 Sep – Sat 25 Oct
Wed – Sat 11am – 6pm

Supported by



Photo Steven Sebring



PATTI SMITH: PHOTOGRAPHY & INSTALLATION

This is an exhibition of Patti Smith's work in three parts: *Land250* is a rare collection of her evocative photographic work; *Melbourneland* is a place-specific project by Patti, made especially for Melbourne; and *The Coral Sea* is an installation piece which includes video works alongside photographs by her longtime collaborator and friend, Robert Mapplethorpe.

Anna Schwartz Gallery
185 Flinders Lane
Thu 9 – Sat 25 Oct
Tue – Fri 12noon – 6pm
Sat 1pm – 5pm

Photo *The River Ouse* by Patti Smith

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATTI SMITH

“Life is an adventure of our design intercepted by fate and a series of lucky and unlucky accidents.”

This quote from legendary American artist Patti Smith opens the Steven Sebring film *Dream of Life*, which screens as part of the 2008 Melbourne International Arts Festival. This award-winning documentary was shot over 11 years and provides unprecedented personal access and insight into the life and work of Patti Smith, poet, visual artist, rock and roll musician and activist. It's hard to know where to begin in writing about a woman that has had such an impact on the international arts scene for four decades. This year's Festival program attempts to showcase Patti's many talents with the presentation of these live gigs, an exhibition of photography, an installation created especially for the Festival and an evening of poetry dedicated to Allen Ginsberg, as well as the screening of *Dream of Life* and the presentation of its accompanying exhibition. These events merely skim the surface of providing an overview of Patti's immense body of work, but they certainly give an indication of the breadth of her artistic talent. So how does Patti see herself? Given her illustrious career in music, poetry, photography and art, is she able to say she has a first artistic love?

“I have always been attracted to any form of art, but I would have to say music has certainly been the most important for me. While poetry and photography are no less fulfilling in my artistic life, it is music and performing live that are my greatest loves.”

Although she first took to the stage as a poet, reading aloud from her work to the accompaniment of Lenny Kaye on guitar, to many it is music for which Patti is best known. And it's no wonder. With more than 15 records spanning 30 years to her name and a recent induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, she is a rock icon.

From the first time she heard the sounds of Little Richard's "Tutti Frutti" as a young girl on her way to Sunday School in 1955, rock and roll has



always drawn Patti to it. Not that she ever dreamed rock and roll would become her life.

“When I was a teenager I dreamed of being an opera singer like Maria Callas, or a jazz singer like June Christie, or approaching songs with the kind of mystical lethargy of Billie Holliday. But I never dreamed of singing in a rock'n'roll band. This idea, it just didn't exist in my world.”

Live performance is something very close to Patti's heart. As she explains it: “Performing live has always been very important for me. Many of the most exciting moments of my artistic life have been concerts – like the concert in Florence in '79 or the last concert at the CBGB Club in New York. I especially love performing with my band. I have been with these guys for so long, we've been through so much together, but I still can't imagine anything better than stepping out on stage and having a great time with them.”