A Short Exhibition About Music Zines

This exhibition has been co-curated by LCC Library and Nick’s widow Jen Kavanagh, who generously donated a complete run of ASFAR to the zine collection in Nick’s memory. We are immensely grateful to Jen for her donation, which ensures ASFAR can be accessed by UAL students, staff and the public, and for all her work on the exhibition.

The exhibition soundtrack can also be heard at Mixcloud: http://bit.ly/2u0R5Wd

A Short History of Music Zines

Zines are hand-made, DIY, non-profit publications, free from the controls of traditional publishing. Initially coming out of the 1970s UK punk scene, over the past five decades zines have been vital in providing individuals and subcultural communities a means to express their ideas as an alternative to the mainstream.

The original UK fanzines were music-based, often with a political edge. The movement began with Mark Perry’s Sniffin’ Glue fanzine in July 1976, which was central to encapsulating the punk ethic of DIY. To form a band you only needed three chords; to make a zine you only needed a photocopier, scissors, glue and something to say. Zines were cheaply printed and distributed: given out at gigs; in pubs; through the post; on the street.

In the 1980s, the fanzine movement expanded to other types of music, spanning genres through post-punk, hardcore punk, anarcho-punk, ska, mod, new wave, and indie pop. The Riot Grrrl movement in the late 1980s used zines to bring women and feminist perspectives to the forefront of punk culture.

In a digital world, the zine community is still as active and vibrant as ever. Many of today’s zines are more personal in nature, but whether personal or political, in bypassing the mainstream zines empower individuals to express alternative voices. Zine-makers are often opinionated, unapologetic, unedited, and passionate. They provide us with an alternative history of music.
The LCC Zine Collection & Jen Kavanagh are co-curating

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Lower Gallery LCC