

LIMITED EDITION COLLECTOR'S PACK

BLONDIE



100% OFFICIAL
BLONDIE
MAG

featuring original members...
the Harry, Chris Stein & Clem Dunbar

Future
MEDIA WITH PASSION

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BLONDIE
MAGAZINE





Chris Berens

on

Panic of girls

artwork

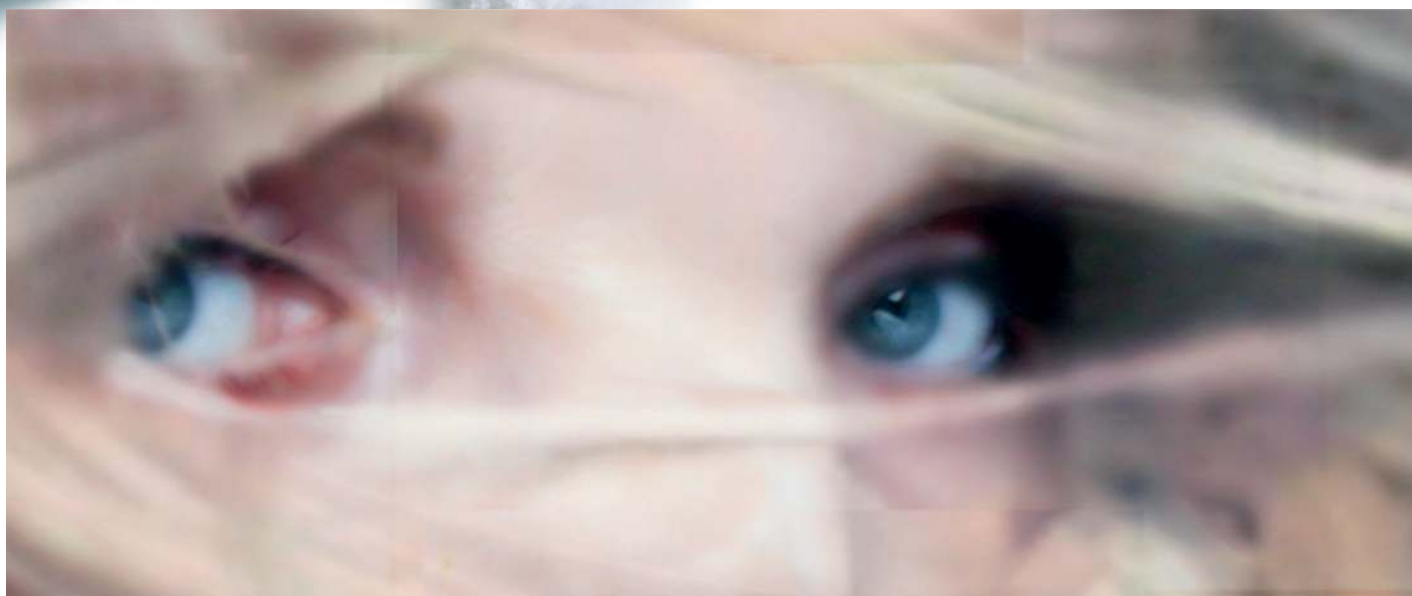


AS TOLD TO:
CHRIS ROBERTS

A **BOUT THREE YEARS AGO, CHRIS STEIN** discovered my work. He bought a painting, and an intensive correspondence started between us. Later, Debbie Harry joined in, and the three of us became friends. Over Christmas 2009, my wife Esther and I visited Debbie and Chris at Debbie's apartment in Manhattan. Blondie were in the midst of recording and mixing songs for their new album, and I was winding-down from the hectic business of my debut New York art show. They asked me to paint the cover of their upcoming album, the title of which at that time was still undecided. I was very excited about that and we talked about it for hours. We discussed music, our love for art and our art collections. We had a great time.

Later that day I flew back home to Amsterdam where, freshly inspired, I immediately started working on the cover. I was given carte blanche, but the three of us did maintain daily contact during the entire process. At the end of each day, I would send over my progressions and new ideas, and they'd respond by giving their opinion on them, fantasizing about where they could lead, what it all could – but probably didn't – mean, and how this would all relate to their music. During the same period, Blondie went into the studio, recorded new material and sent that over, ►

Linger on your pale blue eyes: Debbie's peepers peek out.



By appointment to her majesty: Berens' Queen.



Foxy!: a pair of otherworldly cute creatures.



so every morning I'd find new songs, versions and mixes to listen to and be inspired by.

Near the end of the development of both the album and the cover, Paul Carbonara left the band. After thinking through different options, I slightly altered the cover, adding extra layers of immersion in the lower right corner of the painting, insinuating that something's "off" with the figure resembling Paul, referring to similar innuendoes in pop history.

On the final design, there's a lot to be seen. The main female figure resembles Debbie, though in the back and forth sessions between Debbie, Chris and myself, we preferred to call her Blondie. The five figures around her are the rest of the band. Everything else happened along the way, listening to Blondie songs – both old and new – for over a month while painting. It prompted a tidal wave of figures and ideas, all of which passed in review one way or another during the many conversations between us about art, life, and the general daily concerns of artists and musicians.

The seemingly hectic feel of the piece derives from those endless conversations and sometimes random thoughts. The fact that the piece feels like one massive icon is due to the fact that the whole was created with one overarching thought: of Blondie, reinforced by their songs – old and new, polished and rough – echoing in my Amsterdam studio for over



6 string mystic:
Berens' vision
of Chris Stein.



Tubthumper:
a dreamy
Clem Burke.



Berens' fantastical creations, the Pingwins.

a month.

This way of working at first seemed new and strange to me, but really it's quite similar to how I normally work. The only difference was that all the discussions – all the wandering around in a world-in-the-making and dreaming about what could happen around the corner – happened over e-mail and telephone, instead of in my own head, as would usually happen.

Besides the cover, another painting derived from our co-operation, a bleak portrait of a female figure resembling Debbie Harry, without any make-up, glamour, fuzz or frills. Chris Stein referred to it during the process as “the soul of Blondie”. I named the painting “Blonde In The Soul”.

Both designs will feature on the cover and booklet of the album, and on worldwide merchandise supporting the album. The uniform worn by the central figure on the front cover was an inspiration for Blondie and their costume designers for several creations Debbie wore on their Endangered Species tour. Also, a wig was made for Debbie to resemble my design.

The only thing both Blondie and I were aiming for when we started out was a clear and simple image. Although all parties are extremely happy with the end result, the cover as it now appears is everything *but* simple. It's the result of mutual enthusiasm, getting caught up in the momentum of creation and sheer fun. ♥

Biondia

pari (of Girls)