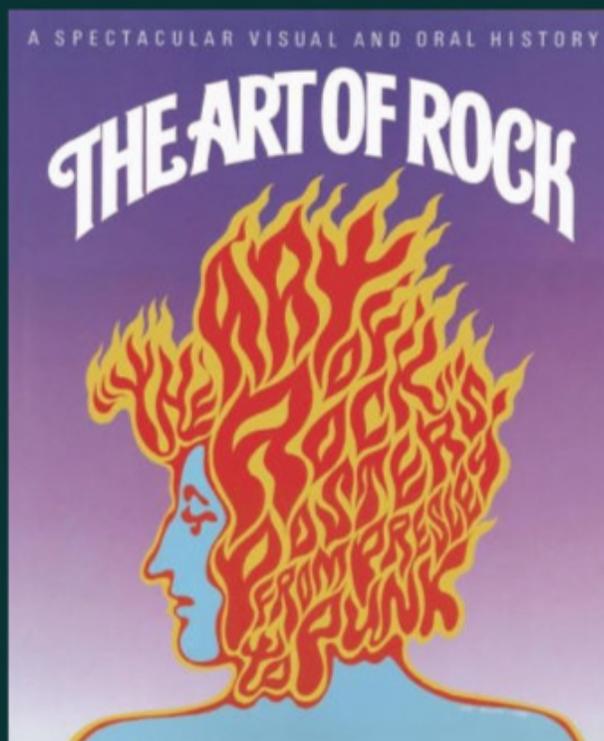


# AOR Review “The Art of Rock”



by Michael Erlewine

# “The Art of Rock” AOR (The Review)

by

Michael Erlewine

## INTRODUCTION

This is not intended to be a finely produced book, but rather a readable document for those who are interested in in this series on concert poster artists and graphic design. Some of these articles still need work.

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Here are some other links to more books, articles, and videos on these topics:

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## **The Art of Rock by Paul Grushkin**

A review by Michael Erlewine

Most fields have at least one indispensable book, something that every collector has to own. If there is an indispensable book for the concert-music-poster collector, than it has to be "The Art of Rock," by Paul Grushkin. The fact that there is no other book remotely similar makes this true by default. But even if there were many competitive books, I cannot imagine there being a better book, more information in a single volume about rock posters, their history and culture, and the whole collecting scene, in general. Period. This is the Muhammad Ali of poster books, the one and the only, so far.

Well-known author Paul Grushkin has some thirty years of experience working with posters, including a stint as archivist for Bill Graham Presents, and many years working with Winterland Productions. He was a founding director of the Bay Area Music Archives and the Museum of Rock and Roll in San Francisco.

From my viewpoint, Grushkin's approach is outstanding for two main reasons, the first is posters, posters, and more images of posters -- over 1500 in all. And second is his liberal use of the interview style, real-life quotes and articles from the actual people who made the history themselves. This makes the book so much more than just one author's viewpoint. The majority of the text is in the words of the individuals who created all this, the artist, promoters, printers, collectors -- just about anyone of importance

who was on the scene at the time. What there is of the author's commentary serves to knit all the interviews together, enhancing what is presented.

And the book is massive, a very much oversized volume (11 x 13 inches) of over 500 pages. It weighs a ton. The publishing of this book single-handedly transformed the world of rock posters and poster collecting. It shows clearly what great pieces of art rock posters are. Far more than just pieces of nostalgia, Grushkin's book points out that rock concert posters are not only important historical documents, but valuable and collectable pieces of art.

The book manages to cover everything from the boxing-style posters from the 1950s all the way up through the punk and new-wave posters of the late 1980s. Paul Gruskin and poster-guru Dennis King are working on a second volume "The New Art of Rock," due out perhaps as early as the Fall of 2003.

I have never met a serious collector who does not have a copy of this book close at hand. The bottom line is this is just one great book on posters. Check it out and see what I am talking about.

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