



Patti Smith: America's Punk Rock Rhapsodist

(Tempo: A Rowman & Littlefield Music Series on Rock, Pop, and Culture)

Eric Wendell

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Nicknamed the “Godmother of Punk,” Patti Smith rose to fame during the 1970s New York counterculture movement where she welcomed a new breed of rock and roll. Smith sanctioned the presence of a strong-willed woman in the mainstream rock community by breaking not only the fragile glass ceiling, but also the “rules” about women on the rock stage. Smith pushed right up to the front of the punk scene, stripping down sexual, religious, and emotional barriers to create a raw, viscerally personal message.

In *Patti Smith: America's Punk Rock Rhapsodist*, musician and historian Eric Wendell delves into the volatile mix of religious upbringing and musical and literary influences that gave shape to Smith’s lyrics, music, and artistic output. Wendell explores how Smith’s androgynous stage presence pulled the various societal triggers, adding a new layer of meaning to popular music performance. Songwriter and singer, performance artist and poet, Smith created work that drew together biography, history, and music into a powerful collage of an artist who shaped a generation of musicians.

For poets and performers, as well as fans of Patti Smith and punk rock history, *Patti Smith: America's Punk Rock Rhapsodist* is the perfect introduction to Smith’s achievements and the politics and art of a generation that is still felt.



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