



**NEW MUSIC**  
By Jim Gellatly

**GANGS**  
WHO: Steven Young (vocals/guitar), Steven McLaren (guitar), Marc MacCallum (bass/vocals), Stephen Forbes (drums).  
WHERE: Glasgow.

**FOR FANS OF:** Royal Blood, Catfish and The Bottlemen, The Black Keys.  
**JIM SAYS:** When I caught Gangs live for the first time, supporting Holy Esque at the Art School in Glasgow, I did think there was something familiar.

It turns out that Steven Young and Stephen Forbes used to be in the much-touted indie outfit The Imagineers.

They hit the headlines in 2012 when Scots chat show host Craig Ferguson invited them to appear on US network TV's The Late Late Show.

He did a week of the CBS show from Scotland, and installed The Imagineers as the house band. They even performed a cracking version of the show's theme tune.

Gangs are a very different proposition to the jangly indie of the Imagineers, as they go for more of an all-out rock sound.

I was confused when I saw them because I thought Steven's new band was Young And The Satellites. It turns out he plays with both.

He explained: "The Satellites is a project to vent my love of Bond soundtracks, Westerns, and spacey soundscapes. We've just recently finished recording an album which will be out later this year. With Gangs I wanted to try something with a different mood. It's exciting music to play live."

So far Gangs have released two singles, Knock The Door and Thieves. Both tracks clock in at under three minutes.



They are blasts of explosive indie rock and a great statement of intent.

Things look rather encouraging for the debut album. Steven said: "We're only a couple of tracks away from completing the album."

"We've only been together for under a year but the sound has definitely got more punky recently. There's elements of garage, rock and punk in there."

"At the moment we're listening to a lot of Slaves, Spring King, The Amazing Snakeheads, Iggy Pop and T Rex."

Gangs play Nice N Sleazy in Glasgow on Sunday as part of the Sauchiehall Lane Summer Party, Reclaim The Lane.

The free all-day also features bands and DJs in Broadcast and the Variety Bar. Other acts include The Ninth Wave, The Bar Dogs, Tongues and Stillhound. It sounds like the perfect warm-up for Tenement TV's Tenement Trail on October 3. Also happening at Sauchiehall Street, Gangs are one of over 50 acts booked.

A full tour for October is set to be announced, along with a third single ahead of the album.

Meanwhile, Gangs have their sights set further afield, with Belgian and Dutch trips planned later in the year.

**MORE:** facebook.com/wearegangs  
● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio on Sundays 2-4pm.  
amazingradio.com  
jimgellatly.com

Watch video of GANGS at: [thiscottishsun.co.uk](http://thiscottishsun.co.uk)

**From front cover**

the Ramones and supports her mission to keep their name alive since Johnny's death from prostate cancer in 2004.

"They changed music forever, made it completely different," she maintains.

"They took away from all the long, overdone guitar solos. Their music was short, simple and cool... and they looked so cool too. I love The Beatles but the Ramones were just the coolest band ever. Johnny looked amazing and, in later years, he'd admit, 'Wow, I was good-looking. I didn't think that back then.'"

Johnny, born John William Cummings in 1948, the only son of a construction worker, dreamed of being a baseball star with his beloved New York Yankees.

He was dogged by pent-up anger, the need for control and a quick temper, and thought a career in the Army might serve as an outlet for his emotions.

Linda says: "He put himself in military school. It wasn't as if his parents sent him there because he was bad. He wanted to go and he wanted to be a sergeant."

The idea of Johnny ferociously barking out orders resonates with his short sharp shock approach to music.

"But military school was too strict," continues Linda. "They wanted him to cut his hair. He said it was really hard having to get up early every morning, make your bed, clean your rifle. Too intense!"

"He quit just at the time he was getting into music. When he saw Elvis, he wanted to be a rock star."

As a teenager, Johnny played in a band called the Tangerine Puppets, worked with his dad as a plumber, even delivered laundry, all the time following his passion for new music which included punk forebears such as The Stooges and The MC5.

He hung out with future bandmates, like-minded souls, and by the summer of '74, the Ramones were up and running.

**'Johnny didn't expect to ever fall in love'**

"Johnny was leader of the band," says Linda. "I don't know if he would have liked it as much if he wasn't. He loved being in charge."

His first serious guitar was a blue secondhand Mosrite Ventures II for which he paid \$54 at Manny's Music, New York.

Now he had a chance to express himself and Linda provides a telling insight into her late husband: "Johnny felt his anger made him play his guitar that way. If he wasn't angry, if he was a fluff-ball, how could he have influenced so many guitar players the way he did?"

"I mean his stance alone! Nobody stands like Johnny and he looks crazy or angry, his eyes rolling and his hair flowing."

"The whole point of the Ramones is Johnny's sound. His guitar and that anger drove it. That's just how he was."

"When he was young, if someone said something to him he didn't like, he'd just punch you and lay you out on the floor."

"Later on, he would just give you this stare and people wouldn't even be able to speak."

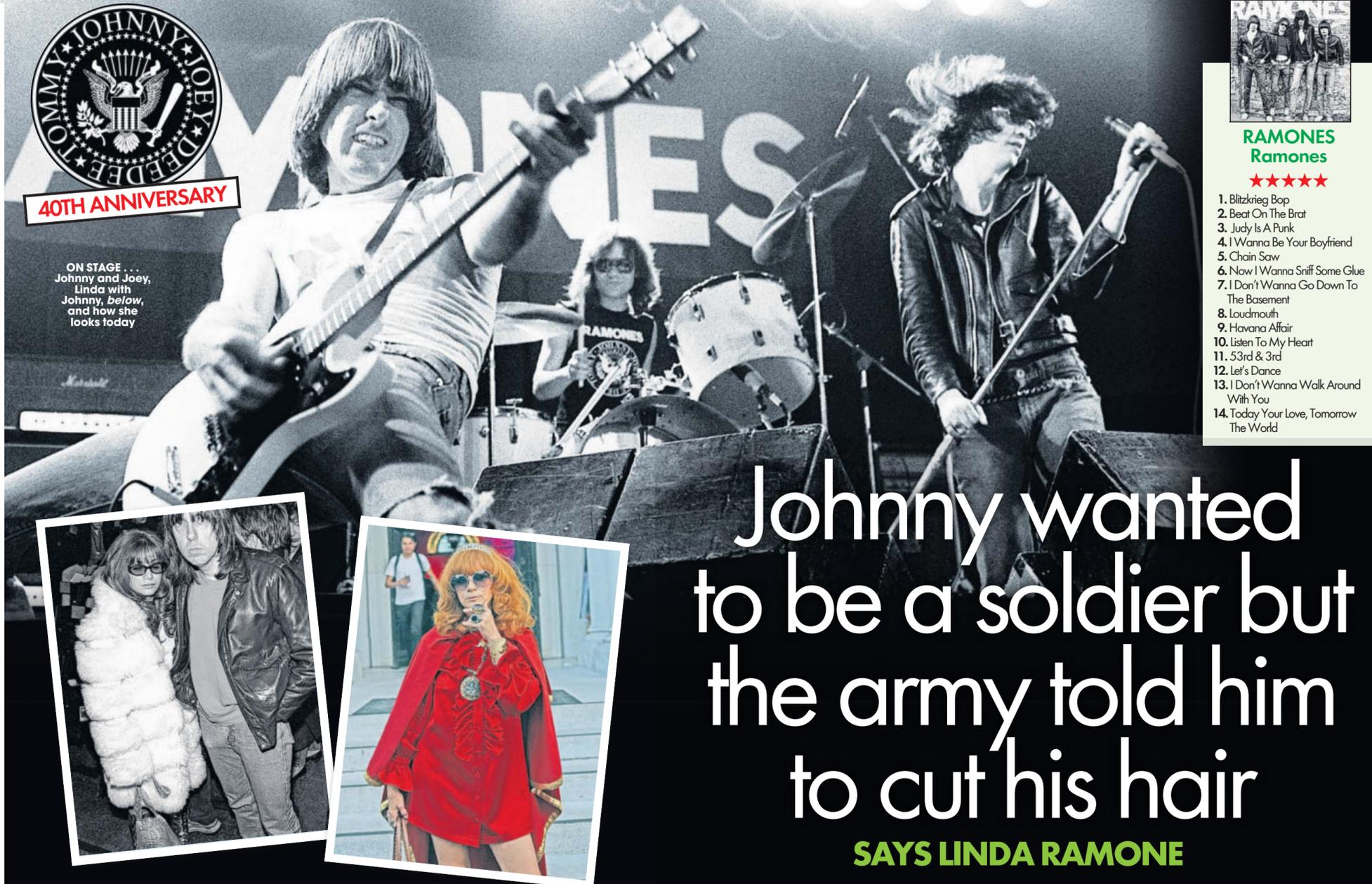
"I was never intimidated - go figure guess that's why I lasted. He mellowed out a little when we moved to LA and he retired."

Linda describes herself as a "music freak" and remembers first seeing the Ramones very early on at Manhattan's legendary scenester club CBGB.

"There was probably only 20 to 25 people there and the audience used to hang out with the bands. At the beginning, it was the Ramones, Television, Blondie, Johnny Thunders' Heartbreakers and Talking Heads."

"I leaned towards the Ramones immediately. I also liked Blondie because Debbie was always so beautiful."

Her relationships with two Ramones, extrovert guitarist Johnny and shy singer Joey, has been described



**40TH ANNIVERSARY**

**ON STAGE ...**  
Johnny and Joey,  
Linda with  
Johnny, below,  
and how she  
looks today

# Johnny wanted to be a soldier but the army told him to cut his hair

**SAYS LINDA RAMONE**

as one of rock's great love triangles, up there with George Harrison, Eric Clapton and Pattie Boyd.

Ending with one and starting up with another led to an irreparable rift between the bandmates. They continued to make studio albums and perform live but it's claimed that Joey revealed his animosity in the song The KKK (Ku Klux Klan) Stole My Baby Away for 1981's Pleasant Dreams album, which could be a dig at Johnny's right-wing politics.

Linda tries to set the record straight when she explains the entangled situation: "Well, what really happened is that Johnny fell in love with me, which was shocking because I don't think Johnny expected to fall in love with anybody."

"I don't think he ever was in love before. I'm not saying I was the only one in his life. I'm just saying he was kind of obsessed. So I had to leave Joey. At one point before

that happened, Joey said to Johnny, 'I don't want you to talk to Linda. And Johnny was like, 'She's my best friend, you're not telling me what to do.'"

"So it was either Joey and me stay together and Joey leave the band or I leave him."

"I'd been with Joey for three and a half years and I believed he wanted to try life without me."

"When I met him, he wasn't powerful in the band but by the time I left him, he had a voice and I think our parting was mutual."

Linda recalls bad feelings around the image created by the Ramones' "uniform".

She says: "They were definitely opposites. Joey was more sensitive and you had to watch everything you said to him."

"He was also very sensitive about the way he looked. He said he was 6ft4 but he was really 6ft6. Growing up, people hadn't been very kind to him. Joey's only real hobby was

music and that was our life together. Because I liked Slade and Sweet and Iggy, that was his first attraction to me."

Linda says Johnny had hobbies outside of music but they were consuming passions.

"He was a baseball fanatic, a genius with his knowledge and his number one hobby. Then came his horror movie collecting. He said hobbies kept him sane."

Politically, Johnny was a controversial character, staunchly supporting the Republicans while many rock stars, notably Bruce Springsteen and Cher, pinned their colours to the Democrat mast.

Linda says: "I guess people might be surprised but, while the band was together, Johnny didn't talk about politics."

"At the end, though, he was a Republican through and through and he didn't care if all our friends from Eddie Vedder (Pearl Jam) to Rob Zombie were Democrats. Johnny loved debating and read so many books."

"He also loved his retirement and planned his whole life around it. He would

always talk about saving enough money to retire so I don't have to get another job because I can't do anything else!"

"He was frugal and saved all our money. He was happiest when he retired because we finally got a house with a pool in LA and we were away from the demands of New York City."

Lastly, we return to the legacy of the Ramones, a band from a world away who seem just as relevant today.

Linda says the The Clash's late great frontman Joe Strummer had something to say on the matter.

"Joe Strummer, who was a very close friend of Johnny and me, and I still see his partner Lucinda all the time," she reveals.

"He said all the punk bands were

waiting for the Ramones to come over to the UK. He believed the Ramones influenced all punk - Joe Strummer's quote, not mine!"

And what's it like keeping the flame burning today?

"When Johnny was dying, he said, 'I'd rather have been able to keep my own legacy alive but, if I had to pick one person, it would be you because I know you'll do a great job.'"

"That's the most important thing. Johnny, who was never really into giving women any kind of job, gave me the most important one."

"So, for me, it's all about love for my husband and love for the Ramones."

"But if I didn't think the Ramones were one of the best bands in the world, I couldn't be this passionate about it."

"So 'hey ho, let's go' crazy for the Ramones once again.



**RAMONES**  
Ramones

★★★★★

1. Blitzkrieg Bop
2. Beat On The Beat
3. Judy Is A Punk
4. I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend
5. Chain Saw
6. Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue
7. I Don't Wanna Go Down To The Basement
8. Loudmouth
9. Havana Affair
10. Listen To My Heart
11. 53rd & 3rd
12. Let's Dance
13. I Don't Wanna Walk Around With You
14. Today Your Love, Tomorrow The World



**Q & A**  
**GOOD CHARLOTTE**

## 'We try not to overthink'

By ZARA ROWDEN

SIX years on from their last record, Good Charlotte returned last month with album number six, Youth Authority, given a four-star review in SFTW. They are about to begin a UK tour and today guitarist Benji Madden answers all our questions on the band.

**Youth Authority is your comeback album. Why was the time right to end your hiatus?**

"We didn't know when we were going to come back. We were just waiting to get that feeling and when it came we called the guys and everybody was in. As long as it feels right we will do it."

**This album comes six years after Cardiology, how does Youth Authority reflect how you've changed?**

"I think more than sonically or stylistically, the main difference on this album is the feeling. I feel like it's the first album in years where you can hear the excitement. You can hear genuine emotion. We had to get back to that and it had to happen naturally and I think it has. So it does represent how we've grown and what we've learned along the way."

**You've always said you wouldn't make another record until you had something to say. What is the message?**

"The things that run through this record are about standing up for each other and valuing yourself. Having hope and never giving up. We've always felt that the world could use a little more of these themes, they recur throughout our career."

**How was the recording process for this album different to your previous albums?**

"On this album we really wanted to do it old school like we did on the first couple of Good Charlotte records. So we would write a song a day and then record it, and we would try not to overthink it and force anything. For that reason our album feels totally natural and a portrait of where we are now."

**You collaborated with producer John Feldmann who you worked with in the early days. Was this an attempt to recapture your early sound?**

"I never actually made a record with John, we only ever wrote a few songs with him. So we wanted to know what it would be like to make a record with him. This was our chance."

**There's nostalgia in the album - what do you miss about the early days compared to now?**

"The late Nineties and early Noughties was a really special time for music, especially pop punk. We felt so lucky to be a part of it and we feel even more grateful to still be here today. The album artwork on Youth Authority shows our love for all the old show flyers and things you just don't see any more."

**What was it like working with Biffy Clyro's Simon Neil and Sleeping With Sirens' Kellin Quinn?**

"Working with Simon and Kellin was really great. They are both great songwriters and amazing vocalists and just all-round really positive people. We felt really lucky to get a chance to be in the studio with them on this record."

**You're playing Reading and Leeds, what are you most looking forward to?**

"Reading and Leeds is such a legendary festival, and the thing that makes it the most legendary is the amazing crowd."

**Which of the new songs have become live favourites in your latest shows - and how do you balance a setlist?**

"Life Changes is becoming a favourite for us. We definitely have to play the hits though. We want to make sure they get to hear the songs that they know and love as well."

**You seem to have enjoyed your comeback so what's next for Good Charlotte?**

"The Good Charlotte comeback has been really heartwarming for us. We're going to keep trying to continue and just keep it special. I don't know when another record will come, but we're going to take it one day at a time and make sure that it all feels right. None of it would have been possible without the fans and we will be forever grateful."

● Youth Authority is out now. Good Charlotte's UK tour begins on Monday at London's O2 Forum Kentish Town.



OUT SEPT 9