



voices breaking boundaries

crossing borders, sustaining dialogue, inciting social justice through art

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Joshua Turner

713 524 7821

joshua@vbbarts.org

www.vbbarts.org

“Smith’s intimate memoir is a tender elegy for the man with whom she had a two-decade-long relationship...”Just Kids” is astonishing on many levels, most notably for Smith’s lapidary prose...As a primer on self-discovery and the artist’s journey, “Just Kids” is as inspiring as Rilke’s “Letters to a Young Poet.” It reminds us that becoming an artist is a worthwhile and brave endeavor....There’s no need to ghettoize this book by praising it as an impressive memoir by a famous musician. It is simply one of the best memoirs to be published in recent years: inspiring, sad, wise and beautifully written.”

— San Francisco Chronicle

voices breaking boundaries presents

Patti Smith: *Just Kids*

7 pm, Monday, April 19, 2010 (doors open at 6 pm)

E. Cullen Performance Hall, University of Houston, TX

\$5 general admission at the door (no one will be turned away while seats last)

\$35 with preferred seating + signed copy of JUST KIDS (pre-purchase online through Brazos Bookstore)

HOUSTON, TX (March 11, 2010) – **Voices Breaking Boundaries (VBB)** is honored to bring to Houston writer, performer and visual artist, **Patti Smith**, for a reading from her exciting new memoir **JUST KIDS**, at a night filled with literature, memory and rich conversation at the University of Houston’s E. Cullen Performance Hall. She will be also be performing a few songs. Smith gained recognition in the 1970’s for her revolutionary mergence of poetry and rock. Her seminal album, *Horses*, bearing Robert Mapplethorpe’s renowned photograph, has been hailed as one of the top 100 albums of all time. Smith has now written an honest and moving coming-of-age story of her extraordinary relationship with Mapplethorpe. **JUST KIDS (Publication Date: January 19, 2010; \$27.00)** is a chronicle of friendship in its truest sense, a portrait of two innocents who, in a chance meeting in 1967, become lovers and then friends, and went on to fulfill their mutual dream of becoming great artists. In addition to her Monday night performance, Patti will be appearing live on KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM that morning at noon, and will be available to sign books after her reading.

“I met Patti in 2003 at New York’s LGA airport,” says VBB Founding Director, **Sehba Sarwar**. “We’d been at the same anti-Iraq invasion rally on Washington Square the evening before. In Houston, later that week, I had the wonderful opportunity to co-interview her on KPFT’s Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM. I’ve stayed in touch with her ever since then, and am thrilled that she can make time in her schedule to visit Houston to read from her new memoir—which I love. Every college student should read it, and VBB is hosting the reading at the University of Houston just so the next generation can learn about her work and be inspired.”

Patti Smith's visit is supported in part by UH's Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts, and Nina + Michael Zilkha. The show is cosponsored by UH-Creative Writing Program, English Department, Women's Studies Program, and History Department; Brazos Bookstore; Free Press Houston; Houston Independent Media Center; Houston Institute for Culture; Inprint Inc.; KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM; and Students for a Democratic Society. Books will be available for sale + signing after the event. Paid parking at UH Visitor Center (Entrance 1 off Calhoun). See VBB Website (www.vbbarts.org) for more details.

About Just Kids:

JUST KIDS begins as a love story and ends as an elegy. It serves as a salute to New York City during the late sixties and seventies, and to its rich and poor, its hustlers and hellions. A true fable, it is a portrayal of two young artists' ascent, a prelude to fame. It was the summer Coltrane died, the summer of love and riots, and the summer when a chance encounter in Brooklyn led two young people on a path of art, devotion and initiation. Patti Smith would evolve as a poet, and performer, and Robert Mapplethorpe would direct his highly provocative style toward photography. Bound in innocence and enthusiasm, they traversed the city from Coney Island to forty-second Street, and eventually to the celebrated round table of Max's Kansas City, where the Andy Warhol contingent held court. In 1969, the pair set up camp at the Hotel Chelsea and soon entered a community of the famous and infamous – the influential artists of the day and the colorful fringe. It was a time of heightened awareness, when the worlds of poetry, rock and roll, art, and sexual politics were colliding and exploding. In this milieu, two kids made a pact to take care of each other. Scrappy, romantic, committed to create, and fueled by their mutual dreams and drives, they would prod and provide for one another during the hungry years.

About the Author:

Patti Smith is a writer, artist and performer. Her seminal album *Horses* was followed by nine releases including *Radio Ethiopia*, *Easter*, *Dream of Life*, *Gone Again* and *Trampin'*. Her art work was first exhibited at Gotham Book Mart in 1973, and she has been associated with the Robert Miller Gallery since 1978. *Strange Messenger*, a retrospective of three hundred works, made its debut at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and has been exhibited world-wide, most notably at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Haus der Kunst, Munich and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Her books include *Witt*, *Babel*, *Woolgathering*, *The Coral Sea*, and *Patti Smith Complete 1975 - 2006*. On July 10, 2005, she received the *Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, the highest grade awarded by the French Republic to eminent artists and writers who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts throughout the world. Smith resides in New York City and is the mother of two, Jackson and Jesse.

JUST KIDS
by Patti Smith
Ecco

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For more information about VBB's programming, email info@vbbarts.org or visit our website at www.vbbarts.org.

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