



Guitars hang from the walls of the NO.TOM guitar shop on Denmark Street.

**The Sex Pistols and The Clash led the British punk rock revolution in the steamy summer of 1976. London is marking 40 years since that summer with a series of events, gigs and exhibits this year. As an early fan of punk, I set out on a personal pilgrimage to explore the neighborhoods and locations that were its petri dishes — from the Pistols’ rehearsal and living space to the scene of the Notting Hill riots witnessed by The Clash to the pubs and clubs that hosted their first shows.**

In some places, I found the opposite of the angry energy that inspired anthems like the Pistols’ “Anarchy in the UK” and The Clash’s “London’s Burning.” But I also found some venues still going strong.

**First stop**

Portobello Road to see the mural of Clash frontman Joe Strummer, which was painted after this death. Sadly, when I visited, it was mostly covered by scaffolding. I looked in vain for signs of Strummer’s anti-establishment vibe, but all I found was a bustling market selling knickknacks, clothing and antiques while passers-by peered at their iPhones. From there I headed to Tavistock Road, the street that inspired Strummer’s “White Riot,” his call

to arms after a West Indian carnival ended in riots in Notting Hill in the summer of ’76. But I failed to find any sign of punk’s past on the quiet thoroughfare, so I settled in the Metropolitan Pub on Great Western Road for a hand-pulled pint.

The Rough Trade record shop opened in 1976 on Kensington Park Road. Today it’s on Talbot Road, filled with vinyl and CDs, its walls and ceiling adorned with posters featuring The Clash, Sex Pistols and others.

In Central London, I marveled at the fine instruments at NO.TOM, a small guitar shop on Denmark Street, near the Tottenham Court Road tube. The short street, once known as London’s Tin Pan Alley, was home to many music publishers and studios. Behind NO.TOM

there’s a tiny 19th century cottage where the Sex Pistols once lived. It’s covered with graffiti created by the Pistols’ John Lydon (Johnny Rotten), including a drawing of the Pistols’ manager Malcolm McLaren, and another of Nancy Spungen, Sid Vicious’ girlfriend.

At 100 Oxford St, the 100 Club is marked with a sign and poster for upcoming shows. The Sex Pistols played here in May 1976 and the venue hosted a punk festival in the fall of ’76. In January 2016, ’70s bands including 999, The Members, UK Subs and Discharge played here as part of a punk series.

In Chelsea, at 430 King’s Road, a giant “SEX” sign once hung outside a shop of the same name shared by McLaren, the Pistols’ manager, and designer Vivienne Westwood.

Westwood still runs a boutique here called Worlds End.

**Next stop - Camden Market**

Today this thriving collection of bars, restaurants, shops and stalls is overrun with shoppers perusing all types of food and fashion, from espresso to T-shirts bearing the Union Jack. I was here to find the spot where The Clash posed for a photograph that became an iconic image adorning their first album. The photo was taken on a ramp that’s since been converted to steps. I took a selfie standing there but couldn’t help feeling a pang of regret. My favorite band, often called “the only band that matters,” once stood here on the cusp of fame, but today the spot



Tourists take photos outside the Rough Trade record shop in London.



A wall sports records, photos and posters at the Hope & Anchor pub in London.