

Experiencing Alice Cooper: A Listener Companion



Experiencing Alice Cooper: A Listener's Companion

by Cindy Berry

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Alice Cooper is one of the most iconic and enduring figures in rock and roll history. With his flamboyant stage shows, elaborate makeup, and unforgettable songs, he has entertained and terrified audiences for over five decades.

This guide will take you on a journey through the music and career of Alice Cooper, from his early days as a garage rocker to his global stardom as the godfather of shock rock. We'll explore his classic albums, groundbreaking stage shows, and enduring influence on rock and roll.

The Early Years

Alice Cooper was born Vincent Damon Furnier in Detroit, Michigan, on February 4, 1948. He grew up in a strict Pentecostal household, but he was

drawn to the dark side of life from an early age. He began playing guitar at age 13 and started his first band, The Earwigs, at age 15.

In 1966, The Earwigs changed their name to Alice Cooper and began playing a mix of garage rock and psychedelic music. Their early sound was influenced by The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, and The Byrds.

Shock Rock Pioneer

Alice Cooper's breakthrough came in 1969 with the release of their album *Pretties for You*. The album's dark and twisted sound and lyrics were a departure from the pop-oriented music of the time.

In 1971, Alice Cooper released their seminal album *Killer*. The album's title track became a huge hit, and it helped to establish Alice Cooper as the godfather of shock rock. The album also featured the classic songs "Under My Wheels" and "Halo of Flies."

Alice Cooper's stage shows were as outrageous as his music. He used props such as snakes, guillotines, and baby dolls to create a theatrical experience that was unlike anything else in rock and roll.

Concept Albums and Commercial Success

In the early 1970s, Alice Cooper began to release concept albums, which told stories through their music. Their 1972 album *School's Out* was a huge commercial success, and it featured the hit singles "School's Out" and "Elected."

Alice Cooper continued to release successful albums throughout the 1970s, including *Billion Dollar Babies* (1973), *Muscle of Love* (1973), and

Lace and Whiskey (1977).

Alcoholism and Recovery

In the late 1970s, Alice Cooper's career began to decline due to his struggles with alcoholism. He entered rehab in 1978 and has been sober ever since.

After getting sober, Alice Cooper returned to music in 1980 with the album *Flush the Fashion*. The album was a commercial failure, but it marked a new beginning for Cooper.

Later Career and Legacy

In the 1980s, Alice Cooper continued to release albums and tour, but he never regained the commercial success of his heyday. He did, however, continue to push the boundaries of shock rock.

In 1994, Alice Cooper was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He continues to perform and record today, and he remains one of the most influential figures in rock and roll history.

Essential Alice Cooper Albums

Here are some of the essential Alice Cooper albums that every fan should own:

- *Pretties for You* (1969)
- *Easy Action* (1970)
- *Killer* (1971)
- *School's Out* (1972)

- *Billion Dollar Babies* (1973)
- *Muscle of Love* (1973)
- *Welcome to My Nightmare* (1975)

Alice Cooper is a true rock and roll legend. His music, stage shows, and persona have been imitated by countless other artists, but none have ever come close to matching his unique style.

Whether you're a lifelong fan or just discovering Alice Cooper for the first time, I encourage you to explore his music and learn about his incredible career. He is one of the most important and influential figures in rock and roll history, and his music will continue to entertain and inspire generations to come.



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