



RAY-BAN AVIATOR: THE ESSENTIALS

Summer 2010 and **Ray-Ban Aviator** goes back to the future – celebrating one of the most iconic accessories of all time, with the help of music’s most influential names past and present. In a peerless showcase of talent, **Iggy & The Stooges** and the **New York Dolls** join forces with **The Virgins**, **Free Energy**, **Plastiscines** and **The Big Pink** for one-off shows in New York and London. Together with **We Are Scientists** all bands unite to champion timeless rock ‘n’ roll style with a series of new portraits by esteemed rock photographer **Kevin Cummins**.

Along with the **Classic** model, Ray-Ban launches six exciting new re-imaginings of its ageless Aviator style – **Ray-Ban Aviator Titanium**, **Ray-Ban Aviator Craft**, **Ray-Ban Aviator Metal Glide**, **Ray-Ban Aviator Ultra Gold**, **Ray-Ban Aviator Road Spirit** and **Ray-Ban Aviator Tech**.

Ray-Ban Aviator and rock ‘n’ roll have always evolved together. Originally appearing in the mid-1930s, the Ray-Ban Aviator glasses were first used by the military and civil aviation industries. During the Hollywood boom of the 1950s, fashion-forward acting icons such as Jack Nicholson and Robert Redford wore their Ray-Ban Aviators with pride. By the 1970s, music stars of all stripes were flaunting Aviators as *the* stylish accessory to be seen in. Classic rock ‘n’ roll photography captures the biggest stars of the day sporting the look: Jeff Beck, Don Felder and Eric Clapton to name but a few. The Ray-Ban Aviator and music both came of age during that decade, exciting times epitomised by two groups in particular. With their primal blues howl and audience-baiting aggression, Michigan’s Iggy & The Stooges looked and sounded like no one before them.

Elsewhere, the New York Dolls combined The Rolling Stones’ androgyny, girl group pop and glam rock to create a new form of music that presaged both punk and heavy metal. While some of their peers may have been unconvinced – for many Iggy & The Stooges and the New York Dolls were too brash; just too *out there* at the time – in 2010 no one could argue that together they formed anything less than rock’s very DNA. In recent years, both bands have reunited to find far bigger audiences than they’d previously played to; releasing new music to universally great reviews. Little wonder: in sound, style and attitude, the influence of these iconoclasts is everywhere today. To prove as much, Ray-Ban has invited the cream of today’s music scene to join forces with Iggy & The Stooges and the New York Dolls, celebrating the Aviator in exclusive live shows and new pictures how today’s music scene keeps moving forward – while never failing to acknowledge it’s debt to the past. It’s an evolution of true timeless rock ‘n’ roll style, something Ray-Ban knows all about.

Consequently, The Virgins fuse the 1970s cool of Talking Heads and Modern Lovers with contemporary dance-rock, to create something that’s truly their own. Free Energy take the glitter stomp of 1970s acts Thin Lizzy and T-Rex, add the open-road euphoria of The Cars and Journey and mix it together with today’s up-to-the-minute production. The Big Pink layer anthemic choruses and drum loops over a wall of electronics and feedback that harks back to rock’s very blueprint. Plastiscines combine a love of the sharp guitar pop of Blondie and The Kinks with a deathless contemporary cool. And We Are Scientists take their cues from *Who’s Who* of rock’s great and good, one that includes David Bowie, Fleetwood Mac and Hall & Oates. The message is clear: when it comes to music’s most forward-thinking groups, there’s no better heritage on which to build than that rich seem created in the 1970s. “My opinion on remaking classic things is that that’s the nature of all fashion,” says Free Energy’s Paul Sprangers. “I think when people do remake music, the hope is you remake it using inspiration that comes from your life.”

Photographer Kevin Cummins would surely agree. Coming to prominence thirty years ago, during music’s most thrilling decade, and based in one of its most exciting cities, Manchester, England; Cummins was there to record the scene as it exploded around the world. His photographs of the emergent Manchester bands, including Joy Division and Buzzcocks, together with portraits of rock’s biggest icons, The Clash, Marc Bolan, Mick Jagger and David Bowie, sealed his reputation as one of rock’s most esteemed documentarians – the photographer the bands asked for by name. A decade as the in-house snapper at *NME* secured his position as the man to seek out new talent ahead of the crowd. All things considered – and given that Cummins was no stranger to shooting rockers in their iconic Ray-Ban Aviators – there was only one choice when it came to photographing the above roster of talent.



“Ray-Ban has always been a rock ‘n’ roll brand for me,” Cummins says. “I’ve photographed people [wearing Aviators] over the last 30-odd years. They’ll wear them in the dressing room. They’ll wear them at night when they go on the street. The only problem we had at the *NME* was, sometimes for a cover, we always wanted eye contact – so we’d force them to take them off. But it was like forcing them to take their favourite shoes off as well.”

The bands concur. “Ray-Bans are just a classic look,” says The Big Pink’s Robbie Furze. “From Axl Rose wearing silver Aviators, to Dylan. There’s so many icons seen wearing Aviators. It’s just been so ingrained in [how] you consider someone being, [and] looking, cool.”

“Being involved in this campaign is really cool because it brings [us together with] our idols, the New York Dolls and Iggy Pop – the older generation and the new generation,” says Plastiscines’ Anías Vandevyvere. “In the same way Ray-Ban [have] with Aviators - you’ve got the old ones and we’re wearing the new ones. So it’s cool being part of it. You know, being all together.”

“I feel very fortunate to be performing with Iggy & The Stooges,” says The Virgins’ Donald Cumming. “His music has moved me for most of my life. When bands reunite it can be really amazing – because there’s so many people that may not have otherwise had the opportunity to experience it.”

“I think people wear Ray-Bans because they’re really solid sunglasses,” he adds. “They don’t pertain to any specific time or place.” Timeless style, in other words. For summer 2010 Ray-Ban Aviator and music’s boldest and brightest names have come together to show it’s something that never goes out of fashion.

“We live in a world of nostalgia at the moment,” notes photographer Cummins. “But I think you can recreate a classic without just copying it in a very dull way. What Ray-Ban have done, they’ve worked really hard to make this huge range that are contemporary, but have classic overtones. When you get the new bands to wear them, the Aviator looks really contemporary. All the bands we’ve worked with are very different and all respond in a very different way to being photographed. That’s reflected in the range of glasses; because each range has been really different.”

“The bands wear them readily,” he concludes. “And they look great in them.”

The exclusive live performances and unveiling of Cummins’ photography, will take place at the epicentre of rock music in New York – the Music Hall of Williamsburg – on 12th May 2010. The photographic and musical exhibition will then move on to London on 26th May at London’s Scala.



About the photography:

The Virgins **East Village, NYC** **March 2010**

Kevin met The Virgins in their home, the East Village on the island of Manhattan. Both on the streets of NYC and in the band's local music venues, Kevin spent an afternoon with the band capturing their life in the city.

Free Energy **Brooklyn, New York** **March 2010**

Free Energy, based in Philadelphia, met Kevin in Brooklyn's home to indie rock – Williamsburg on a rainy March afternoon. Kevin used the raw neighbourhood as the backdrop for this up-and-coming band.

Plastiscines **Belleville, Paris** **March 2010**

Although the Plastiscines take much influence from the rock music of the US and UK, Kevin met these young French girls in their home town, Paris. Belleville, home to many of Paris's artists and musicians, provide the backdrop for the girls capturing their true spirit.

The Big Pink **Mile End, Montreal** **March 2010**

Meeting The Big Pink on their tour through North America, Kevin met The Big Pink in Montreal's Mile End neighbourhood. Shooting both in the unstyled streets and the home to The Big Pink's Montreal live gig, Kevin captured the rock duo living life on the road.

We Are Scientists **Coney Island, New York** **April 2010**

Although formed in California, We Are Scientists met with Kevin near their practice space in Brooklyn, New York. Kevin took the duo out to Coney Island to capture the spirit of the band's California roots and New York City attitude.

About Ray-Ban:
www.ray-ban.com

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