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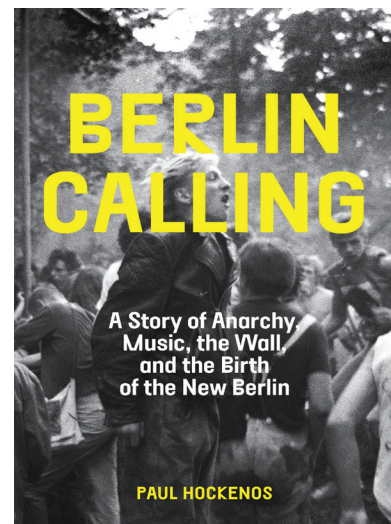
Berlin Calling

A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin

By Paul Hockenos

"A must read...West Berlin with its bars that never closed and hard narcotics practically on tap beckoned and inspired Bowie, Iggy, Brian Eno, and Nick Cave. An untold tale until now is that of the punks, anarchists, dissidents and yes, even neo-Nazis, who rebelled against totalitarian rule in the east. I know of no other book that tells their story." --**Gillian McCain**, co-author of *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk*

"The Berlin of the 1980s is famous for two things: a wild counterculture and the surprising end of the Cold War. Paul Hockenos, who knows the city inside out, brings them together in a fast-paced, sometimes astonishing story of underground clubs, squatters, and dissidents." --**Brian Ladd**, author of *Ghosts of Berlin*



Berlin has long had a reputation for its off-beat mystique and powerful allure, drawing an array of underground artists, punk rock and techno connoisseurs, and DIY political activists into its city limits. From free-love communes to the era of amphetamine-fueled techno clubs, it's a city of charisma and innovation. So how and why did Berlin become the vibrant world capital of eccentric subculture?

American journalist and former Berlin resident Paul Hockenos moved to West Berlin in the 1980s and has watched it change over more than three decades. In *Berlin Calling: A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin*, Hockenos delves into Berlin's tendency toward reinvention and its ability to "posit itself anew many times over" – a quality he attributes to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The Wall, Hockenos writes, was the foremost symbol of a divided Europe. In its shadows cropped up inevitable micro-countercultures. In sequestered West Berlin, residents began to innovate in art, music, and lifestyle; in East Berlin, an underground democratic political and cultural opposition began to take hold. When the Wall fell in 1989, East and West collided and launched a heyday of experimentation and creation.

Berlin Calling brings the post-Cold War city to life through a flamboyant cast of characters including David Bowie and Iggy Pop, as well as lesser-known Wall painters and underground designers, club owners and transvestite performers, industrial rock bands and anarchist dissidents. A vibrant and evocative portrait of a city in transition, *Berlin Calling* tells the story of the staggering contradictions that make Berlin feel consistently creative and new.

Paul Hockenos writes regularly for the *New York Times*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Foreign Policy*, among many other media outlets. He lives in Berlin.

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Booklist

STARRED REVIEW

Berlin Calling: A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin.

Hockenos, Paul (author).

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Though certainly unplanned, the timeliness of Hockenos' intelligent analysis of the effect of a wall on a people and their culture is uncanny. Here, Berlin-based Hockenos (*Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic*, 2008) uses music as the lens through which to understand the subcultures, countercultures, evolutions, and devolutions that echoed through a West Berlin isolated by a wall whose first iteration was barbed wire and guards and whose final iteration was the "world's biggest art gallery." Hockenos bore witness to punk rock's egalitarian dissonance, political and anarchistic in its assertion that everyone could make punk. This book is a study in complexity. Hockenos debunks the idea, for example, that counterculture was absent from East Berlin. West Berlin's unique circumstance also created a haven for queer culture. Over several years, David Bowie had a romance with Romy Haag, a beloved transsexual (in the language of the time) who finished her act with a gender-bending deconstruction of costume. The tearing down of the wall on November 9, 1989, led to more complex consequences; squatters occupied East Berlin, and neo-Nazis dug in. Now, Hockenos sees a current Berlin that thrives while remembering its bohemian roots.— *Emily Dziuban*

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In 1985, Hockenos (*Free To Hate*), philosopher in training, stepped off a train in West Berlin with only his savings and works by German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in his duffel. He quickly became a habitu   of the rich subculture found, rubbing shoulders with the squatters and rockers, graffiti and performance artists, and other nonconformists drawn to Berlin. When the Wall fell in 1989, the subsidies that had bought the time and space to experiment with new social and artistic arrangements ended. Hockenos's insightful book captures the history of that subculture and the adjustments made after the government collapse, detailing them with sympathy and an analytic eye. A flood of oversized personalities cross the scene, including musician David Bowie and his transgender muse Romy Haag, industrial band Einst rzende Neubauten, charismatic anarchist Silvio Meier, and Warhol-inspired artist Thierry Noir. VERDICT This wide-ranging book will appeal to everyone from music devotees to history scholars. In addition to looking at history from a different perspective, Hockenos illustrates this work with photos and posters that stimulate the mind and delight the eye.—David Keymer, Modesto, CA