

## **Cherry Bomb**

A unique artists' book by [Marshall Weber](#) and [Raimie Weber](#)

2020, calligraphy, hand-painting, ink, vintage (1960's and 1970's) Instamatic and silver gelatin photographs  
12 x 12 x 1 inches, 15 pages, accordion fold binding with fold down covers

Location, Brooklyn, NY / New Hartford, CT

Related subjects: [pop culture](#), [pop music](#), suburbia, [teenagers](#), [women's history](#), Connecticut, The Runaways, girl bands

\$ 4,800.00

Marshall Weber collages and paints an assembly of vintage Instamatic and silver gelatin photographs from the 1970's taken by his (then teenager) sister Raimie Weber and her friends in the burgeoning yet torpid suburbia of white nascent-middle-class Connecticut. This survey of a definitively low plateau in American culture is accompanied by verses from the 1976 hit song *Cherry Bomb* by the influential hard-rock/proto-punk, all-female band, **The Runaways**. Tragically, the book also cryptically documents some of the frequent drunk driving accidents that were a primary killer of area teenagers of that era.

The song's music was written by legendary rocker Joan Jett and the lyrics were written by notoriously and criminally abusive (see notes below) Runaways manager Kim Fowler. It was a standard of the 1970's white female-identified teenage cultural rebellion spurred by the ennui of both second-wave urban flight and the mainstream cultural flight from the youth, feminist, and Black rebellions of the 1960's. While the song and the band were created within social circumstances informed by Fowler's (and others') misogyny and the sometimes violently exploitative atmosphere surrounding the band, they are often cited as inspirations for female empowerment in the music industry and in the general culture.

The book covers depict Raimie and, basically, all her friends of that era when they were all cheerleaders for the Hartford Knights, the Connecticut team in the popular but short-lived Atlantic Coast Football League, and for a few more years in other ad hoc leagues (1968-1973). Today the recruiting of high school-aged cheerleaders for a professional football team seems questionable, (it does resonate with the story of this book and the times) but the fact that the team was owned by Connecticut businessman Peter Savin, whose daughter Stacey helped recruit the team, and by all accounts from the involved parties, kept things legit and amicable. (Stacey also appears in the cover photograph next to Raimie, her good high school.)

Marshall and Raimie Weber both grew up in suburban Connecticut after their parents fled from New York in 1964 seeking better employment opportunities. Both attended high school (Raimie at the public Bloomfield High School, Marshall at private schools Westledge and Loomis) and college there (Raimie studying at the University of Connecticut in Storrs and Marshall studying at Connecticut College in New London).

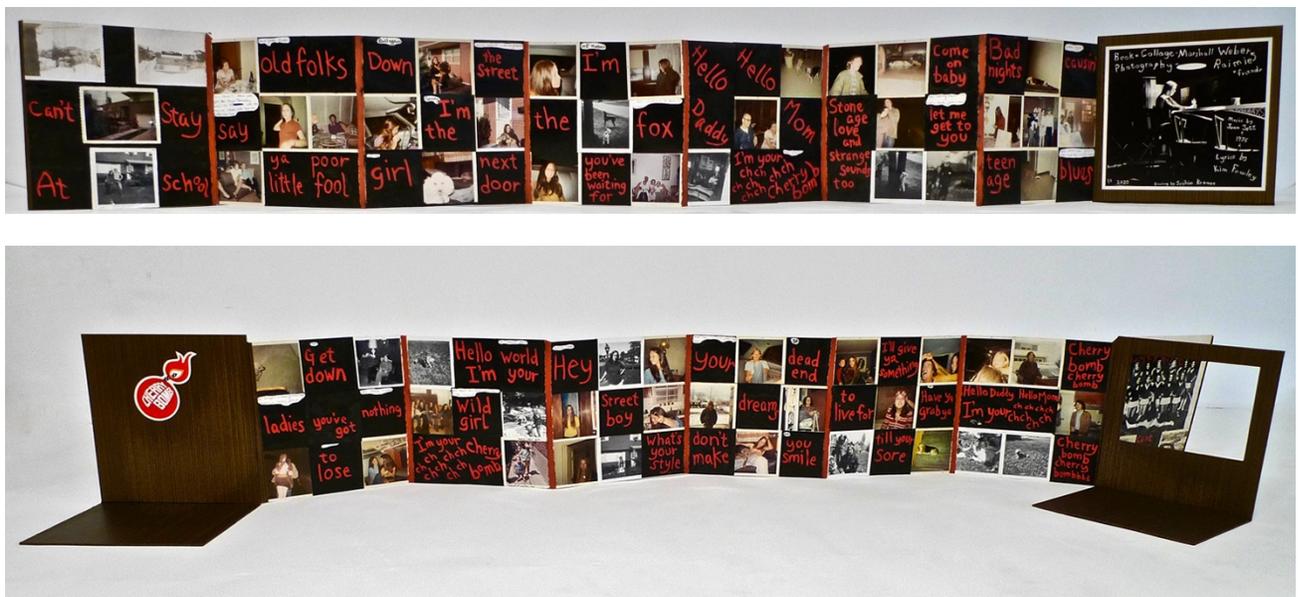
Raimie Weber's photographs of teenage malaise and hi-jinx have timely captions scrawled on the back by then-teenager Raimie, whose current handwriting is also used as the template for the marker pen calligraphy of the song verses. The accordion fold structure of the book features fold-down covers to facilitate gallery exhibition. The faux wood paneling paper used on the covers is an antique paste paper sourced from the antique paper cabinet in the print studio of the Bundesakademie in the castle of Wolfenbüttel, Germany.

"The cover and end-page papers evoke the crappy wood paneling that was the standard of all crappy 1970's American interior design, especially the Connecticut bedroom and basement walls that I would throw myself against while listening to Cherry Bomb, School's Out by Alice Cooper and other 1970's teenage anthems. The Cherry Bomb brand muffler sticker on the rear cover is vintage and circa 1976."

Marshall Weber

**Please note:** while the band, the song, and Joan Jett have become part of 1970's American pop culture history and this artists' book is a reflection of those times, there are disturbing realities to (now deceased) Kim Fowler's criminal abuse of the teenage band members (and others) at that time and to the lack of support for former band member Jackie Fox (AKA Fuchs) when she later publicly accused Fowler of sexually assaulting her at a hotel room party in the 1970's that the band was also in attendance at (numerous witnesses corroborate her accusation and Fowler's general predatory behavior). The unfortunate lack of solidarity that other, mostly male adults, witnesses, and former band members showed to Fox is also (and continues to be) disturbing. This artwork in no way intends to normalize, ignore or condone Fowler's criminal behavior and the other witnesses and band members' lack of support for Fowler or to diminish the validity of Fox's (and other's) accusations against Fowler. The intention of the work is to use both popular and personal primary source material to evoke the atmosphere and ambiance of white, female, American suburbia. For more details on this tragic history start with Evelyn McDonnell's "Queens of Noise" book (and her other writing on the subject, especially in her "Populism" blog) and Jason Cherkis' July 2015, "[The Lost Girls](#)" article for the Huffington Post (though admittedly flawed).

Booklyn webpage - <https://new.booklyn.org/catalog/cherry-bomb/>



140 58th St, Building B-7G, Brooklyn, NY 11220 917-406-1038 [mweber@booklyn.org](mailto:mweber@booklyn.org)

