

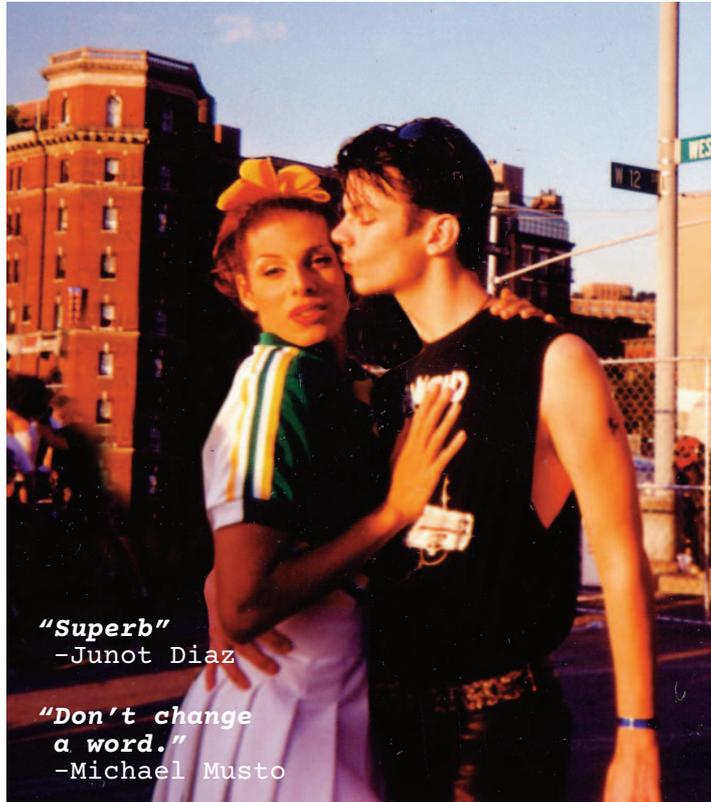
PRETTY BROKEN PUNKS™

lipstick, leather jeans, a death of New York

STAGE ADAPTATION & THEATRE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

London

confidential



PRETTY BROKEN PUNKS:

lipstick, leather jeans, a death of New York

by Martin Belk

“Martin Belk is New York, losing and finding himself in the ‘Mondo Trasho’ epicentre of queer liberation. Belk reveals a Baudelarian sense of the city and a profound, burgeoning poetic power & sensibility.

He may not know this — I’m telling him.”

— GAWAIN DOUGLAS,
nephew of Lord Alfred Douglas, Oscar Wilde’s ‘Bosie’

Martin Belk writes beautifully and in exquisite detail about a very unique cultural moment in New York. It would be very exciting and potentially even important for audiences to see his writing staged. I wholeheartedly and enthusiastically support the development of this project.

— STEPHEN TRASK, composer, Obie Award Winner,
Grammy Nominee: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*

PRETTY BROKEN PUNKS: *lipstick, leather jeans, a death of New York*

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Précis

“In our 20s we were told we wouldn’t make it past 30, so we lived on borrowed time. In those days, chances were 1 in 5 guys around you would be dead within months. Then the developers started killing our city — turning our streets into a shopping mall.

They pimped-out Lady Gotham to the masses, instead of celebrating the fine call-girl she once was. Only problem is, we survived.”

–Martin the Younger, *Pretty Broken Punks*

In 1987 New York City, a generation of young men lost their lives, and those who survived lost their city. Through the 90s to the turn of the century, *Pretty Broken Punks*'s protagonist ran Squeezebox! – one of the most notorious downtown clubs in The Big Apple & successor to Warhol's Max's Kansas City, Studio 54 and Danceteria. Relationships with legends like Debbie Harry & Joey Ramone — chance encounters from JFK Jr to John Waters — alongside a cavalcade of other celebrities, political titans and rock stars fueled the fire.

In the finely delineated historical context of New York City's AIDS die-off, gentrification, destructive culture war with one of the most hated mayors in history, plus a post-9/11 societal-seizure — *Pretty Broken Punks* presents a compelling personal journey and fight for survival which now resonates in urban centres around the world. Our survivor walks the wild sidestreets of Gotham, in the spiritual company of Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde and Quentin Crisp.

Pretty Broken Punks tells a story of universal twists and truths: We're all going to die, the question is, how do we live? In this stage adaptation of his homonymous book, Belk explores time, mortality, arrested development, and identity in an age of radical technological and social change. With connections among AIDS, current cancer rates, palliative care, and ever-present social fears & stigma, the conversations remain germane today.

If you could speak directly to your younger, vulnerable self, what would you say? Can you handle the reply?