

# 'Detroit Rock City' travels to roots of 70s rock n' roll

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Like the song for which it was named, the New Line Cinema release "Detroit Rock City" captures the youthful energy and disregard for authority expected of any rock and roll comedy. Directed by Adam Rifkin and produced by Gene Simmons, the film transports viewers back to a time colored by lava lamps, *Madd Magazine* and Farrah Fawcett posters — a time when, for many, Kiss defined rock and roll. "Detroit Rock City" opens in area theaters on Friday.

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Something About Mary? Shayne is a Detroit native. Her character, "Mrs. Bruce," mistakenly places Kiss' "Love Gun" album on her record player and relaxes back into her recliner just as the music explodes from the speakers, sending her reeling in anger. Her son, Jam, will suffer the consequences. Exploring the generation gap, the rivalry between rock and disco, teenage rebellion and the eternal quest for freedom, "Detroit Rock City" is a coming-of-age comedy. Accompanying countless Kiss tunes, the film is filled with enough classic rock songs to inspire a sing-a-long. Viewers are treated the sounds of the Ramones, Thin Lizzy, Van Halen, AC/DC and Detroit's own

Without hesitation, the film pokes fun at false perceptions about the band. Carl Dupre's script contains references to the length of Gene Simmons' tongue, and comments about "the devil's music" in a comical manner. Blatantly obvious song references permeate the film — from characters obviously named for popular Kiss songs ("Beth" and "Christine 16"), to scenes punctuated with just the right music. One fight scene appropriately plays out to Black Sabbath's "Iron Man."



Kiss Fanatics: (left to right) James DeBello, Edward Furlong, Sam Huntington and Giuseppe Andrews take Detroit by storm in search of their favorite rock band Kiss in "Detroit Rock City."

While the film was set in Detroit, it was filmed in Toronto. The original "rock city" is marred by references to crime, many of which are sure to evoke laughter. In one scene, Mrs. Bruce chastises her son for buying tickets to the Kiss concert and attempting to sneak off to Detroit:

"Now you wanna see the Devil in the flesh... You wanna reach out and touch pure evil, and in Detroit, no less," she said.

Like the colorful pages of a comic book, the look of the film is bright and flashy. With quick camera movements, split screens, and scenes that send sober heads spinning, "Detroit Rock City" brings back the campy atmosphere associated with such films as the Ramones' "Rock and Roll High School," while adding the sparkle of 70s style, reminiscent of a "Brady Bunch" marathon. The film uses predictable tactics to carry its story: from authoritarian hall monitors, to stolen cars, and a pack of angry guard dogs. "Detroit Rock City" establishes

itself as a film about teenage angst set appropriately to rock and roll. Diehard Kiss fans were warned; don't expect to see too much of the band members in the plot of the film. Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley and Peter Dinklage appear as themselves in backstage scenes and in performance, but are mostly confined to the climax and end of the film. "I think there will be a lot of kids, as well as adults who will relate to the pilgrimage these teens are on," said Gene Sim-

mons in literature about the film. "I loved the script immediately. It was hilarious, it was about the fans. And that was important to us, because Kiss has always been about the fans." "Detroit Rock City" offers a light-hearted cinematic romp through the minds of young rock fans. While Kiss followers are sure to enjoy the film, those who can't cope with a campy-yet-predictable plot should stay away from this one.

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**Scheduled to open Friday, Aug. 13**  
"BROKEDOWN PALACE"  
Two high school girls set off on a dream trip to Trinidad following their graduation. The dream turns to a nightmare when they are accused of drug trafficking and sentenced to 33 years in a Thai prison until an expatriate American lawyer comes to their aid. Stars Claire Danes.

**Scheduled to open Friday, Aug. 20**  
"MICKY BLUE EYES"  
Romantic comedy about an English art dealer in New York who falls in love with the daughter of a Mafia boss. To win her hand, he embarks on a mission

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