

No Slam Dancing, No Stage Diving, No Spikes:: An Oral History of New Jersey's Legendary City Gardens

Amy Yates Wuelfing, Steven DiLodovico

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How did a lifeless, concrete bunker in the inner city come to be a cornerstone of the underground music scene? How did a club stuck between nowhere foster an atmosphere of creativity and promote a vibrant music scene ready to explode? Simply: with dedication, drive and passion. The story of City Gardens is a multifaceted tale of community, history and, tradition. While one man, the inimitable Randy Now, is credited (and rightly so) with growing and cultivating the scene at the Gardens, it took a community of freaks, weirdoes, and misfits to truly make it a home. No Slam Dancing, No Stage Diving, No Spikes is the story of how that bunker became an oasis for wayward iconoclasts and cultural outcasts while witnessing some of the most compelling performances in music history. Told through the memories of bands, bouncers, stage management, bartenders, and fans—as well as the man who oversaw it all—No Slam Dancing is part history, part sociological study, and part legend. It is a document of times and events that occurred during the last great music age before technology changed everything. Over the course of hundreds of interviews, the authors pull together the narrative City Gardens during its nearly-20-year run. Whether they were the New Wave-crazed dancers who populated 90 Cent Dance Nights, or the punks and skins who caused mayhem during the hardcore shows, they were the ones who made every event a happening and every show something to behold. The individual memories merge to tell the story of a city, of a scene, and of the indomitable force of creativity.



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