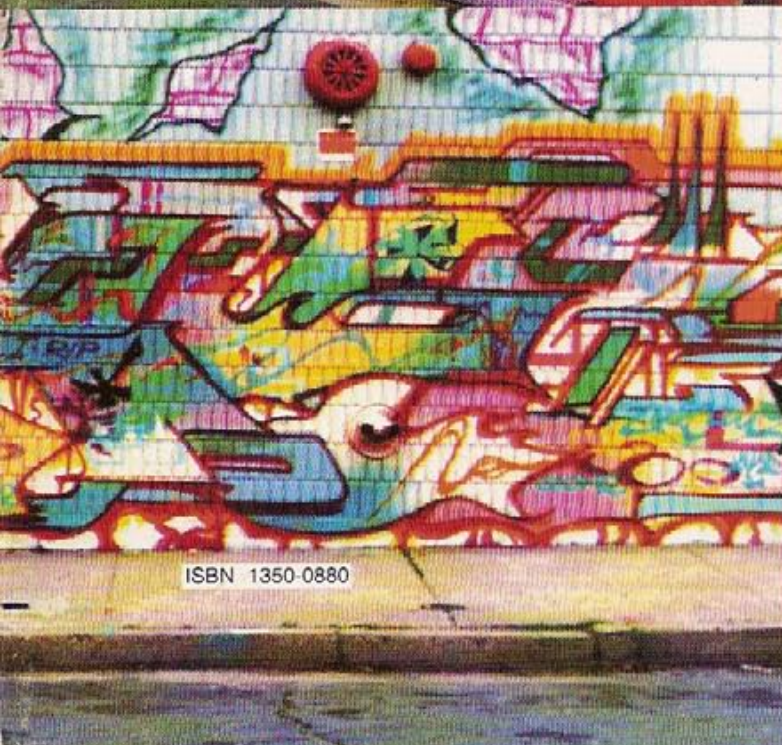
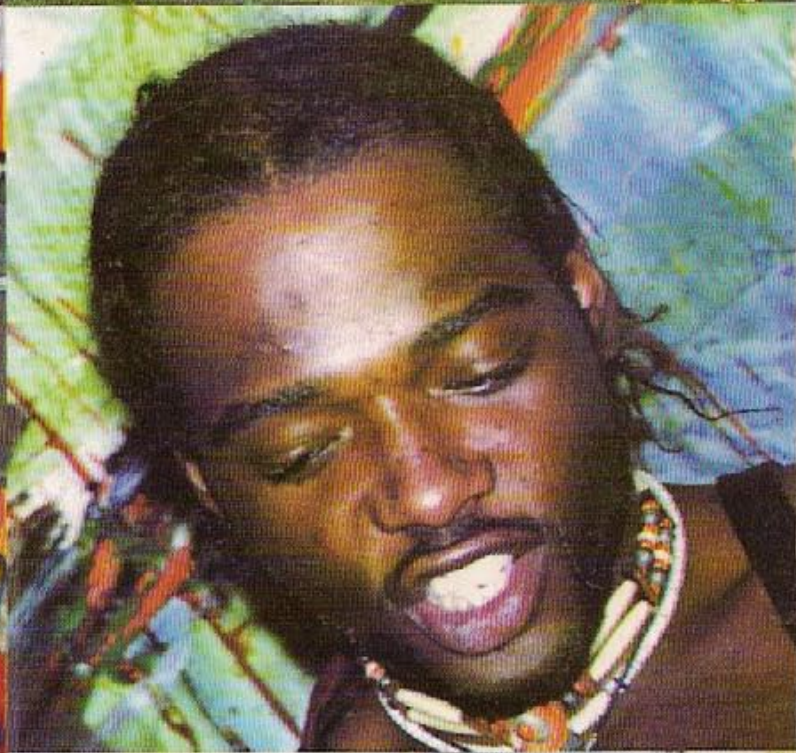
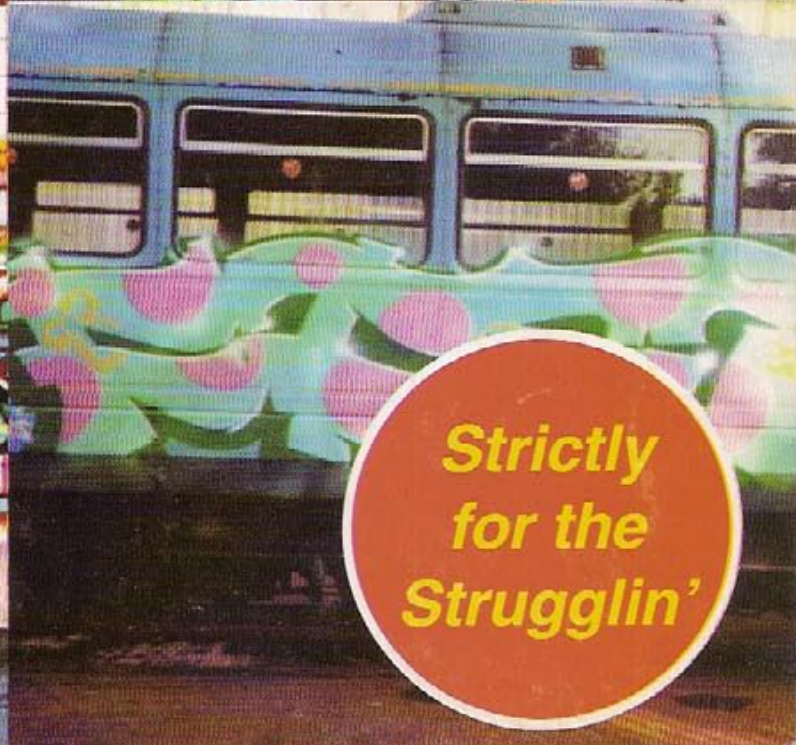


THE REAL STATE



ISBN 1350-0880



**Strictly
for the
Strugglin'**

Introduction

Not about colour not about fashion first things first just plain old soul expression prove your humanity show your identity. State it relate it communicate it. Dignity and respect. To yourself and others. Give it.

It's not our art that needs to change; it's society's heart that needs to change. No protection on the streets, no protection off the streets. Racial harmony. Is it possible? Can it be real? With a legacy of hate and injustice, broken promises, deceit and war upon war, it is too late for many scarred lives to be healed by "racial harmony" alone. But just as hate has contorted and destroyed countless lives, so love can build up and create. Love sees differences as curiosities and beauty, something to understand and learn from. Hate sees them as hostile walls of separation, structures of power to be conquered, threats or inferiorities. But differences are there to remind us that we need each other. Division destroys. We cannot continue with tolerance of evil and injustice, silence is not golden anymore. Neither can we continue destroying each other in retaliation and fear. This is only the fulfilment of the Oppressor's plan. We should learn from history; the greed and lie of colonialism and imperialism is nothing to be proud of, intervention is not always good. Too often it is done out of greed and desire for power and status rather than out of love and real concern.



We should learn from the horror of slavery, from the legacy of destruction and poisoned minds it has left in America and Western Europe - a crime in history only to be recalled in shame. We should learn from the wars, from the resulting materialism, apathy and selfishness about what happens when faith and hope die. We should learn from the horrors and nightmares which are now daily realities walking our streets and in our lives: violence, drugs, AIDS, no home, no family, no faith, no education, no work, no hope. It is hardcore reality. It's not cool anymore, it's just real. Too much silence and "tolerance" has gone before us and now we live in what those values created. This isn't a "free" society. This is a trapped society. It is time for the antidote. It is time for real change. This is not a movie. This is life. And judgement awaits us all.

CLOSE YOUR EYES.

Imagine you live in a city in a land where there are no history books or newspapers. Imagine you have no parents or living relatives. Imagine 24 hours of the day, 7 days of the week, 365 days of the year being reminded of who or

what you are, where you belong, what you do and what you can't do. Imagine from the age of 4 knowing only the law of survival and escape. Imagine you are constantly punished for a physical characteristic you were born with and which no surgeon can remove, but which is seen as a threat and a hostile symbol in your land. Imagine how you'd feel if the ministers of justice, order, morality and learning treated you according to this characteristic, before anything else. Imagine your personality/character judged to be the same as that of a complete stranger who has the same physical characteristic. Imagine being barred from public places, institutions, leisure areas, not due to your behaviour, but due to this physical characteristic. Imagine the ONLY place where you can feel relatively free and make a living without this pressure being the street and at night. Imagine being young and trying to envisage or plan a future in this environment. Imagine watching your friends - your 'real' family - die, be murdered, beaten or removed from home ground. Imagine this as being a constant reality and not to be seen as a tragedy or danger by the rest of the world. Imagine confusion, despair, chaos, pain and anger like you've never felt before.

NOW OPEN YOUR EYES.

Yes, this IS 1993. Maybe you can't imagine this. Stay around a while, be entertained and educated. Or maybe there's no difference between imagination and reality. Maybe it's worse. Please stay around - there's something only for you in here.

T H E TRAINS

This fear inside me is like a shout and a pulse. It will not let me go. I look for the future and see none. I look to the past and see none. I look to the present and see none. I am in nowhere land, on frontier territory. Stripped of work, address, status, friends, family I stand on this platform at one with the throbbing groaning engines of these machines which come and go, speed and power and travel and unanswered questions. Waiting. The people waste time, feigning patience, distracting themselves from their inability to control time.

The time is yours yet you let these schedules, these fears chain you from living, loving, giving, from speaking. The terror of the unknown, of maybe breaking, if you ate your pride instead of that donut. You say you can't. You're on your way to Xham or Xton. But you're on your way to nowhere until you see. And all you need is here - your mind, your soul, your body, your time. And you let it go like the trains....Another time.. perhaps. But how much time have you got? And what did you do with the time you had? It's not how much you've been given, but what you do with what you have.



The writing is on the wall in these stations of reality. Confronting us with the fact that we have choices to make, good or evil, that we are finally alone and have no excuses. Open your eyes and maybe you'll see. Break your mind and you could be free (and drugs aren't the key To seeing reality)

The train spotters like railway stations. The train spotters sit in anoraks and safety, with notepads and pen and their outward order. They love the precision and accuracy, the dependability, neatness and beauty of these lovely trains, all looking the same



and behaving as they should. The trains know where they are going. They are expected and regular and wonderful machines, marvellous gods in a world of chaos, confusion and reaction.

The writers like railway stations. Structure, pressure, energy. Places where people are waiting, a captive humanity, in a setting of opportunity, of speed, chance, travel, uncertainty, a future,

leaving the past behind. A people where it is harder to smother the soul screams we manage to waste or busy away from each day. The edge, the risk zone, the front line. Will you cross it?

NON GOVERNMENTAL HEALTH WARNING
BEING UNWILLING TO FACE REALITY IS TO BE ILL-PREPARED FOR LIFE.

But train spotters are safe (Ask Julie Dart's murderer) Graffiti artists are a menace to society. Too right they are - to a society which denies the truth. But who is the real destroyer? Lord, have mercy.



NOT FOR SALE

You say you'll give me a name -
Can I give you my pain?
I'm trying hard to understand
What's going on in this land.
Everywhere I go
It's NO, No, No.
I'm trapped,
I'm strapped.
But did you think I'd fall for that?
My soul I won't sell -
I'll suffer here rather than in hell.
You're the devil in disguise
Telling me those lies.
"But I'm helping you
And giving you
A reason for living you
Can be a film star,
A pop star, a model
Or a wife,
A baby-mother, Bad-boy,
But no, you can't live your own
life."

Well think again, Mr
MoneyTrendyBusiness man
Justice isn't a logo.
Faith's no label on my Polo.
I don't want to play your game.
This wild one you won't tame.
My sight's the gift of pain
And my brother's not my shame.

I won't give up.
I won't give in.
The fight is on
And guess who'll win.



by Spon

I N T E G R A T I O N

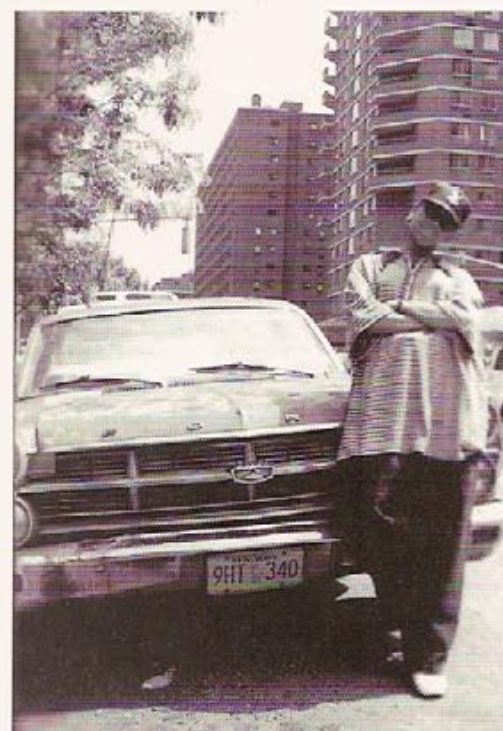
The only integration I know
Is my white mum loved my
black dad
My dad loved my mum.
Now they're dead and gone
And where do I belong?
Their love created me, but will it
now destroy me?
Where do I fit in a divided society?

Integration is not absorption,
Or people distortion
To fit the machine
And keep things clean.

Integration is not identification
Stereotype simulation.
Saying "I understand"
And holding your hand.
Please - not that. Don't pretend.

Integration.
It's impossible I suppose.
But somehow I hope all doors
aren't closed.
Yet to integrate I must disintegrate.

Colour, culture. I don't care.
But I don't want to belong
nowhere.



V U L C A N

The original badboy
burner, wildstyle king.
Just when it seems he's
broken the final limit with
regard to writing, he goes
off through another
frontier we never thought
existed. He has recently
written, while living in Los
Angeles, a screenplay for
a film on hardcore writers
and he is professionally
and internationally known
for his pieces. Yet he still
chooses to live on his
homeground territory in
East Harlem, New York
and his first passion is still
piecing. "I prefer rough
reality to glamour and
vanity!" Something about
a leopard never changing
its spots...

He started writing in 1972, mainly
on the 6 train which took him to
school each day. Although unsure
about why he started, one of the
main reasons was because it was
something he could control and no
one else could - not police,
parents or school. "I liked the
whole idea. Just writing. I liked
writing."



First tags included Vulcan, Stix 2,
Trail 1, Hat 1 but Vulcan was the
name he got up most with.
"I had to write in the day, riding to
school and back. I couldn't go out
at night."
By 1980, he became fascinated by
the new pieces on the trains and
the challenge of developing a
technique nobody knew about.
"I saw wild burners that I couldn't
read. I was pulled by the desire to
have this secret language that
nobody else could understand. I
wanted to learn how to paint like
that. This stuff was more complex
than the stuff that I'd learnt in the
early 70s."
He doesn't describe himself as a
bomber, but as a piecer, a painter.
"My speciality is the wild burner -
the wilder the better. I try to do

stuff that I've never seen before.
"Pieces which have inspired him
were done by Phase 2, Jean 13,
Kase 2, Dez. "These are the
people who were the brave ones,
doing styles and going places
where nobody else had been
before. They rarely got the
respect they deserved."
"I always wanted to be different,
didn't feel I had to follow the
written code. I fell in love with the
concept of burners. I don't want to
paint happy pictures - my joy
comes from portraying fierce, real,
wild, deep emotions - the "I'll-
f--- you-up" ghetto-style, down-
and-dirty. That's burning for me.
That's real.
"People talk and talk about 'art'.
You don't have to be able to
UNDERSTAND it to have it move
you. And, to be honest, I don't
care if I'm not understood. I do it
anyway. I do it cos it's how I am,
not because it's down or to be
acceptable. I do it for those I
respect - other writers and for
myself. It's done for the hardest of
the hardcore, not for fame or
money. Strictly for the hardcore.
If you don't like my style, you don't
like my style, but I'm here and
doing it anyway.
"Yes, my style alienates a lot of
people - the people who don't feel,
don't care, can't or won't under-
stand or see. My first piece in
1973 now seems like a joke. I
gradually developed my style.
Now I just do pieces and burners
when I have a specific idea in my



mind, something I can be proud of, not just writing for the nostalgia. Three months ago I did a whole car on the 5 train but it was buffed the next day. But painting trains doesn't make you real. It's what, where and how you write.

"I think writing has changed a lot. I remember seeing the first piece on a train in the 70s. Nowadays it would look like the sloppiest, easiest thing to do but then I did not have a clue how somebody could pull that off. A lot of writers today do not give props to the original pioneers. But they should remember that if nobody did it before you, if someone hadn't broken the ground, it wouldn't exist. There would be no way to know how to do it. You're trying to figure out how to technically do something that has never been done before. This is the evolution of an art form."

There are many vicious rumours and myths generated about aerosol culture, which Vulcan was eager to put to rights:

"Graffiti is always being defined and stereotyped. I don't call myself an aerosol artist or a graffiti artist. I'm a writer and do pieces and burners. For me, graffiti is vandalism. Tagging and disrespect, going over, destruction. If it takes 8-15 hours to do a piece, you can't seriously describe that as defacing a building. Writing is about reclaiming territory, of breaking free from a prison-like society.

Too many people let somebody else control what they should have control of - the expression of yourself.

I respect writers who respect themselves. I respect dignity. So many young writers now have no respect for anything. They'll write over a piece in a second - show no respect, thought or understanding. That just makes you more of a toy. You should have some type of comprehensive thought or philosophy beyond what you're doing, whatever aspect of writing you're doing. You can be a bomber or just do plain pieces or burners. But you must show some level of respect for what you do and a game plan.

"My game plan is just to burn. Fly shit. Everytime I paint. And the paint I use at the moment is any I can get my hands on! I

prefer Buntlak (someone out there send me some cos we can't get it here!) but usually use Krylon. If you make a mistake you can go over it. You can always fix it, unless it's your style that's wrong! My outlook on writing is going to be different from a five year writer from Europe. I've seen so many pieces, what may be new to them, is old to me. The piece which inspired them I saw the piece which inspired that piece ten years ago!

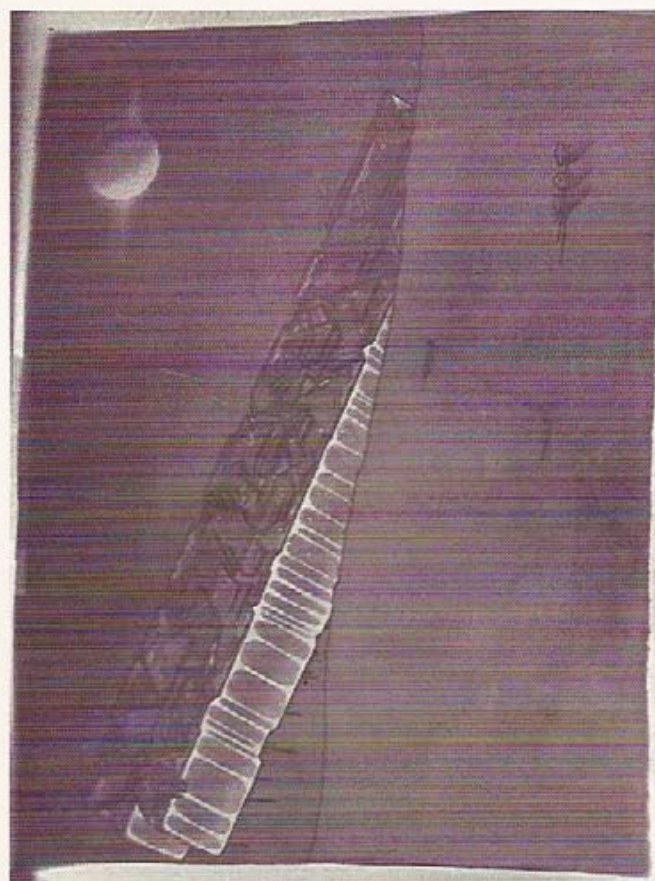
"The most dangerous change has been the change in attitude of writers. It's become selfish and ignorant and if the culture dies it will come from within not without. There used to be a lot more unity - writers against injustice, the system, the authorities, the police. But now it's writers against writers, us against us. No respect for anybody. In New York, writing has gone backwards. The young kids just want to street bomb and write over anything.

"If they can't respect people from within their own group, how can they expect people from outside that group to respect them? So Vulcan's still burning, thank goodness

And a last word to those involved in the writers' competition in London:

"I'd just like to say I didn't think that competition was set up correctly, me being the only judge there. I don't think that was right. I asked for at least 2 more judges but the promoters wouldn't pay the travelling costs for more than one. All I could do was say my opinion on what I saw.

There should have been other qualified writers there to balance out my opinion. But I also think European writers should be grateful to get a chance to paint in an environment like that. All the time I've been in New York, we've never had anything like that. You shouldn't enter a competition unless you're prepared to lose."



Young life must go through chaos or there is no development possible

FREEDOM-FIGHTERS?

"It's amazing how much gangster art exists in countries where there are no 'gangsters' or gun-related incidents. How many of these guys ever had a gun or even used one? Ever stood next to someone who got shot? Ever seen a friend literally blown in half? Shot in the head? Most probably don't even know anyone who's caught a bullet in the glove.

That's what you hear. Actually, the second Bill of Rights states "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed".

It says nothing about individuals, whether they are hobbyists, religious fanatics, law-abiding citizens, gangbangers, cops, paranoid schizophrenics or wannabe hipsters, bearing arms. Granted, the US constitution was written, like "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" for the white man who owned property. Most of your ancestors were in chains or if they were of European stock, hopefully they were fleeing conscription in some monarchy's army.

Still, ideas on this piece of paper inspired children of slaves and immigrants alike. "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness". Of course, there was a lot of dreaming and a nightmare reality. The dream of happiness through the pursuit of greed and conspicuous consumption.

"Violence is as Amerikkka as apple pie"

The Black Panthers, and to some extent, The Young Lords, were the closest in this century to the embodiment of this idea of a well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free people. They were real militants, revolutionaries whose job was to understand the power of the gun in relationship to the power of the people. It freaked the white power structure to see black men and women toting guns, especially when the guns were not a means to get paid, but a tactic to patrol the police in their communities. Free breakfast programs. Free schools. A free people. It was "Seize the time" and they paid for it with their lives. Bodies weren't the only toll.

Today, hip hop nation's images of young brothers showing off with guns is understandable: but they are only IMAGES of individuals still trapped in a real DISgraceful situation - THE AMERIKKA DREAM.

It shouldn't take guts to shake a dream; but why is it so hard to get a handle on this reality of violence plaguing our lives? GUN-CRAZED! What does this have to do with empowerment? Where is the consciousness of a free, fighting people?"

by Phase 2

Any obstacle to justice makes humanity seethe.

"The price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro is the price of its own destruction. The hour is late; the clock of destiny is ticking out; we must act now before it is too late"

Martin Luther King

"The denial of freedom to an individual is a denial of life itself. The very character of the life of man demands freedom. Freedom is the chosen fulfilment of our destined nature".



THE REAL OLD SKOOL

PHASE 2 Granddaddy of aerosol art gives some words of warning and wisdom:

"Writing is not about hip hop and breaking. People were writing at least 10 years before hip hop, from 1967/8. The subculture was there already. We've always danced, we've always had a whole culture nobody knew about. The baddest writers learnt on the streets. The ones who have stayed true to that deserve respect not the ones that go off doing stupid art shows and separating themselves from the culture.

"Fellows got respect long before we started doing canvasses. Nobody should tell you where to paint. What happens if there are no more trains or buses left? You stop writing?!

It's like sport. Within yourself you've got to know you're a good player otherwise even if you are a good player, you'll still fail. You have to be sure within yourself, have to know what you are about. **You must embrace the culture for yourself, not for anybody else.**

Twenty years I've been living and breathing this thing. My cousin was writing Lee 163D back in the late 60s/70s. He let me try my hand at it. And that was it - off I went. Aerosol art.

There are certain people who want to destroy everything, to dictate and control and collect money for it. To destroy our youth.

"Every f####ing day I'm reminded I'm a 'nigga'. No matter how talented or intelligent or strong you are, there's no way you can ever wear a three-piece suit and be accepted like a white man. **Doesn't matter if you go along with every single rule and regulation, play their game. You're a nigga....for life. I realised this at a very early age and decided I might as well not waste time, just get on with being myself, stuff what anyone else thought.**

In '78 we were still djing, holding rap parties in the park. I've been playing records for ages. That's how we are, how we feel. Not because it's cool. It's just us. There is a drastic difference between hardcore and a bum. **Hardcore is an attitude.** Bum is copping out. Hardcore isn't "I-done-10000-pieces-i-done-dis-I-done-dat". It's the renegade. It's being ready to dis everything that's wrong about this world and to take the s### for it. It's sticking to your word even when it hurts. Why writers write, why djs dj, why dancers dance, with or without money, approval and acceptance. You get more respect if you speak up against what's wrong, state what's right. Absorbing reality goes deeper than just absorbing the facts. That's why I paint the truth.

"No child is born hard but out here you learn it. You have to make a choice early.

I started writing cos that's how I felt and that was the way I was saying it. You do s### cos that's how you feel. I wanted to create something good, instead of all the mess I saw around me. The public can respect your art, notice your art even if they don't understand it mentally. It doesn't matter if you can't read it. You can read it in another way. Why should I alter my style so people can understand it? I think that whole attitude is wrong. The whole point is that it is a challenge to your way of seeing things.

"I want to teach people. If you're going to give so much, it must be real. You must write from inside, have something to say, show some understanding and humanity.

"I had the desire and the quest then. I still do. Once you understand something's wrong, nothing can numb you to reality. Society's f####ing me and my ass. I've got to work 10 times as hard as the next muthaf####a just because I'm black. I'm a prisoner in my own city. I daren't go to the Bronx - I get shot down. Can't go here, can't go there. In America you never know what price you have

to pay for being what you are. I can't afford to walk in the wrong neighbourhood - I stand out like a sore thumb.

That's one reason why writing at night was such a release. Freedom. Doing a lay-up. Able to be everything you are without all that pressure.

I'd rather give something to my culture than to society. If I was to wait for people to legalise what I am and what I do, I'd waste my life. So I just do it anyway. This art is my life. Hip hop - this is how we live, man. Not "this is cool". We've always partied - we had to. We've always made music. I disrespect those who are mentally hard and those artshows and their work. People say "Who's your enemy?" The enemy is everything that's going to destroy our art, our youth, our future.

We've got to stick together whether it's a bad scene or not. We can't make it on our own. The only thing that will keep this culture together is to get a unity, to come together more. Writing - we've created our own language, our own alphabet. I'm not surrendering this up to anyone. I say to those who copy, write-over, sell-out - don't! You're taking everything we built and risked backwards. I don't care if you're in my 'group', you're destroying, you're my enemy whatever colour or class you are. **YOU ARE AN ENEMY TO YOURSELF AND YOU ARE AN ENEMY TO THIS CULTURE."**

NAUGHTY by NATURE

Ready to take on the world, Naughty by Nature still remain true to hardcore hip hop and haven't turned sell-out slip-slop. Tough beats and Treach's dynamic lyrics have proved hip hop's vigour as a living art form. Yet despite heavy schedules and travelling, these three are still East Orange homeboys at heart.

The group (consisting of lyricists Treach, Vinnie and DJ/beatbox KayGee) originate from East Orange, New Jersey where they became friends at High School. Fifteen years old and none of them in the athletics' teams, they decided they better start to show themselves and do something. They entered the school talent show, were a success and decided to take on the local showcases.

Although rap certainly wasn't new, they developed their own style in New Jersey and were in great demand. At last they felt ready to try their luck in New York City. They knew the competition was fierce, the talent shows vicious and tough because people were used to seeing a lot of aspiring musicians. But the challenge was there - and so was 'Naughty by Nature' to 'rock a New York crowd'.

And did they! New Jersey homegirl, rapQueen Latifah asked them to support her at a show doing freestyle, and then on the road. The crowd liked them and the rest is well-chronicled history...

Treach: "I think of our music as classical hip hop. It's street music but it's also stuff you can sit back and listen to, chill out to at home. It's music with depth as well as rhythm and rhyme.

I hope my music gives the people a good feeling and a good vibe, to go away feeling satisfied and happy. It's designed to keep you groovin', lyrical and full of production. We're always making up new material. I'd rather do too much than too little.

Our homies is where we get our schooling from - where all our ideas and inspiration come from.



Our aim is to make sure our homies is straight, to say "you CAN come up and out of the ghetto without selling out". Our homies are locked down or on the street. We still live in the same 'hood, stay faithful to the crew. **I guess my main message is to say: "You can do it" - to give positivity and courage to people.** You don't have to do rap or swing, be a rock star, athlete, model. You can have your own rak. They treat you like you're stuck to the ghetto. **But that's not true. You can live in the 'hood and still be all that you want to be. Just cos you're from the 'hood ain't nothing to be ashamed of.** So believe in yourself. You've got to stay true to yourself because you've got to live with your own actions.

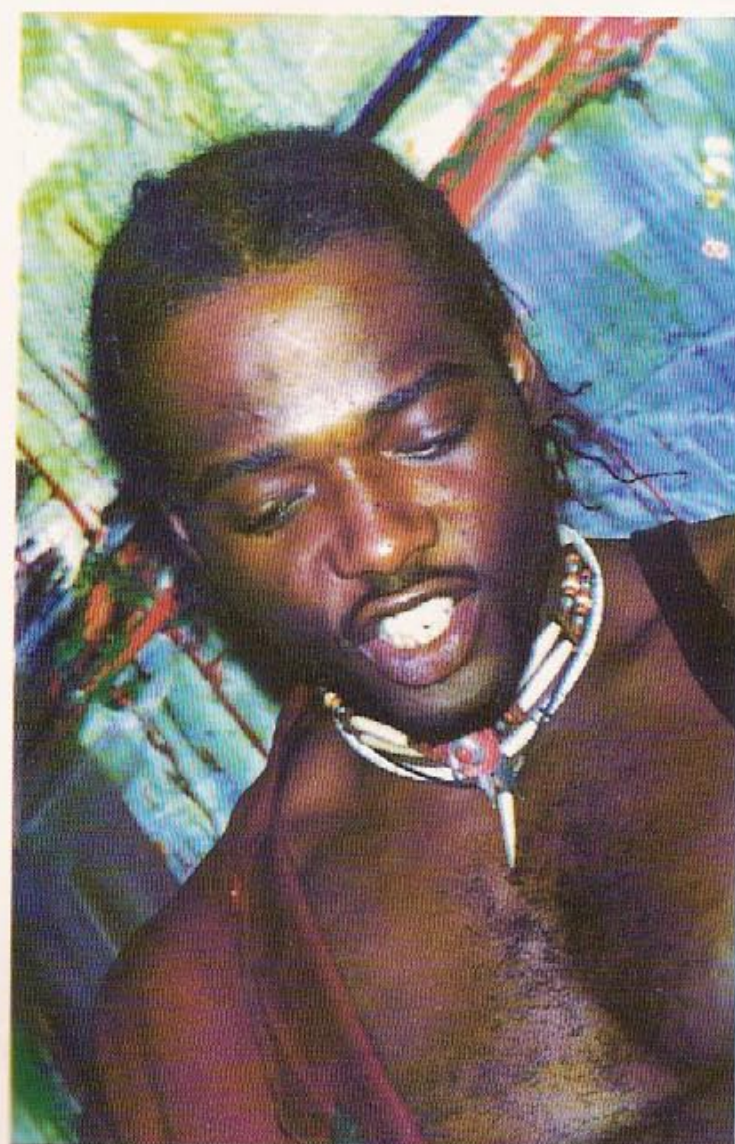
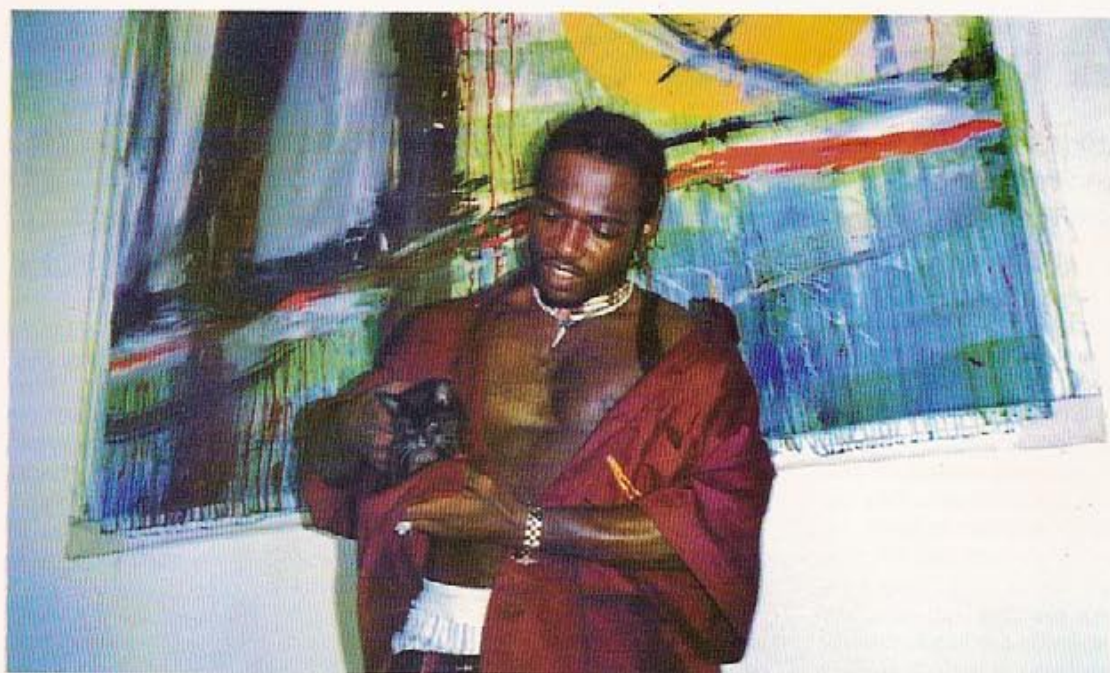
I think the biggest opposition to young people today is that there is no home training - no one to look up to. There's no father figure except the streets (check out "Daddy was a street corner" - editor). I go to my homie for help, advice, support. Kids go to their homies instead of their parents.

It's a tough world and either the parents aren't there or don't understand the realities we're facing.

Now you can't talk to kids like they kids. You have to talk to kids like they adults because they're living with adult realities - drugs, violence, relationships, death, poverty. Kids have to grow up fast. I think it's bad. You've got to have your childhood and have fun and learn slower. Now kids are too old too soon.

My music tastes cover just about everything! I like rap, reggae, R&B, rock and roll, jazz. If I hear it and like it, I'll play it. When "Nirvana" Smells like Teen Spirit came out, I was singing that round the house for weeks!

To relax, I just do regular stuff: hang out with the boys, parties, play basketball and pool (I'm a BIG pool player - I love it!) and go to the pictures. My favourite number we've recorded is OPP cos it took us to where we wanted to be and my aim is to tour with Janet Jackson. Yep, I'm a real Janet Jackson fan. I want to open our music up to more people."



From "Sleeping on Jersey"
by Naughty by Nature
**"Never turn Hollywood
Turn, burn Hollywood...
Who the hell is
concerned
What the blacks earn
Not a moth****ing soul
Unless you sell your soul
Or your record sales
blow..
The bad does dirt
The good get hurt
It could get worse
The 'hood comes first."**

SPONtaneous combustion

"Occurring without external cause or incitement; automatic, instinctive, natural (in style or manner), unconstrained. IGNITION OF SUBSTANCE BY CHANGES WITHIN IT."

Well, that just about sums him up. The phantom original garbage truck bomber. Six in the morning and New York's East Harlem stinks, as usual. More than usual because the garbage vans are out. In the midst of this urban nightmare of rot and waste, a shout is heard. A cry of surprise and joy and hope, affirming truths and creativity in a world which is set on destruction. Spon is cleaning up the city.

"I never set out to be a writer. You know how people are supposed to say to you as a kid 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' Well, no one ever asked me. I never thought I had a choice. I just did what I had to do to survive. I've been writing over 14 years now.

I started writing in '79, but seeing fresh pieces on the subway trains inspired and motivated me further. I went out with a couple of other kids in the 'hood. I wrote on the trains 2,4,5,6,CC and D. In my younger days, I did a whole car ('ZEY'). Mostly I'd go out with other kids, including Kas 1, TFT Crew, Alpha 1, Sweet, DDK, the Dead End Kids. I got the latter to go on the subways instead of just bombing the streets. No one taught me to write. If someone was to teach me, I'd have that style. My style just comes out the way it is. 'I just let it flow cos that's how it has to go'.

The only slight recession graffiti saw was when they took away the trains. But then we just found other places to write.

I used to come back from bombing early in the morning when the garbage vans were going out. I would see these aluminium trucks covered with scrubby, disrespectful tags and I thought how much



better a piece would look, so I started. Gives the public something different to look at and the guys who do such a lousy job for everyone so early in the morning. When you are bombing, you are always looking for something new to hit.

I do a lot of characters to deepen my work. When I was really young, I could draw them ok. But at that age, my peers didn't think I could do it and didn't want to be upstaged by a little young kid that wasn't known. So they kept me in the background. For me, a character enhances the piece - shows a side that you don't see when you just do letters. Doing pieces and doing characters are two different things. Characters by themselves are nothing. You must be able to do the letters first - the characters come next, bringing out another dimension to the piece. Graffiti is the art form of expression through lettering.

I try to do outlines before I go out piecing but then again I get my name "Spon" from the fact that I am spontaneous. I'll see the outline in my head and then on the wall. I'm on a mission and I haven't got time to waste. The worst feeling is not being able to complete your work.

The only commissioned pieces I've done are store gates (the corrugated iron shutters New York shopkeepers use when shops are closed).

New York has influenced me a lot

as a writer as it has exposed me to so much. But in writing, it's not so much experience as your mind. Your mind's the limit. You can go as far as your mind will take you. A lot of writers continue doing the same type of style, the same foundations on their pieces, or burn out. Then a lot of new writers are taking styles from the masters, reapplying them and passing it off as their originality. But a real writer will know a recreated style from an original style. Music inspires me. I listen to a song and I feel like drawing six different pieces from that one song. Every song I listen to, I visualise a piece to match it. When you are that far into graffiti, it's always at the back of your mind - it just becomes a part of you.

Graffiti is a means of expression. Out here it is the survival of the fittest. No way you can make it if you fake it. You can dress like the ghetto, talk like the ghetto, but if you don't KNOW what struggle's about, you're going to be sucked in, one way or another. It is hard and vicious and you have to be strong and determined to keep your soul alive and get out. I love and hate the ghetto. I wouldn't have learnt my art without it. Street art is about presenting how you feel, how things are. It's not changing or making something look pretty or acceptable in a gallery. Graffiti isn't ashamed of itself.



There are the believers and the non-believers. Mayor Cox was a non-believer. He just saw that graffiti was out-of-control youth rebellion. But believers (writers) know they have to do it to survive. The Mayor and his friends couldn't see that. A few years ago, graffiti writers used to have meetings with the Mayor and we suggested that we be allowed to do some of the advertising in the city, seeing as we knew all the right spots. But no, they weren't going to pay advertising money to 'vandals', it was to go to the 'professional' organisations. As if we aren't professional! But they said: "We're not paying top money to someone we've already labelled as a vandal". But I think the idea of graffiti writers being advertisers was a good idea. I would just like to see aerosol art accepted by the general public.

Graffiti can't be stopped. It's been going since hieroglyphics. It's about people expressing their reality, seeking freedom in oppressive places, showing themselves. Anybody, writer or non-writer, should really look at what's going on. It is street art, art in its rawest form. There's more quality in graffiti than in most galleries. A true writer is an all-rounder. That means not just tags and throw ups, but original style, bombing, piecing. You have to motivate yourself, be determined to say what you've got to say. The most original stylist I know is Vulcan. Nobody has approached his level. He always goes one step beyond. You feel he really is

writing on the edge of space itself. Also there's Jean 13 - he has some real nice stuff. Few writers dare venture that far, or have it in them to do so, yet for me that's what makes graffiti. The sense of breaking frontiers, pushing on, doing things your way. Graffiti is a self-taught street discipline. Different lines, different styles, different writers gave diversity to the art but it must keep moving on. Influential writers were A1, Waste 1, PG, Seen, the UA Boys (the latter three wrote on the 6 train). If you are not taught, you just make up your own style and that's how new styles emerge. Long live originality! There are a lot of new kids coming up, but they haven't the dedication or stamina. Give me a hardcore ruffian anyday cos I know he's more likely to stay true to the writing game.

I'd say if you're unsure or scared of the risk, DON'T START. It can either wreck your life or build your life. You've got to really know what you're going into. Too many kids are messing up their life by 'dabbling' in graffiti, tagging, doing throw-ups. Also they damage the cause - make the public despise aerosol art as they see it as vandalism.

The difference between a piece and a throw up is that a throw-up uses two colours, soft and round letters. A piece will be more detailed, bright colours, more style, look more complete. Throw-ups are done for fame, the piece should move you deeper, make you feel something else, not just recognition of a name, but a feeling. The piece is art - it expresses something more than just the superficial identity of a person.

You can't curb or stop graffiti; it'll be around as long as the world is, whether it's accepted or not. It's freedom of speech in an oppressed world. It's not just writing for fame, it's saying what you are as a human. Everyone can tag - that's graffiti vandalism. But not everyone can piece. True graffiti is the inner voice.

I'm still writing. I have the heart to do it and I'm taking the risk and if I complete what I set out to do, I'm happy.

I'd like to say a big up to the GNR (Guns 'n' Razors crew) and peace to Reves 127, Jitterbug, Chax, Joves and Aver."

D

A member of THE DESTINY CHILDREN (TDC crew), DC3 was a Queens boy before moving to Long Island. He's been writing for over 10 years and his subway burners and mad style are internationally known.

"My writing mentors were Bio, Sim, Sak, BG 183, Seen, Jon 1, Kyle, Web.

I started writing on the trains with some friends from the Bronx. The first time I did a piece I got chased by police but I still went back to finish it! I was only 15 then. It was on the 5 train. I did a lot of pieces on that line, also on the 6 and 3 train and the letters B and C trains. I could have more than 5 pieces running on trains through Brooklyn, the Bronx and all over the city. Our crew - "The Destiny Children" - were the first crew after the original old school (Tat Crew, Rocksteady crew) to do whole cars.

The Destiny Children (TDC) was made up of Dome (Zoo) who was Spanish, Sho who was white and myself, black. We called ourselves The Destiny Children because when we met we were just kids - friends because of what we were, not what colour or class.



C

We knew what we were about and what we wanted to do so we just did it - hence TDC. We had the same mentality and understood each other.

We did whole cars - windowdown cars like the Old School. We had some beef with PJ. He crossed out a lot of our pieces. I never tagged really - just went straight into piecing. I hate tagging. It's what puts the general public off graffiti because there are these stupid pointless tags or throw-ups all over. Graffiti is street - to make you and those who see it feel good and proud and strong. It's secret and different and special - tagging is just cheap. Disrespect to yourself and your surroundings. It just brings everything down. Anyone can tag - there's no skill involved.

Apart from trains, I did pieces on trucks and went to the Hall of Fame three times. I did a storm train and a train with Sho, real wildstyle.

In my pieces, I try to leave messages. I want people to understand the art better. But I can't change to simplex style. I do wildstyle - the wilder the better. It's like a secret language, a code. The more complicated, the more fascinating. I want it to be unreadable even for other writers! Vulcan's style is the wildest I've ever seen. Other writers I'd rate

3



for wildstyle are Duster, Kase 2, Doze. For myself, writers who inspired me and who I still admire are Jean 13 from the Old school, Phase 2, he really has a unique style. Vulcan, dome's style was good and all of the Tat Crew.

I moved to Seattle for a while. I started writing on freight trains and buses, as there was no subway system. I think the new development of writing on freight trains is logical - moving on from subways. Now it's All Country (LA to NY) instead of All City! There are good new artists coming up from all over the world - Amsterdam, NY, UK, Holland, Australia, California, Denmark. These guys are good. They get their props.

For me, subway writing and underground art is about expression, youth expression, the society of tomorrow. It's very important. It's the start of reality and growth. It's a secret society.

But it's art too. You also want regular people on the street to like it. You want it to be part of society. You want recognition from regular people, not just other writers. The tagging messes up true graffiti. It gives the public a prejudice against the art. The taggers are toys who are more into the "scene" than real expression, but they are the ones destroying what others have risked so much to create.

Graffiti can't be stopped because with every generation there are writers. Fourteen year olds learn it from older guys, brothers, friends, cousins. Like with rapping, dancing, breaking - it's all part of the same family.

One Christmas, Vulcan and a group of us went down to a train lay-up. Vulcan found some Styrofoam blocks and he did a mad, wildstyle piece on the car using these Styrofoam blocks on the train. They looked like rocks! It ran. He used some real hard glue and certainly all the conductor remembered that for a long time. They had to! That night we got chased. The cops came up because they smelt the spray paint coming up the vents. The cops were running after me in this real skinny tunnel, just two feet wide. That was not nice!

I hate the elevated trains, the ones that run across the city into the Bronx and Queens cos I'm scared of heights. One time I went up with Wane and another writer, Joke, and had to walk on these boards with a 100 foot drop below me. My piece came out horrible because I was so scared. If you fall, you're dead, period.

Another night, I was with this writer Joey, a fat boy. We were doing some two-by-four trins on the bridge. As he was running along, the boards were BENDING and I was right behind him. I gave the elevated trains up soon.

In the winter, the trains are hidden under the tunnels. The graffiti writers know about it - it's like Christmas to us! We had Goldie, a writer from Birmingham, Vulcan, Sho, Dome, Reas and myself. We did a whole car together."

DC3 now designs made-to-order air brush T-shirts. So far he's had orders from all over the world and



he's only been open a few months. Apart from a 2 line ad in hip hop magazine "The Source", he's not advertised or even set out a catalogue as yet. Warner Bros. for Columbia Pictures have asked him to design the promotional T-shirt for next year. "I've designed a real mean and nasty rabbit!"

"I do whatever design people want, although I also do my own which sell fast. The shop's called "Undaground Phlavas" because it's giving people a taste of that underworld art.

I'm really glad I got out and wrote, did something creative now. I'd say to young kids be yourself, be original, whatever form it takes. Stick at it."

Aside from writing, he still raps in his band "The Rowdy Bunch" with Ali and Essioari the Djs.

For more information on DC3's T-shirts or to place an order, write to:

Undaground Phlavas
60 S Main Street
Freeport
New York 11520
USA tel. 516 546 68146



Art Degraded, Creativity Denied - the mechanisation of materialism
written by

Fista

"Some people say graffiti art is anti-social but, in my opinion, that's completely hypocritical, especially when we are constantly bombarded by billboards advertising consumer goods to bemuse and amuse materialistic minds.

The images and rhetoric of advertising are there to influence and seduce purely for monetary gain. The views of ordinary people are not considered on whether they want to see advertising hoardings everywhere. But the common people have no power, unlike the advertisers who try constantly to vandalise our minds with images portraying their ideals of a materialistic society.

But the advertisers are not commonly recognised as being anti-social. Why? Because those responsible for the need to promote these have power and money to use us to create their wealth. They abuse their power as we are mere pawns in their game. These companies with their Associates are the ones that regulate what they consider to be acceptable and within the rule of law.

To solely create money from graffiti art is completely contradictory and goes against the whole ethos of our art form. This art form is about creativity and every individual's freedom to express themselves. Therefore, I do not see graffiti art as being anti-social but rather as another form of communication.

Graffiti art has also been viewed as anarchic. So the actions of graffiti artists have been

criminalised and, in turn, this has led to punitive measures being undertaken to prevent the reoccurrence of freedom of expression.

The police, the guardians of the state, have been given the position of maintaining social order and protecting private property and to prosecute those who challenge the status quo.

Recently, in the South Yorkshire area, a wave of "dawn raids" have taken place, where homes have been ransacked and people's belongings have been taken (stolen) without due consideration to the privacy of their victims. These authorities think that by arresting taggers/graffiti artists and imposing fines, community service orders and custodial sentences, they can eradicate the self-expression and individualism which is the essence of graffiti art.

We need to radically change the system so individuals can achieve freedom to express themselves. People are expected to conform to the rules. Conformity, however, denies humans vision and healthy deviance, natural development.

For graffiti art to survive, in my opinion, there needs to be more unity between serious writers. This is in the hope of further developing graffiti as an art form and as a movement. Then there will be a continuing awareness of graffiti in communicating further the creative aspects of this art form.

Graffiti isn't just painting a nice piece or writing on a train, bus or wall. It is our form of communicating as well as a reaction to the way we are treated within this system because to "them" all we are just cogs in the machine. It's as if we are unable to think and make decisions for ourselves, because they'd rather make them for us.

In conclusion, don't forget what graffiti is about. It's not about the money of canvasses and legal commissions. I'm not writing down the people who do that, but being free to express yourself by doing so-called illegal pieces and trains is more true to the roots of graffiti rather than selling out yourself and every other graffiti (or is that aerosol?) artist. Graffiti was started by oppressed young people reacting to the destruction of what they saw and the society which didn't recognise them, until they picked up a can of paint and gained the recognition that the system denied them.

Bombin' under the city NYC 93 by

Mist1

"In New York for the third time. This time with Fista and hoping to get a subway car done. After meeting Swatch, he said he could show us a tunnel lay-up on the N line. I would have preferred to do a more famous line like the 2 or 5 train but this was cool.

Before going to the lay-ups Swatch wanted to take us to some tunnels where we could paint a wall. It was near to the lay-ups anyway. But first we were off to the store for some 40 oz Old English. To get into these tunnels, we had to go down about 15 floors by MTA emergency exit stairs. As we went further down, it got colder and colder.





It didn't feel like summer down here. All the way down the steps there were lots of tags and messages, one by Mr Smith "oh Mr Smith, going down?" There had been a lot of writers down here. When we reached the bottom, it was darker, wet and there was a buzzing noise like vibrations. It reminded me of a Planet of the Apes film when he's goin' through tunnels underground with the same sort of noise. We walked up the tunnel to our right. The other direction there were no lights, this way there was one every so often until you couldn't see them. We walked a mile or so, maybe more, lookin' at pieces and writing. We came to some more stairs and there were many pieces there. Swatch said these pieces were done when they had a New Year's party down here. Some of the pieces were Baron, Clark and Ces. Going up the stairs Swatch told us we were now under Roosevelt Island, so we had walked from Manhattan to Roosevelt Island underground and under the East River. On different levels there was Long Island Railroad and subway lines. In one of the subway tunnels was a piece by Cope. Next to it was one of Sabe's throw-ups which I had already seen all over the city. We waited for a subway train to pas. There was a rush of wind as

the train approached at high speed. We went on up more stairs, finding rooms on each level, some like boiler rooms with big pipes all over and some sort electrical fuse box things. Here there were pieces by Swatch, Ces, SMK (from Washington DC) and others, while takin' photos of these pieces my camera died. "What! No, I can't believe it" Fista didn't have a camera. "How can we do trains without a camera? We'll have to get a camera somehow". I wanted to do a piece while I was here because it should last for years, being well underground. I did a quick straight letter piece. I know I couldn't take a photo of it but Swatch offered to come back and take one for me. On the way out of the stairways and tunnels I left arrows for directions so if I came back I could find my piece. We left through the tunnel in which we came but to get to the street this time we came out through one of those trap doors. It's real funny cos people are walking right past



you and you just pop out of the ground. I really wanted to do that. We went on to a shop to get a disposable camera. Now to the trains. Swatch was only going to show us where the trains were and how to get to them. There were two levels on this lay-up. We first went to the

upper level to look through a spy hole in a door where you could see trains laid up. That was a good feeling, being so close to doing a subway car. We went to do the lower level. We waited on the station platform for a train to come then leave, so we wouldn't be spotted in the tunnel. When the track was clear, we ran down the platform on to a catwalk down in the tunnel. We crawled through a hole next to the ground into another tunnel. I was first through. Fista passed through the bags of paint then he followed. I turned to my left and could see the front of the subway car. The pieces were to be simple for speed. I painted next to the MTA sign for the photos and Fista on the next car. This lay-up was cool. There were lights in the tunnel. All the time we were looking out for transit cops and trying to be as quiet as possible. When I had finished my piece, I walked down the other cars and put some tags on the roofs, hoping they wouldn't get buffed. Fista started a colour throw-up on another car. I then went round to hit the front of the train. We took photos and got ready to leave.

In New York now trains don't get bombed like they used to cos of new laws. The trains were where graff was massive and bombin' was believin'.

Respect to all those that made it happen - Mistone.

NAME:

Mental

(at 19 a veteran DJ of 5 years). Not called Mental in vain!

Power

(just 17 and an established MC of 4 years). Originally was to be known as MC Fuse, but being short-tongued, he thought it was a bit 'risky'!

REPUTATION: known in the north (UK) to get the dance floor filled by their unpredictable but predictably zany tunes and lyrics. They've been working as a team for over two years now and this is how and why things are getting better and brighter for the Mental Power crew....

Six years ago, when rave was born, DJ Mental (Richard Williams) began to go on Sheffield's pirate radio station SCR (Sheffield Community Radio) with DJs Rhythm and Reality, who used to allow him to play on their shows. His initial fascination for the music and mixing developed into a skill and led to a spot on Hardcore FM, Sheffield's pirate rave station.

His first live break was at 'Rampage', one of a series of raves held at The Broomspring Centre. He also did all-night raves at The Hub, London Road and at the Hypnosis Centre, Spital Hill along with DJ Eazy D, Sunrise, Mastermind, Dextrous, Rave, Brian G and Frankie Wonder.

"I had two other MCs then - MC Spice and MC Uproar. But they weren't taking it seriously enough. I'd known Patrick (Power) for years and used to dance with his brother Owen on "Ghost Train" and "Club X" on TV. Patrick wasn't MCing, but rapping with a professional rapper from Sheffield, Errol," says Mental.

After meeting at one of the "Rampage" raves, they decided to make tapes together, had a laugh, made promotional adverts for Hardcore FM and then MC Power joined Mental on the Hardcore FM show 6-9pm on Mondays. MC Power was also playing on Mighty FM (Sheffield's reggae/soul pirate station) with DJ Mayhem, Merlin and Grandmaster J.

Mental Power put their namesake into action and started sorting themselves out with rave bookings. "Fantasy" in Bradford 1991 was a big break for them, an 11-12pm slot alongside Carl Cox, Evil Eddie Richards, Graham Dixon and DJ Si. Despite all the top names, it was the Mental crew which got the dancefloor moving. DJ ambassadors from Hardcore FM (Sunrise, Mental and Mastermind) had been doing pilot slots on Bradford's station so Mental was well-known prior to this.

But the rave that really set them off was "Joy" at the BYO, Warehouse, Doncaster when Hardcore FM put on an all-nighter with "Blame" live on stage. DJs included Mastermind, Ecstasy and Bootie.

Mental: "We had the last slot and they loved us! I was asked to go back on twice. The next week Patrick and I were in Pascha's nightclub in Rotherham. We saw Graham, owner of the BYO, asked for a booking and got a resident slot."

"We played every two weeks. But we weren't the youngest crew

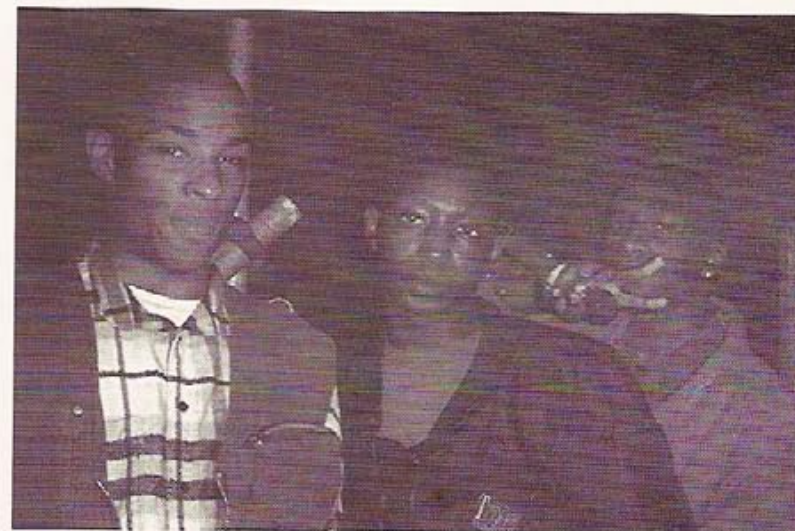
there! There was a sixteen year old, Sound Dominator. I don't know where he is now but he was one safe DJ".

The Mental Power team also used to MC together, lyrics bouncing back off one another, knowing when to drop the right lyric and carrying on til the other one rhymed.

Last year they made a tape and produced 150 of them. They gave 20 away and sold the rest through shops in Manchester, Bradford, Huddersfield, Doncaster, Wakefield, Worksop, Hull, Scotland and Ireland. Also, inspired by Eazy D (Sheffield's hardcore DJ mentor), the duo started to create their own tunes and make dub plates for vinyl production...make records. Since then, they have made seven fresh tracks, some of which have been bought and used by national DJs including SS and Jumpin' Jack Frost.

So what's the clue to all this apparent success and originality? Just born calculated careerists? "We look for surprises in music - pick up on catchy riffs and weave them in. We're also very versatile; listen to everything and play for the crowd," says Power.

Mental: "I keep away from labels and watch the crowd. If I see people leaving the dancefloor to a certain mood/tune, I'll change or if it's another DJ playing, make sure I play with the vibe of the crowd. It depends on how they're feeling and what they're wanting.



Versatility is a major survival tactic for a DJ.

"People are very choosy these days regarding dance music. It's not how it was when rave first started. There are too many sub-sections (garage, techno, ragga, hardcore) and the culture is unfortunately getting divided. Also drugs have been abused too much - when you're off your head, you dance to any sound! So the standard of music and dance falls. People should think about their lives a bit more, not throw away their health and sanity so readily! If you're unsure about a drug, don't take it - don't let anyone persuade you."

Power: "At present in the house dance scene, there are too many things coming in too quick and going out too quick, too many silly categories. People who now hate hardcore used to love it - now there's been a mass movement into garage. They couldn't take the pace - couldn't take the breakbeat! When we play nasty, we make them stompers, with some life and energy to them, rather than dark tunes".

Mental: "There are a lot of good DJs and so many have disappeared. Like Mastermind and Sunrise (Three Deck Wizard). They can mix every kind of music and deserve respect and recognition."

As for what's next, that should be no problem for the crew who claim to "Make the music of the future". Their ultimate goal, however, is to start their own record label, bang in the heart of Sheffield. Having sampled tune-creating in the studio, they see this as a natural step from DJing.

"Only playing to a packed crowd beats the buzz of making your own tune. But studio time is expensive".

And I can vouch that they don't waste one minute of that time. Ten square feet of cluttered wires and a grimy window on a Sheffield backstreet doesn't seem an inspiring site for anything, let alone making music. But it seems Mental Power are oblivious to

everything but making the right tune.

Mental: "What do you think of this?"

Power: "Nah. Can't keep it like that. Don't want them getting bored. Number one priority."

And after thirteen hours boxed up in that room, they emerge looking like they've just seen the Last Vision instead of cut a dub plate. That single-minded determination has got them where they are. And it will get them where they want to be.

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST WANT TO CHANGE IN THE WORLD?

Mental: "Racism. People who are against anything different or which they don't understand. Lack of understanding."

Power: "The world".

But where would Mental Power be without their very supportive crew?

Who are:

Baggy and Andy, the chauffeurs
MC Buzz (David Oliver)

Scottie (the ruffian)

A.D. (the dancer)

MC Jaxe

Rebecca (Bad Girl crew)

Little D (the Doncaster massive)

Mental Power send shout-outs to:
Asterix and Space - for not selling out

Eazy D - original Bad Bwoy, the greatest mixer

MC Rush - for being the godfather
DJ Dextrous - Mixmaster, takes the record for holding the longest mix without clashing. Definitely holds the longest mix title.

Mastermind and Sunrise - the old Skool Scratchmasters

MC Jaxe - pick up your

legs!(chest) Keep rocking.

MC Uzi - different MC. Get back on it.

Mental Power's Favourite Tracks:

1 "Return of Nookie" EP by Nookie

2 "Dark as it gets" by Darkman, the Ambient Touch

3 "Dark and Moody 1"

4 "Obsession" by DJ Vibes

5 "Breakage 1" by Third Party

Top MCs compiled by Power:

MC Rush - original rhymes, versatile and he taught and inspired me

Man Pariss - lyrics to be savoured

Mad P - (Top Buzz) Funny MC.

True lyrics.

Lennie - just gets the crowd going

Evenson Allen - (RatPak) different style



JOEY BELTRAM

At twenty one, Joey Beltram has made over 50 records and has his own record label under which he has three other labels - house, techno and hip hop. No need for description; he's obviously a man of diversity, dedication and talent. But how did it all begin?

"I was twelve years old, into graffiti, breakdancing and watching the older kids DJ in the early 80s. I was inspired by hip hop, got hold of two decks and became grafted to djing. I watched the other DJs, bought records, taught myself, listened to a lot of music. POES, King of the M Train in New York city in 1988 was JB himself!

By the time I was 16/17, I knew I wanted to make my own records. From there, I started getting into house music - Chicago music. I was heavily into that for 3-4 years, all that Chicago acid stuff. From house, I went more into the European music, heavy techno. I made a lot of techno records. But recently I've gone back to hip hop, started listening and getting involved. I still like techno, but hip hop is really the quality stuff right now.

I've been into the hardcore jungle scene in England but it's just a bit too busy for me, a bit too wild. I prefer slower grooves. New York (Queens) where I live, has affected my music in that it's harder - that comes from living in a hard city. When I'd decided I wanted to make records, I knew I would need some kind of a musical background. I played around with the keyboards - taught myself yet again.

I usually pick up technical knowledge quickly. I still DJ at weekends, but am a musician in the studio during the week. I've learnt to balance everything out. Techno music is definitely dying in the states. House is still going strong here and hip hop is bigger than ever. I think techno died because a lot of the wrong people got involved and ****ed up the whole scene. Not mentioning any names, but one particular DJ threw a lot of parties, a lot of drugs. The way he portrayed and promoted techno was that you could only appreciate the music if you took the drugs. That sort of mentality is considered really wack by the Americans - all the ecstasy, illegal parties - it's just so wack and not cool in the States. People just aren't into that drugs-are-the-answer scene. He used to pressurise folk to take ecstasy and acid, telling them they couldn't enjoy the music without it.

It just completely ruined the birth of techno over here - gave a completely wrong impression. The best attitude for futuristic dance music is in England, better than anywhere in Europe even. I think it's sad that it can't be the same over here. Look what it's done - brought a lot of people together. It's a big peace, unity thing over in England and is still going strong. I'm always surprised at how many people can be together and for there to be no fights or aggro on the whole. It's completely different to the states - much more peaceful. The people are more friendly and the DJs and mcs have the best attitude I've seen anywhere.

Usually there's so much rivalry and jealousy among DJs, mcs and musicians. But there, it's like they all know they're part of the same cause.

I guess that's why it's still going strong. Techno introduced a progressive sound and influenced other styles. It's a very synthetic yet realistic sound.

Now when I DJ I play a bunch of different things, some hardcore, a lot of house music. I've played at lots of big raves in the UK - Eclipse (Coventry), Universe, Orbit in Leeds. I've also played all over Australia and Europe.

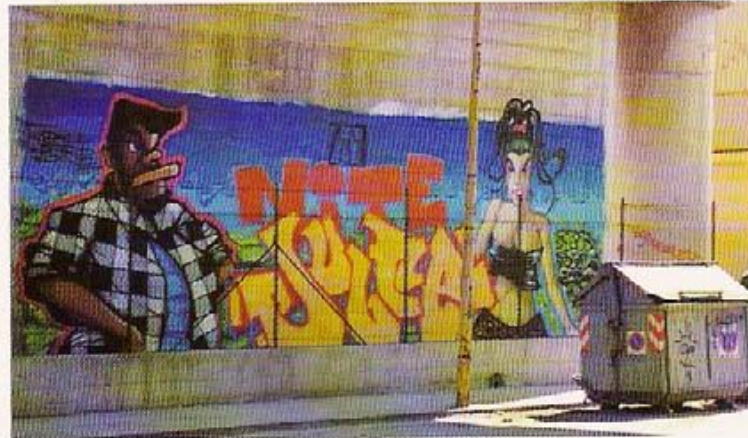
My biggest break came two years ago when I hooked up with a record label called "New Groove". They gave me exposure as a producer and they managed me for a while. Now I'm producing house, techno and hip hop labels. There's A LOT of incredible talent out right now. At present, I'm working with "the Young Black Teenagers" ATA and Scribbler."

His tips for dedicated DJs and would-be producers are:

"Don't rely or copy anyone else's style. Be original, be yourself and develop your own style if you want a long-term career."

Joey Beltram C/O Dynamix Management, Milton Keynes 908 270811.





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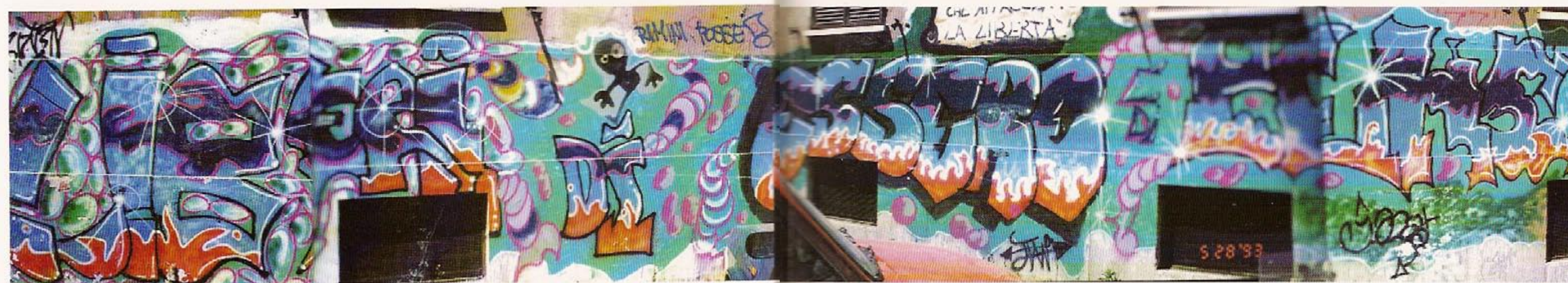
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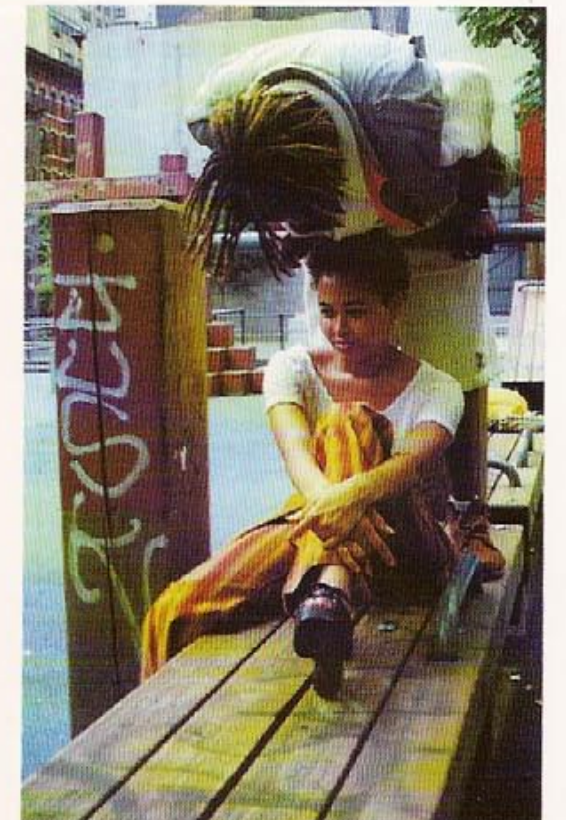
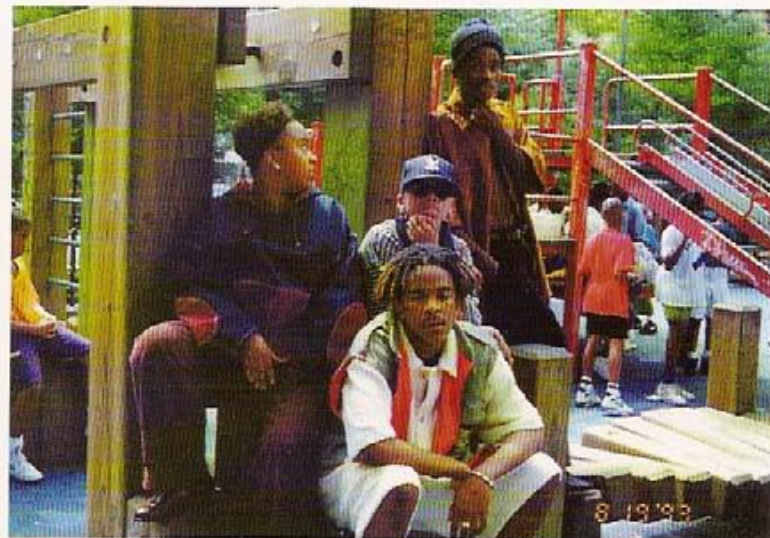
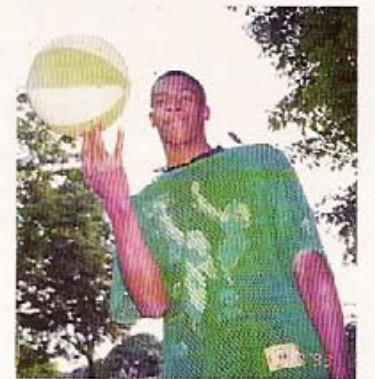
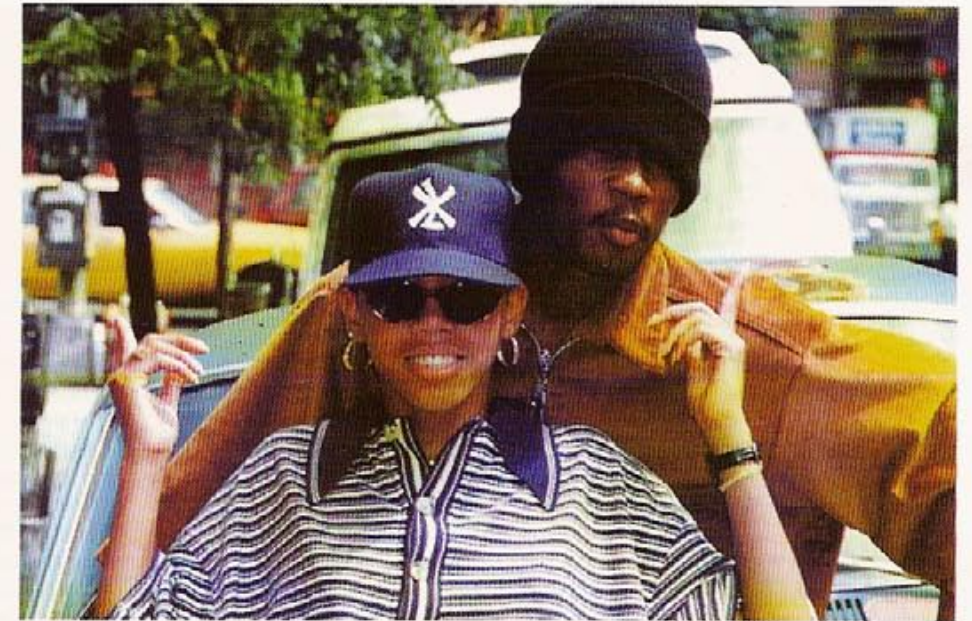
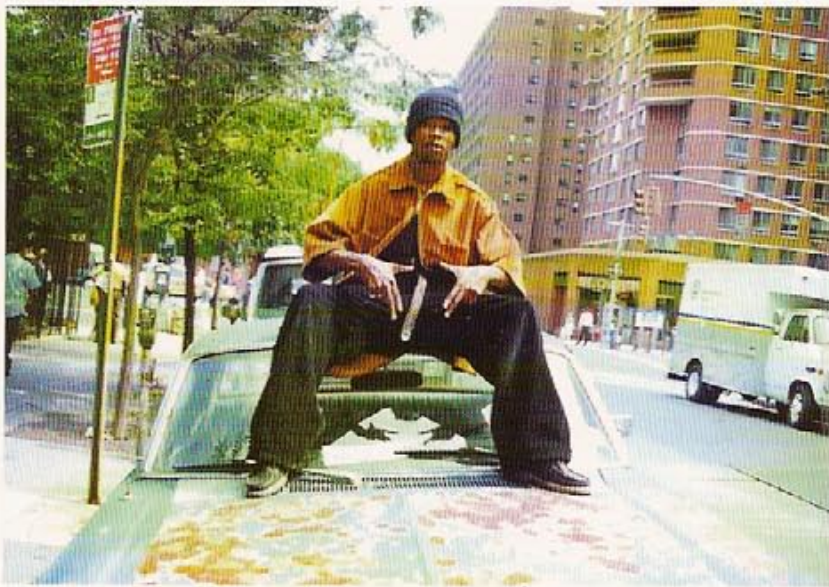
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CITY KIDS

NEW YORK, USA



“EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE, BUILDING MULTI-CULTURAL BRIDGES AND ENCOURAGING YOUTH OF ALL CULTURES TO SPEAK OUT AND BE HEARD”.

Whether you believe in the philosophy or trust any organisation - one thing is clear, City Kids has made a positive and real difference to thousands of inner city young people, of whatever race, colour and culture.

Begun in 1985 by Laurie Meadoff, a young film producer and director as well as a qualified teacher, City Kids is a not-for-profit organisation based in New York. It promotes positive values and creativity via programs focusing on self-esteem, education, environmental awareness, health and global issues. There is no 'philosophy' or doctrine save the kids' own ideas, thoughts and feelings expressed through art and action. Ms Meadoff intends that the voice of youth, "the largest untapped natural resource", is heard in the most powerful arenas possible. So far they have been heard and been effective in change in social service organisations, local and state government (they have spoken out in the White House and to numerous governors), the entertainment industry and public and private corporations. I spoke to some of the young people involved in City Kids during the filmshoot for their forthcoming TV series "City Kids". They all had their own different ambitions and

dreams, but what came out was how City Kids had supported them in this. By mixing with others, learning to work together, they had discovered not only what made other people tick but what they as individuals really thought and wanted. Through expression they had come to realisation. "We're trying to be normal kids in a world where it seems like the norms are poverty disease homelessness pollution violence broken families".

The TV series will be shown on ABC channel Saturday mornings in USA in collaboration with Jim Henson productions. Yes, the muppets are in it - two girls called the Dirt Sisters who gossip on the phone, some characters called "In the Head" who deal with inside thoughts on how things happen, a captain, a private and a libido. There are also music videos, the music created by Malik Yobo and Ralleigh Neal, two leaders in City Kids. But the rest of the crew for the series are all real-life city kids.



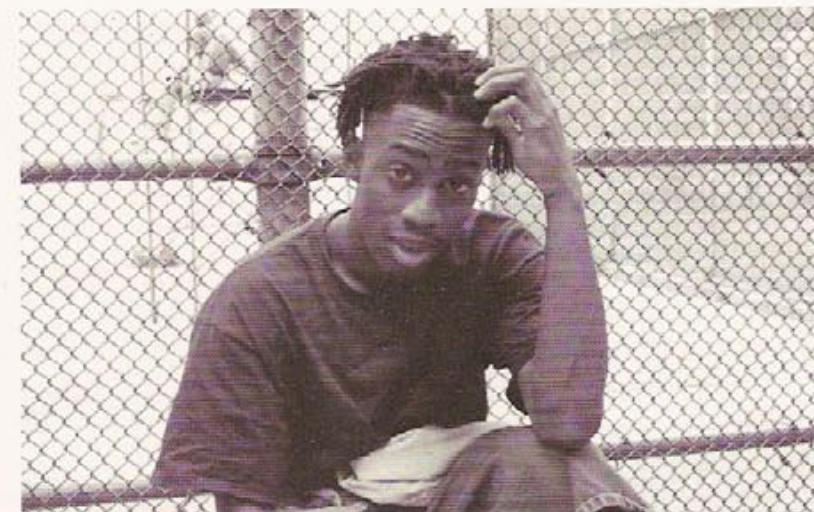
Creative assistant Moses said: "We want to speak, to reach out to the young ones, the new generation. To say we CAN live together. All the kids are from different cultures, races, classes but they were all friends before the series. For them, this is just another activity. They don't have to act like they get on together, they already do! In fact, some of them have been complaining that it's too much like real-life. They want to do some proper acting!" I spoke to some of the "city kids" about their characters and whether this integration thing was farce or reality. Diana Waters (21) plays Nicky, a 16 year old older sister type. Her parents are divorced, she is moody and very sensitive, also very caring and protective towards her younger brother. "Nicky always says what's on her mind and is a bit of an activist. She gets annoyed that her little brother always tags along and would prefer him to have his own friends, but she loves him desperately. I think City Kids is like a microcosm of the rest of the world. Because of the way society is, we are not always allowed to talk

about things we do. I think we should celebrate our differences - that's what makes the world beautiful, because we're not all the same.

City Kids is definitely about different cultures. It's like society put up all these walls and they are being broken down now, thanks to the works of strong, brave people. We're not trying to spell out integration, we're just doing it. People have been fighting to break down these race/culture walls for ages, especially since the 60s. Now it's no big thing. When kids see the show they'll just think "There's a bunch of regular, normal kids hanging out" whereas an older person might think "Oh my goodness, there's interracial mixing".

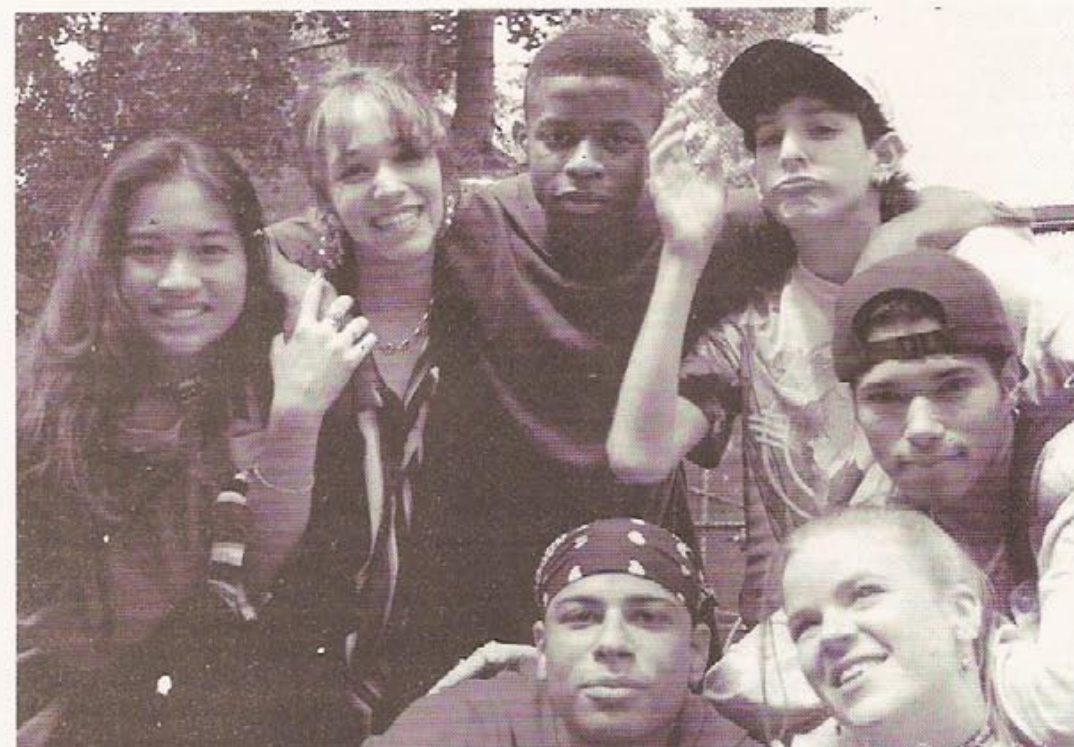
Renoly Santiago (19) plays Tito. Tito is a deep-thinking graffiti artist, never afraid of change. His mother died when he was young and he lives with his elder sister. Renoly has been part of City Kids since it started and is now part of the production group, writing scripts and a speaker for the group.

"I was born in Puerto Rico and came here when I was four. I consider myself very much in touch with my Dominican roots. I'm very proud of where I came from. New York has been good for



me. The city has exposed me to so many different cultures and experiences which has helped me develop as an artist. I'm definitely a city person and I love New York.. I think "City Kids" is a great thing because times are hard and kids have to grow up faster. They should have the power and protection to help them with this. CK has given me the safety and space I needed to grow up in. Integration is not about living the same way as other people do, but having patience and understanding. Diversity feeds all of us." Mikel Washington (19) is a dancer and extra on the set. "For me, CK is about the urban

youth, how we think, the realities we face. It's not about hate or separation. You keep your own integrity yet can learn from other people and their differences. I think it's great cos it would be dull if we was all the same. I enjoy acting, and I'll keep going as long as I can. But only 15% of those in the Actors' Union make a living out of it. I don't somehow think I'm in that bracket! But I'd like to put my vision into action - be a director or in production." Anne Ho (18) plays Susan, the level-headed guide of the group. Anne is Chinese or an Asian American. "At CK, people aren't looking at



your skin colour as a priority. I think the city is a good place where all these people are learning from and how to live with each other. It hasn't been a damaging experience for me, quite the opposite. In the episodes we're shooting, I generally just pull on my own experiences to understand how the character feels."

Cyndi Cartagena (17) is Spanish and plays Angelica. Angelica is a big mouth, outspoken and very "what-you-see-is-what-you-get". Nothing much bothers her, she's loyal and streetwise.

"I've always lived in New York. The city teaches you a lot of things. I like it better that I know the hard way. Integration works. It's possible if you believe in it. We work hard at making it happen. If not the first time, then the second or tenth. I guess Angelica is a lot like me. Oh, in one episode, when a guy lies and tells his mates he's been with me, I have to slap a pudding in his face. I'd never do that in real life! You'd get a punch in the mouth if you did that round here!"

Dule Hill (18) plays John. Dule lives in a New Jersey suburb, is not a "city kid" but he understands what it's about so who cares? "John is very sure of himself, or likes to think he is. He's a real ladies' man. He likes bugging out and having fun. He's very into his heritage and stuff. His parents are both teachers or professors, upper middle class. Actually, deep down, he's very unsure of what he is."

Brad Stoll (16) is the baby of the group but certainly doesn't think like one. He plays David, the younger brother of Nicky. "The rest of the cast are great with me. We're all friends. I'm never made aware that I'm younger or know less. Where I come from, Long Island, it's mainly white. I never thought much about racism before coming to CK. Separation is a bad thing. Everyone should be equal. cos division destroys."

Hassan ElGendi (rap name Has Du) is half-Egyptian, half-Afro-Caribbean. He plays Snoopy a poet-in-motion rapper, constantly thinking of something poetic in his mind he can put to music. He lives in a group home, unlike the rest of the kids. He is more sensitive and intelligent than

he appears, but in a group home, it's not cool to show it.

"Snoopy is too much like me! I'd prefer to do some real acting, you know - a character completely unlike me who gets the girl of his dreams and rides off into the sunset! But I don't live in a group home. Snoopy is really loyal to his friends; friends are his family. He rhymes and toys with the idea of becoming a rap artist but he's not sure. He wants to ask a lot of questions and find out about stuff, he's smart, but it's not cool to show it so he's a bit frustrated too. In 1986 a couple of friends of mine said they were going to make a record. Everyone laughed but I believed them and did a dodgy tape. They thought it funny but still asked me to join them. I kept on writing and rhyming. I have rhymes written everywhere I go, books full of them, tickets, paper plates. I kept wanting to get into the studio. Same old story...I used to MC at clubs in the Village. Then a friend of mine told me about CK, that there were fly girls there. So along I went and yes, there WERE fly girls there! I stayed around for a while. There was a party. I went to a meeting. They talked about a lot of stuff and I liked their debate, how they went about things, how people could say what they felt and then everyone would decide what to do about that problem or idea. There was an event on emotional abuse - parental neglect which is just as important as physical abuse. Hurting your heart is as bad as hurting your body. We did something on liberty - what it meant to be "free" and live in this country. City Kids Repertory, which I'm a part of, is just expressing the ideas we have through art, OUR art not something designed for us.

CK has been great for me, it's allowed me to be myself and not follow a stereotype. I'm from Crown Heights, Brooklyn. A lot of my friends deal drugs.

When I was younger, I wanted to be SO BAD! I wanted to be the baddest, the roughest - drug dealers and roughnecks were my idols, but they would say to me: "Don't do this. Stick to your honour. Go and be somebody."

A lot of criminals are very smart,

clever, creative but nobody ever gave them that break. They don't get recognition. I know people smarter and more creative than me and they live criminal life. I said: "Well, why don't YOU get out and better yourself? Leave all this." But they say, "No, I'm stuck now. I can't get out. You're not doing any of this yet. You go." That makes me sad.

When I was a kid, my mom used to call me in as soon as the street lights went on. The kids used to make a joke of it but now I can see why my mother did that. A lot of my friends are pleased I'm rapping and involved in CK. It seems like I've had an album "coming out" for 15 years, but still they ask me "When's your album out?" and support me so much.

There's another side too. One guy's in a singing group "Full Swing" and he's a stick-up kid. He said to me "You can get large, but if you get too large, I'm going to have to stick you up". That's how it is. Makes me feel I'm still trapped either way."

Desiree Waters (20) is the creative assistant and writer for "City Kids". She came into CK as an actress but naturally fell into leadership through listening to the other kids talking and finding out how they felt.

"I think CK is something every kid should have. It's about building multicultural bridges - by creating safe space. In other words, listening and respect. It gives everyone a space to express how they feel without being put down and without their ideas being changed just because someone else doesn't agree. It gives you an opportunity to create. You can say "I hate the world" and instead of everyone getting on you like you're a freak, they'll say "Why don't we do something?"

I'd written some old poem for somebody in CK and everyone liked it. When the dramatizer (scriptwriter) left, I was asked to fill in because people thought I could write! I was very scared because I wasn't sure I could do it. I'd never written before, apart from poetry and notes to myself. My inspiration and ideas come from talking with the other kids. I think what drives me is remembering how I felt.

How I had all these crazy thoughts inside me, thinking it was me going mad because nobody was putting it into words or expressing it, showing they felt the same. Now when I'm writing, I hope I'm giving some kid knowledge or understanding. Maybe I'll save a life.

I never thought I'd be writing. I refused to learn typing - I was so sure my happiness would lie in acting. But it didn't. And here I am, happier than ever, doing something I never dreamed I'd be able to do.

Eventually I'd like to write children's books. Really silly children's books, like Dr. Zeus. I don't think anybody ever really tells you what's going to happen out there in the world. What happens after High School. No one can make it alone, it doesn't matter how many qualifications you got. We need each other. I wish someone had said this to me when I left, instead of having to learn them for myself:

"Respect yourself. Stay true to your dream. Know that you can't grow without struggle."

BREAK THE MOULD. BE WHATEVER YOU WANT TO BE. STICK TO YOUR DREAM AND DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU YOU CAN'T MAKE IT - IF YOU REALLY WANT TO, YOU CAN. Theorem of the Rainbow (City Kids) written by Audrey Ince, edited by Desiree Waters, Jeffrey Solothey

"In chemistry, you learn that everybody sees slightly different colours and variations in the rainbow spectrum. All these different people, thoughts and feelings are what makes the human rainbow so unique. Yet as young people, we stumble on a legacy of separation. We find ourselves crashing into the bars of the cages that have been erected to keep us separate. But in our souls, deep down, we know that this is fundamentally wrong. We know our chemistry.

And so we find ourselves at City Kids, or City Kids finds us. AND WE BEGIN TO DANCE TO EACH OTHER'S RHYTHMS. Rhythms we have been taught are hateful and bad. Yet we find them beautiful. Still we stumble.

BECAUSE THERE IS NO PRECEDENT FOR OUR DANCE. And sometimes the rhythms clash. Or the chords become dissonant. But we struggle to combine our steps. Form a new dance. In short, we are curing ourselves of separateness. And re-inventing our culture.

And these are what our songs and dances mean to us. They may have been written this month, or last year, but they are enduring and eternal. Because they recognise and celebrate the beauty of our togetherness. And they give us hope. Because in our harmony, if even for just a moment, we have begun to heal the rainbow."

City Kids
57 Leonard Street
NY 10013
U.S.A.

XERXES

Flip, a Slavic New Yorker, goes under the pen name of Xerxes. He writes mainly in tunnels, on walls and basements. He also does a lot of commissioned work in cafes and bars, mainly in Poughkeepsie, New York.

"I've been writing seven years now. I just learnt on the street. I always did my work on my own or at home. Waste 1 and Oz 1 helped me a lot but other than that I didn't have any specific mentors. For me, writing is a means of expression, a message that I exist. I was never interested in art at school. Writing makes me feel good, I feel satisfied. New ideas always come to me and it's a challenge trying to express them through writing, learning new techniques. I'm beginning to work on more details in my style now. I do outlines at home and if I like it, I want to make it larger, share it with other people. I like to see my finished piece."

He admires and has been inspired by pieces done by First Class, Gaze, Freedom and Seen and loves any "totally unreadable wildstyle".

"I've done a lot of commissioned pieces but I always do it simpler. I don't do wildstyle then, although that's what I prefer. I don't think the general public appreciate the craziness of wildstyle, although that's what I prefer."



WHAT TIME IS IT?

What "white" society should realise is how deep-rooted and destructive racism is - to all members of society. It goes further than mere prejudice or discrimination. It rests on judgements about culture and civilisation and who dictates the meaning of science and history.

The denial of values upheld by blacks - love, peace, understanding, tribal upbringing, education and community, celebration of soul and spirit, the onus on caring and sharing rather than self and greed, destroys and impoverishes society. It distorts it, because it makes humanity and each human, whether they be black, white, Hispanic or Eskimo, LESS than what they are. It confines them to stereotypes and limits freedom in every sense. It traps them in superficial images and thoughts. Indeed, many of society's ills - eating disorders, drug abuse, sexual deviancy and violence can be related to the denial of elements real to all humans. By admitting all colours into all areas of society, we free ourselves of the chains binding our own spiritual and emotional health.

Racism is not a thought or word as much as an action - an action killing both white and black. By denying one person physical, material and civil rights, you deny yourself spiritual and emotional health.



Martin Luther King said:

"The price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro is the price of its own destruction. The hour is late; the clock of destiny is ticking out; we must act now before it is too late."

Racism cannot be fought by passivity and absorption, neither by physical violence. It is a violence of the mind alone that is needed, a revolution of the heart. Integration is not saying "We're all the same" - yes, all distorted and confused by years of oppression and hatred.

It can only be fought by listening to the other side. Integration is a two way thing, not absorption.

Surviving slavery took a skill and stamina that no other race has been called upon to sustain. But this is not what others choose to recall. Africa is the most exotic, least-known continent and the remotest from Western experience. Africa is also a symbol - what it says about the human spirit, what it connotes as a way of life. It is more the Africa of history than before the imperial powers arrived. It is also an Africa of the imagination, of music and dance and stories. This Africa speaks for an ancestral humanity, for an awareness of the self, the bonds of tribe and family and community.



In 1990 the unemployment rate for white workers in USA was 4.1%. For blacks it was 11.3%. And the gap between the black and white figures grew during the 1980s, suggesting the economy has little interest in enlisting black contributions.

Yet despite all the oppression and poverty, birth-rates dictate that the approaching century will belong to people of colour. True, the western world still has military might, but it lacks social goals, moral purpose and integrity.

THEY SAID WE HAD NO HISTORY BUT DRUGS, CRIME AND DESPAIR. THAT'S THE ONE THEY RECORDED NOT THE ONE WE DECLARE.



by Part 2 (see later)



THE HALL OF FAME

It is hot in New York. As in steaming. The streets stink, the buildings sweat. Harlem crawls along. At the basketball court off 106th Street, the plaster of twenty years of graffiti fury peels off in a quarter inch layer of housepaint and spray.

Yes, the monster awakes. The big lizard, the rude chameleon is shedding its skin in this heat. All those essential layers of ideas, hopes, dreams, realities hidden, but not forgotten. Expressing the truth, giving the monster life, protection from its enemies, attraction to its lovers.

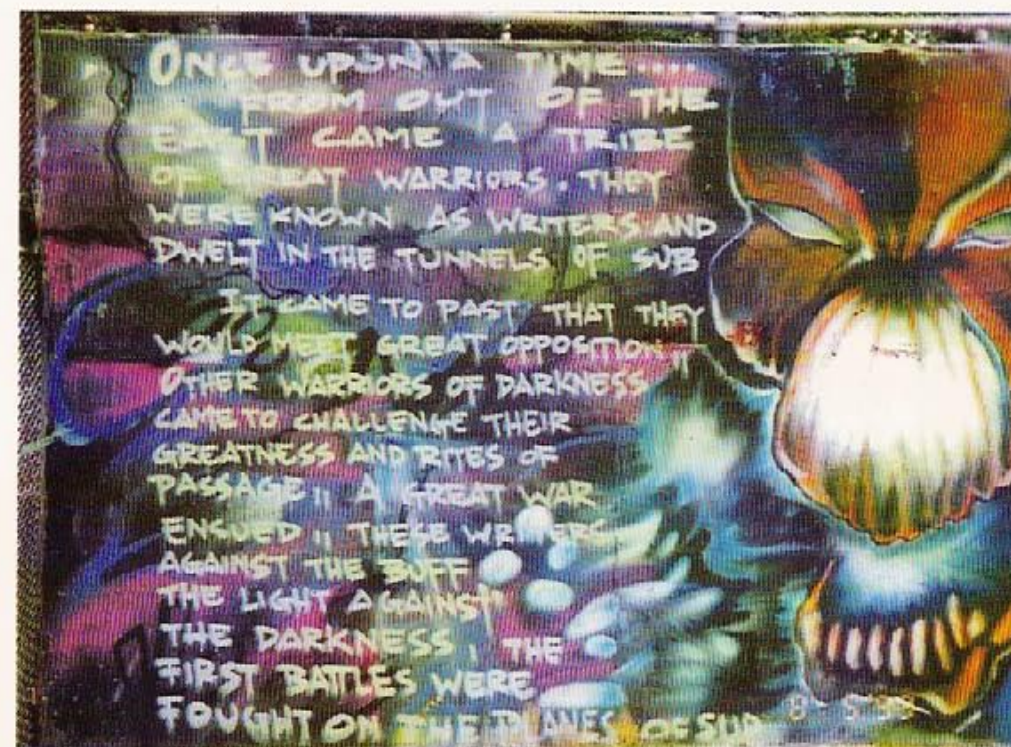
The heat of reality grows stronger, higher. This ferocious animal, the underground leviathan, stretches and growls in the breeding humidity.

It needs a new and tougher skin, a new colour and texture, a new expression of itself, a thicker armour

To survive in this environment of unfinished dreams, wasted lives, corruption and despair we call the world.

Only the fittest will survive. Soul vigour - express it and live it.

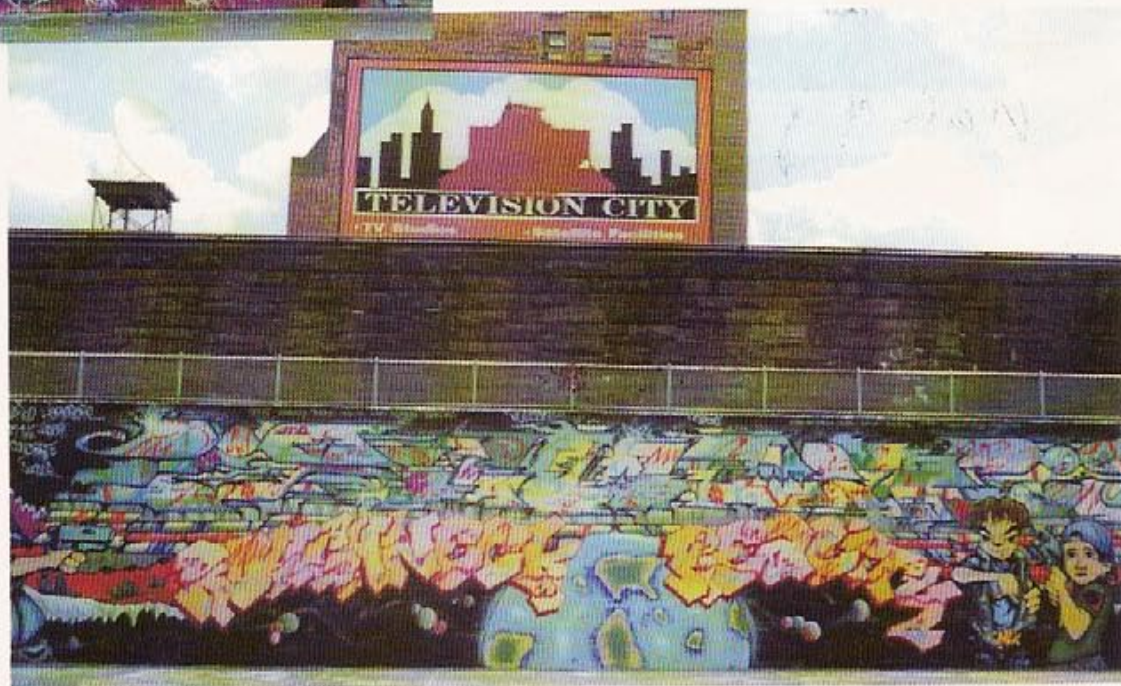
Ephesians 6 v12-13 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."





THE HALL OF FAME

TODAY IF YOU CLOSE
YOUR EYES AND LISTEN
VERY CAREFULLY, YOU
CAN STILL HEAR
THESE BATTLES
BETWEEN LIGHT
AND DARKNESS FROM
OUT OF THE VOID THAT
IS THE SUB!!!
JUST LISTEN.....
-PHYZE-



a Master Teac

Jealousy is a rotten disease that preys on a weak minded individual(s). A Jealous will often try to hinder the path of a Righteous man due to envy.

Jealousy is such a powerful emotion it can make a righteous man do evil and devious things behind or to the man of color.

If you see the next man doing better or trying to do better Don't hinder that man but help him as well as help yourself. Remember selfishness and Jealousy will be your down fall if you let it! peace.



PART - 2

York, not New York, is the home of this 21 year old prolific painter. But first a short geography lesson is necessary: York is a city in North Yorkshire, England, which is committed to preserving its old and beautiful features of architecture and its prominent place in the history of England. York is an ancient, historical city which thrives on the past. Try to imagine the complete opposite to New York or any metropolitan city or town. Now how can a talented and dedicated writer fit in here? Surely graffiti is for cities and more futuristic places? Read on.

What made you start?

I started when I was 12 years old, just influenced by hip hop music, breakdancing. I was always able to do art, but after I was 12 I was hardly ever at school really. Other kids at school used to ask me to do their art. The lessons I was at school I spent drawing outlines in my exercise book at the back of the class.

Describe your first piece.

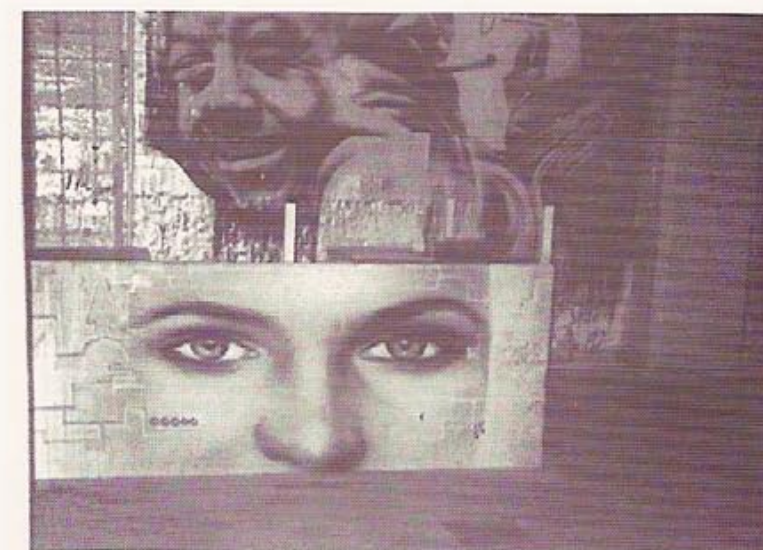
My first piece was done in chalk! No one had any paint. I was with a friend and we did a "Hip Hop" piece on the side of a brick wall by a shopping arcade. People passed us wondering what on earth we were doing. Then, after that, we said "Let's get some paint and do it properly". We got chased by a welfare officer that day as we were supposed to be in school, but we came back to finish it. The next piece we did in aerosol paint, "Hip Hop" in the same style. What made you keep on writing? Seeing other people who were considered masters and wanting to be them, as you do as a kid. New York masters. I didn't want to be like any one particular, but I

liked different pieces and styles. Each different piece tells a different story. And, anyway, if you're truly dedicated to your work, you're always wanting to better it. I admired pieces by Seen, Don-D, Futura 2000 - I liked his futuristic style.

I did do a train once in York's British Rail carriage works. A group of us had just come back from Leeds. We did it at night and came back the next morning to take photos but it had already gone. I'd never heard of writers on trains before. We just wanted to paint, we were there, the train was there, and we were bold kids.

How would you describe what you do?

In 1988 I was more concerned with getting up, developing better techniques and understanding more what other people had done. Now I try to do something different. Subconscious visions and feelings, subconscious thoughts in England we are taught never to express. I paint more of an image. I love wildstyle, but for myself I feel too limited by lettering. Painting your name is part of it,



wildstyle and getting up everywhere is another part, but for me, living in York, I need to use different means to express myself and to teach the public.

York is a historical city. There is no subway. The whole city's economy is based on HISTORY, the past, on keeping things the same as much as possible. Me tagging everywhere would have no effect whatsoever.

But the art form I am developing is more effective and powerful. I do it in places where people see it, day in, day out - on the alley walls next to the Bingo Hall where they pass to go to the shops, school, work, on bridges and so on. Everyday places. It is work to be studied. More subtle than smack-bam-in-your-face, but the things I am portraying are no less raw or real. I live in York, not New York. York keeps its historical image to make money. I feel I am attacking

history itself. The York and the life, people I know is not the York promoted.

Yes, I still want to shock and alert the public, but me writing "Quack!" on a bus in York would just be ignored and dismissed. I want my pictures to draw people in. They'll see something they recognise and that will draw them in. Then bit by bit they can start to understand. I want them to feel at home with one thing before they step in.

So why do you write?

People, old and young, encouraged me. They said "Stick at it". Painting your name ends up just being selfish, doing it for fame only, not expressing yourself. The point of graffiti is that it is an individual view. I'm always trying to rise above what I do or see. Ikonoklast is about breaking images. Painting what is real to me. I paint more about the unknown. I don't like to label what



I do. I don't call myself an aerosol or graffiti artist. You don't say "I'm a paintbrush artist" or "I'm a pencil artist".

I stand for a lot more than that. I looked in the dictionary and it defined graffiti as "To destroy works of art". Well then, I'd say society is a graffiti artist because it is always trying to destroy. What we do is the opposite. It's about CREATING.

What are the biggest myths/false rumours about graffiti?

No one wants to look. Young people have always been seen as unserious, as not thinking seriously about issues. This is more times false than true. I decided I don't want to live as everyone else does. Animals do the same as what many rich, powerful or poor, normal people do - make homes, eat, have children, sleep, die - but we are not animals.

We have thought, language, music and the ability to communicate by means not just physical. I don't want to live like an animal with no choices. I want to live as a human and that means always striving for a potential.

I don't paint for other people, I paint for myself. I believe I tell the truth. I try to in my work. It's there for people to see but often they don't want to see or to understand. But then I feel I've been alienated from society so sometimes I don't want to be understood. Music and art are a massive part and influence of life, soul expression, but in this society they are dismissed as second rate because it's not to do with money. But it doesn't seem very healthy for all that. In one piece "The Human Aquarium" I show how people are trapped. They are trying to get away from their lifestyles but they are sucked into them. There is no room to breathe. Humans are confined and frustrated, destroying themselves and each other, psychological and physical suffocation. This is society.

Your pieces obviously do fit in York and you are often asked to do commissioned pieces. There is something people like about your art. What do you think that is? I see my role more as an unacknowledged teacher in a





community. My pictures are there. I'm there but I'm ignored. I feel I'm teaching people without them realising it. I think my pictures take time to be understood so that's why I wait and no longer go out bombing everywhere. I used to but now I prefer to work at my own pace in my own space without the sweat of the law always on my back. The physical buzz has changed to a mental one. People say "oh he's not a true writer cos he doesn't do illegal stuff". That's not quite correct. The reason I don't go out much now is because I don't like my art being "owned" and, if its on general property, I feel it is owned. My pieces are dangerous but I put them in safe places, whereas before I'd do safe pieces in dangerous places. Newspapers, TV, adverts - they're supposedly safe but they just tell society's destructiveness. They say writers are destructive but you can never be as destructive as an American Government or a British Government. Look at the wars and the country. People's lives and trust destroyed. History - it's just about people killing and fighting, lies and corruption. There's always been a way out, how humans can and should live: wholly and to their fullest potential but the people in power have too often been evil. I want to put the right answer somewhere in my

paintings. Society doesn't want graffiti.
Graffiti is change and confrontation, but it is not violent. It is attacking attitudes and thoughts. It is not graffiti which is unsafe; it is society. Everyone's so well-off and materialistic about themselves. They don't realise how much real damage they're doing.

Some say you have moved away from hardcore graffiti and talk about 'progressive styles'. What is hardcore graffiti?
There wouldn't be any hardcore graffiti if people didn't innovate and move on, risk a bit to state the

truth. Copying is easy - just history repeating itself which isn't what graffiti is about. I want genuine self discipline, self-expression, truthful, honest to the point of psychological pain, otherwise you're just the same as any other compromising person.

Art and music is a universal language - not for money, but to express yourself. People have been given individuality and they throw away and waste such a gift trying to be like everyone else and accepted by everyone else. Better to be real and true, and unaccepted I say!



FOR THOSE WHO KNOW

"Once in a while there is a man who won't do what is demanded of him, and do you know what happens? The whole machine devotes itself coldly to the destruction of his difference. They'll beat your spirit and your nerves, your body and your mind with iron rods until the dangerous difference goes out of you. And if you can't finally give in, they'll vomit you up and leave you stinking outside - neither yet part of themselves nor yet free. It's better to fall in with them..."

But there are others who go down, submerge in the common slough, and then rise more themselves than they were, because they LOST VANITY.....If you can go down so low, you will be able to rise higher than you can conceive, and you will know a holy joy, a companionship almost like that of a heavenly company of angels. Then you will know the quality of men even if they are inarticulate. But until you have gone way down, you can never know this."
J. Steinbeck "east of eden"

Martin Luther King:

"Strangely enough, I would turn to the Almighty and say, 'If you allow me to live just a few years in the second half of the twentieth century, I will be happy'. Now, that's a strange statement to make, because the world is all messed up. The nation is sick. Trouble is in the land. Confusion all around. That's a strange statement. BUT I KNOW, SOMEHOW, THAT ONLY WHEN IT IS DARK ENOUGH, CAN YOU SEE THE STARS. And I see God working in this period of the twentieth century in a way that men, in some strange way, are responding - something is happening in our world. The masses of oppressed people are rising up. And wherever they are assembled today, whether they are in Johannesburg, South Africa; Nairobi, Kenya; Accra, Ghana; New York City; Atlanta, Georgia; Jackson, Mississippi, or Memphis, Tennessee - the cry is always the same - 'WE WANT TO BE FREE'."

Psalm 48 v 14 "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death".

Luke 8 v 21 "My mother and my brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practise".
John 3v16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."



JUDGEMENT

You may deny the truth
But you can't destroy it
For love, truth, justice
Will rise up like a diamond megalith
And drop on
Liars and cowards.
The stumbling stone
Can never be removed.

PARANOID

Don't come too near
You might touch my fear,
And if you feel this pain
You'll never be the same.
Stay away - let me be.
I don't need your company.
Alienation and loneliness
Hurts me less, I've discovered
Than intimacy and trust in a 2
faced brother.

Maybe you're ok -
Straight inside
But you're too smooth in what
you say
Rehearsed, insincere.
I can't take the risk
I feel no vibe - so you I'll miss.

Give me someone rude and rough.
Inner scars know the preciousness
of love.
There's more than one way to
injure.
Take my money and my time
But leave me my peace of mind.

DANCE NIGGA DANCE

by HasDu, written after
the verdict was given on
the Rodney King murder

"Nigga nigga nigga nigga this
nigga that
nigga look good, nigga sound phat
nigga make money, nigga talk to
honey
nigga get power, nigga sound
funny.
Even if you do, you know it don't
mean a damn.
A little bit of power plus one black
man.
A raisin in the sun against all the
sunflowers
Tryin' 2 make a storm but they're
just sunshowers.
A little bit of water from the lambs
being slaughtered
By the old boy network new world
order.
A thousand points of light for a
well-lit way
As a Bush blocks the path 2 a
brand new day.
Singing Hlp hip hooray for the
status quo
While a brother like me has
nothing but my flow
2 throw back and forth 2 the fronts
Using what I have 2 get what I
want
Money, fame, fortune, respect
Recognition of my intellect.
But in society today, I know I'll
never get the chance.
No matter what I do, it's just
Dance nigga dance."



K E E P IN T O U C H !

Photographs, letters,
communications in general to:

THE REAL STATE!
P.O. Box 295
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
U.K.

"The measure of life is not in the heap of goods or honours nor the length
of days one gathers, but in the overcoming of hate and despair, the
sharing of burdens, the celebrations of joy and love that each day offers.
If you want your measure of life to be filled, pour it out freely."

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**You have a choice.
Freedom is possible.**



"NATIONS COME
AND NATIONS GO
TRUTH LIES LOVE
SEEDS MUST GROW
MAY WORSHIP MAN
WHEN THE MOUNTAINS RUMBLE SLOW
LIFE IS MORE THAN THE LIFE YOU KNOW
IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT WAY
AND IT ALWAYS WILL BE SO
I LONG TO HEAR THE GARDEN SING
SONGS OF LIFE AND SACRED THINGS
CAN'T YOU SEE WHAT HATE BRINGS
LIFE IS MORE THAN YOUR PEACEFUL DREAMS
IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT WAY
AND ALWAYS WILL BE SO..."

KANNIBAL

