


DONT  
**BELIEVE**  
THE  
**HYPE**  **HIP**  
THE RADICAL ELEMENTS OF **HOP**



TO TEACH  
TO EACH IS  
WHAT RAP  
INTENDED  
- D-NICE

BLACK  
LIVES  
MATTER

I NEVER BEEN  
THE TYPE TO  
BACK DOWN  
I BOUNCE BACK  
AND I'M BACK  
NOW - RUBY  
IBARRA

LAST  
NIGHT  
THE DJ  
SAVED  
MY LIFE



**I PUT THAT  
WORK IN;  
W CHECK.  
HUSTLE HARD;  
CHECK. I PAID  
MY DUES;  
- MC LYTE YEP.**

**TO THE NEW  
GENERATION  
OF  
PROPHETS  
BECAUSE IT'S  
LADIES FIRST  
- QUEEN LATIFA**

**DON'T  
BELIEVE  
the  
HYPE**

**THE  
REVOLUTION  
WILL NOT BE  
TELEVISED  
- GIL SCOTT-HERON**

**DEAR  
HIPHOP,  
IT'S ME, YOUR FOSTER  
CHILD**

*Don't Believe the Hype: The Radical Elements of Hip-Hop*

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We acknowledge the land on which we have formulated this publication as situated within yak tiṭvu tiṭvu yak ṭihini Northern Chumash homelands. The yak tiṭvu tiṭvu people are Indigenous to the San Luis Obispo region. They have lived in areas from Ragged Point to Carrizo Plain, Santa Maria to Morro Bay, since time immemorial and into the present. We acknowledge the colonialism upon these lands and are grateful to these lands upon which we are guests.

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# DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

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THE RADICAL ELEMENTS OF HIP-HOP

April 12–June 15, 2018

# CON- TENTS



Illustration by: Swasti Mittal

<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF HIP-HOP</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>EMCEEING</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>DEEJAYING</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>BREAKING</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>GRAFFITI</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>WHAT IS HIP-HOP TO YOU?</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>ACADEMICS</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>PROCESS WORK</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>ON-SITE EXHIBITION</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>COLLABORATORS</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>112</b>



# FORE WORD



**DR. JENELL NAVARRO**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ETHNIC STUDIES  
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“Don’t Believe the Hype” is an installation that showcases the five elements of hip-hop culture. These elements—graffiti writing, breakdancing, deejaying, emceeing, and knowledge production—have been utilized to speak truth and justice about social ills in the United States and beyond. This exhibit illustrates the conscious roots of hip-hop culture from the South Bronx in the 1970s and follows that course to our current moment, where hip-hop still remains a powerful voice for those who are marginalized by dominant structures of power.

hypermasculinity, and sexism— that is not the foundation of hip-hop’s cultural force. Thus, this exhibit follows the conscious vein of hip-hop’s history to illustrate how that pulse is still alive today.

In the 1970s African American, Puerto Rican, and Afro-Caribbean youth were faced with the defunding of their schools and social programs in their neighborhood. The federal government strategically abandoned these young people through a program of “benign neglect.” These youth rose to the moment and created an entire cultural movement out of nothing.

“Don’t Believe the Hype” offers Cal Poly an opportunity to learn from young people of color who created hip-hop culture. The ongoing consciousness in hip-hop culture today illustrates how communities of color still face systematic racism that dictates barriers in employment, education, and housing. For Cal Poly, as a predominantly white institution where most students do not struggle with financial stability, hip-hop operationalizes a different type of knowledge—one that teaches us the real struggle of the masses.

“Don’t Believe the Hype” is the work of Dr. Jenell Navarro and Cal Poly student curators in collaboration with Kennedy Library. Student curators explored each of the elements and placed them under a campus and regional lens to showcase the conscious roots of hip-hop culture.

As you view “Don’t Believe the Hype” we invite you to follow Public Enemy’s direction. See hip-hop culture for what it is—a truth-telling reality check—where young people take the mic, the floor, the turntables, or a subway car and dare to write a radical vision of their world.

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**THE ONGOING CONSCIOUSNESS IN HIP-HOP CULTURE TODAY ILLUSTRATES HOW COMMUNITIES OF COLOR STILL FACE SYSTEMATIC RACISM THAT DICTATES BARRIERS IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND HOUSING.**

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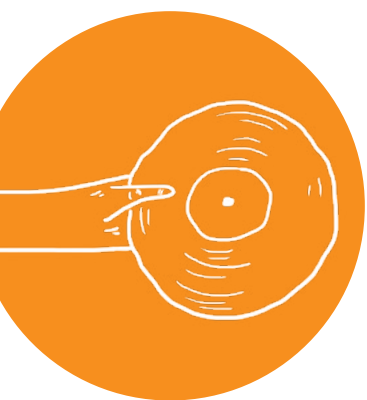
Each hip-hop element is displayed with its truth telling component in order to empower young people today to also speak their truth to power. “Don’t Believe the Hype” is designed to illustrate how hip-hop culture has served an important narrative role in telling a corrective history of urban life in the face of racism, classism, and sexism. The elements of hip-hop culture also tell a radical history from the voice of the people, rather than an incorrect narrative from people who wield power over those who have been marginalized. While parts of hip-hop culture have turned to materialism, violence,

# THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF HIP-HOP



## *EMCEEING*

**PG. 8-12**



## *DEEJAYING*

**PG.14-19**





# ***BREAKING***

**PG.20–25**



# ***GRAFFITI***

**PG.26–31**



# ***KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION***

**PG.32–35**

# EMCEEING

*AN EMCEE (MC) IS A WORDSMITH ARTIST WHO SPEAKS OVER A LOOPED BEAT. THIS PERSON, ALSO COMMONLY REFERENCED AS THE MICROPHONE CONTROLLER, HAS THE ABILITY TO MOVE A CROWD, TELL A STORY, AND FREESTYLE WITTY LYRICS ON THE SPOT.*



While the emcee may not have been the first hip-hop element to gain public attention, it wasn't long before practitioners began to further showcase their talents and become a staple in the culture as well. Just like all the elements of hip-hop, the emcee has undergone a lifetime of evolutions. Some of the earliest styles by Afrika Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force were Afro-futuristic with albums such as "Planet Rock." On the other hand, the reality drenched songs like "The Message" with lyrics from Duke Bootee and Melle Mel were a platform that brought a spotlight to societal issues. Even at its humble beginnings, hip-hop began establishing itself as a radical culture by breaking away from mainstream society and the status quo.

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## ■ ■ EVEN AT ITS HUMBLE BEGINNINGS, HIP-HOP BEGAN ESTABLISHING ITSELF AS A RADICAL CULTURE BY BREAKING AWAY FROM MAINSTREAM SOCIETY AND THE STATUS QUO. ■ ■

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Racial and ethnic lines were crossed early on with Puerto Rican lyricists Prince Markie Dee of the Fat Boys and MC KT of the Latin Empire. Likewise, female emcees such as Roxanne Shante, Queen Latifah and MC Lyte consistently helped to establish a path for many other "femcees" to emerge in hip-hop. The styles would also begin to change thanks to both geographic regions and political atmosphere, with some of the most recognized

growth stemming from Los Angeles, California. Looking toward the heavy funk and disco influences from the early 1980s through the not so subtle emergence of gangster rap, it's undeniable that a major change in style had arrived.



Queen Latifah. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Al Pereira

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Eventually, the emergence of the rap group NWA would shock fans and protesters alike. NWA's vivid style gained a following from both impoverished youth across the country, and suburban youth wanting to live vicariously through the rap music their parents hated. With powerful tracks like "Fuck tha Police," from their hit album *Straight Outta Compton*, NWA established a new style that was only peeking through before their rise to popularity. While their raw reality based lyrics were hard for many to digest, being considered nothing more than belligerent and violent, their music came as an anthem to others whose lives mimicked the long standing history of racism, violence, and police brutality in Los Angeles. In fact, it stayed relevant through the Los Angeles riots in 1992, and is still significant today with The Guardian's recent report



that Black males age 15 to 34 are nine times more likely to be killed by police than any other citizen in the United States.

Fast forward to modern day, and the emcee could be considered the most followed element of hip-hop culture. While deejays and producers may bring in the music, and graffiti artists and breakers maintain a following visually, it is the emcee that gets the most media recognition and is most associated with hip-hop. Regardless of what an artist is speaking on, be it in support of Black Lives Matter or against the president of the United States, about police brutality or the love for their community; if they speak literally or metaphorically, as a corporate or an independent artist the radical element of the emcee will utilize a critical lens.



*Public Enemy. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of the Jack Mitchell Archives. Photo: Jack Mitchell*

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## CAL POLY EMCEES

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*Jeremiah Hernandez (Jeremiah the Prophet) performing an original piece at the Don't Believe the Hype Exhibit Opening. Photo Credit Hannah Travis*

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Since Cal Poly is well known for a large segment of agricultural students, some might not associate hip-hop culture with the university. Additionally, the use of rugged lyrics as an assault toward the status quo is one that might not be welcomed by all. And still, the universal light that hip-hop emits still shines in San Luis Obispo. Through the years, Cal Poly has been host to many students who hold the title of emcee. For instance, this year two seniors are Logan Kregness and Jeremiah Hernandez. Both of these longtime emcees have established themselves as true lyricists with intricate rhyme schemes and themes that reflect the lifestyles that they live day-to-day.

**FOR ME, I GUESS, JUST LEARNING THAT JUST BECAUSE THERE'S NOT A WHOLE LOT OF FEMALE EMCEES ON THE FRONT LINES BEING SUPPORTED BY MAJOR RECORD LABELS DOESN'T MEAN THEY DON'T EXIST. IT DOESN'T MEAN THEY DON'T HAVE THE DRIVE AND THE COMPETITIVE NATURE AND THE WILL AND THE WAY. AND SO, I JUST GOT A CHANCE TO SEE STRONG TENACITY AND A DESIRE TO BE ON TOP FROM SOME YOUNG WOMEN WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN SIX, SEVEN WOMEN SIGNED AT A TIME TO MAJOR RECORD LABELS. BUT THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN PUT THEIR FOOTPRINT IN HIP-HOP IN A MAJOR WAY.**



*ABOVE: MC Lyte on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Al Pereira.*

*LEFT: MC Lyte in conversation with Raj Anand, 2016. Uproxx Media Group.*



## **WOMXN ICONS OF HIP-HOP**

*Womxn icons of hip-hop including Roxanne Shanté pictured second from left on bottom row. Also pictured are (back row-left to right): Sparky D, Sweet Tee, MC Peaches, Yvette Money, Ms. Melodie, Synquis. In the middle is the singer Millie Jackson. Sitting along the bottom row with their legs crossed (left to right): (unidentified, wearing jewelry reading [PAM]), Roxanne Shanté, MC Lyte, Finesse. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Photo: Janette Beckman.*

**BLACK  
LIVES  
MATTER**

# THE MIC CONTROLLER

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The Mic Controller is an agent of their own lyrical destiny. To grab the mic and perform the ‘gift of gab’ is a radical act for conscious wordsmiths of color because they have few avenues to speak their truth to power. In the U.S., people of color have systematically been denied opportunities to voice their concerns from voting disenfranchisement laws/practices to media

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**THE MIC CONTROLLER IS AN AGENT OF THEIR OWN LYRICAL DESTINY.**

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representation regulated by elites. As a result, for emcees of color to turn up the volume on the mic as an immediate and accessible technology against oppression allows for critique of government, society, law, and more. For example, Lauryn Hill bolstered self-worth for young girls of color in her 1998 track “Doo Wop (That Thing)” where she urges them to know that

“Babygirl, respect is just a minimum” and Tupac called out the persistent anti-Blackness in this world in his 1996 single “Street Dreams” where he asks “With all this extra stressing / The question I wonder, is after death, after my last breath / Will I finally get to rest through this suppression?”

While both of these mic controllers were masters at their craft and revered for their radical lyrics, many local names that are never known also harness a sense of self-determination when they bless the mic. Ultimately, the symbol of the microphone in hip-hop culture represents voice for the voiceless and an opportunity to expand the state of consciousness for those willing to listen and learn—those who are open to a hip-hop education.

# FROM THE CURATOR: JEREMIAH HERNANDEZ

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## WHAT ARE THE CONSCIOUS ROOTS OF THIS ELEMENT?

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The emcee has traditionally been one that tells a story, whether that story is a joyful fantasy, or a rugged reality. While the joyous points in hip-hop have always been the upbeat party and creative new artistry, the vein of reality driven rhymes is one of the deepest conscious root of hip-hop to date. The bountiful upbeat sound has maintained a presence in hip-hop over for decades, and while not being as popular at times, the conscious lyricists have always been ahead of their time.

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## WHAT IS RADICAL ABOUT THIS ELEMENT?

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The emcee is always on the verge of being radical. With the gift of gab allowing one to make a clear statement, or be metaphorical and coded in their flow, the emcee has an abundance of words to utilize. However, the most radical aspect of the emcee is the operation of truth-telling within their rhymes, regardless of how awkward or taboo the topic may be. Whether discussing poverty, racism, war, politics, or just speaking autobiographical truth, the radical emcee always keeps it real.



IT'S LIKE A  
SOUTH JUNGLE  
SOMETIMES  
IT MAKES  
ME WONDER  
HOW I  
KEEP FROM  
GOING  
WONDER

-GRANDMASTER FLASH AND THE FURIOUS FIVE

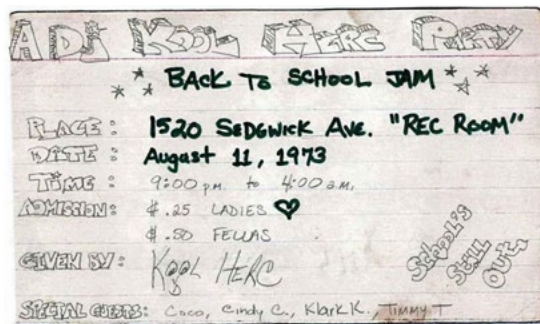


# DEEJAYING



*A DEEJAY IS A SOUND SCIENTIST THAT CAN UTILIZE TWO TURNTABLES TO MIX AND SCRATCH MUSIC TO CREATE A UNIQUE SOUND. DISC JOCKEYS IN HIP-HOP CULTURE HAVE ALSO MASTERED THE ART OF SEAMLESSLY CREATING ENTIRE SONGS BY LINKING TOGETHER SMALL SAMPLES OF FUNK, DISCO, SALSA, AND MANY OTHER MUSICAL GENRES.*

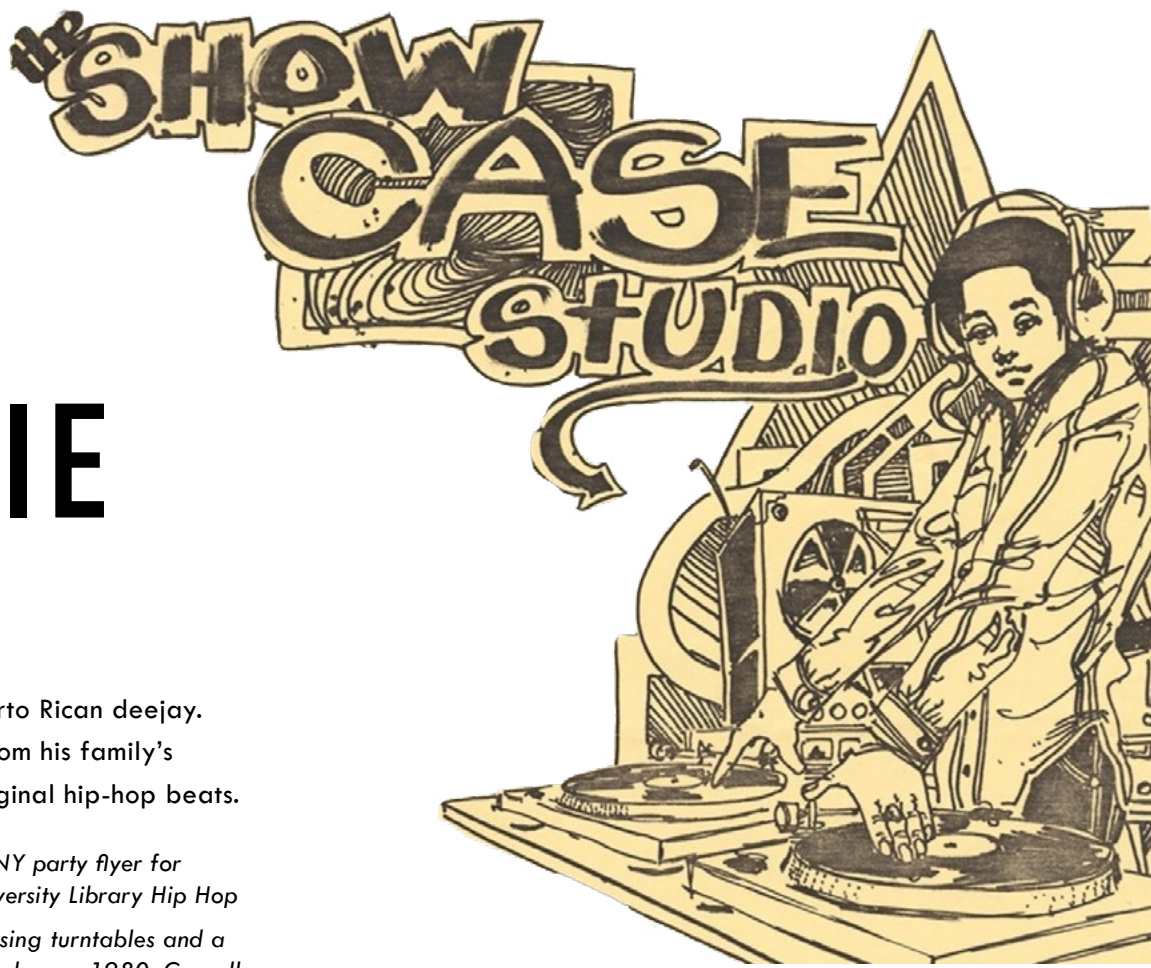
Widely observed in the early 1970s, young disc jockeys (deejays) began spinning, scratching, and chopping primarily soul and funk records. The inception of hip-hop was marked by the simple desire of a young, aspiring deejay, Clive Campbell—to move the crowd. Campbell noticed that most parties he would spin at would be dull until his records hit the “break” sections, when the dancers’ and audience’s energy amplified significantly. Clive, going by the name of DJ Kool Herc, was the first deejay to figure out how to make the B-boys and B-girls move



Flier for the party that birthed hip-hop.  
School's out : The Original Invitation for Cindy Campbell and DJ Kool Herc's 'Back to School Jam' on 11 August, 1973. Cornell University Library Hip Hop Collection

by cutting up the breaks, mixing, and fading them into each other using his turntables. One energetic night on August 11, 1973, at his sister’s party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, marked the birth of hip-hop, when Herc put his observations to the test. Here, B-boying, B-girling, emceeing, and deejaying all formed a new interaction and a newly celebrated culture. Deejaying has since evolved as much as the other branches of hip-hop, with new power players rising to prominence and new technology supplementing new techniques.

The next to leave his mark on deejaying history was the revered Grandmaster Flash with his “quick mix theory.” Flash would plug his headphones into his turntables while one record was spinning, listen to the second record and mentally bookmark the break. Once the time came to make a transition, Flash would mix immediately into the break of the same song on a duplicate record while spinning the second record back into the break again. This repetition made it possible for him to spin the break indefinitely, extending the dancing and energy much longer than previously possible, marking the birth of looping. Another deejay by the name of Grand Wizard Theodore, a student of Grandmaster Flash, pushed the art of deejaying forward by experimenting with the way records were handled on the turntable. Stories tell of a young Theodore Livingston honing his mixing skills one day in the mid-1970s in his Bronx home when his mother walked into his room to reprimand him to turn the music down. To stop the music, Theodore applied pressure to his record to bring it to a slow, scratching stop, much to his interest. He began playing with records during the verse and break sections to add a new, fresh, energy to his sets, giving rise to the art of scratching. Such techniques and technology have evolved over time, spurring the birth of a branch of deejaying, Digital Audio Production, that allows for a higher level of detail in recorded instrumentals that helped push hip-hop culture forward into what we now celebrate.



# CHARLIE CHASE

Charlie Chase was the first Puerto Rican deejay. He created rhythmic textures from his family's Salsa albums and designed original hip-hop beats.

*RIGHT: 1968 Prospect Ave., Bronx NY party flyer for Showcase Studio, 1981. Cornell University Library Hip Hop*

*BOTTOM: Charlie Chase spinning using turntables and a mixer in the South Bronx High School gym, 1980. Cornell University Library. Photo: Joe Conzo.*

# CAL POLY FLAK MOB

Hip-hop Culture is alive and well in the Cal Poly community. There are a significant number of deejays spinning at all kinds of events around San Luis Obispo, including Rohan, Lifegrid, and Luke Liberatore among many others. These deejays often spin for the handful of rap collectives that exist within the community, including Music Production Union's hip-hop group, Flak Mob, and the fun-loving Hobbyists Collective.



**DEAR  
HIP HOP,  
IT'S ME, YOUR FOSTER  
CHILD**





*Detail of the DeeJaying Element section of the exhibit, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CA. Photo: Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library*

# FROM THE CURATOR: LOGAN KREGNESS

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## WHAT ARE THE CONSCIOUS ROOTS OF THIS ELEMENT?

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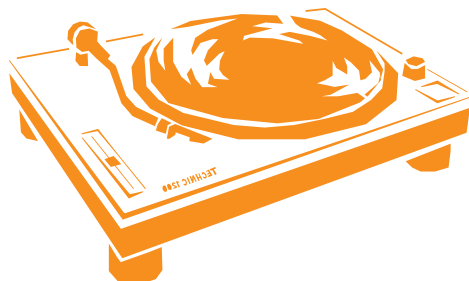
In the advent of hip-hop, deejaying provided a new way for young people to get down. Not only did it keep the members of the audience off the streets to some degree, but it paved path for the emcees to lay their tracks. The truth-speakers would proceed to innovate and spur the genesis of “Conscious hip-hop,” real-world events over groovy beats that pulled listeners in.

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## WHAT IS RADICAL ABOUT THIS ELEMENT?

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Hip-hop deejays did what other genre listeners at the time regarded as a sin, scratching vinyl. Not only did the sound produced seem abrupt and absurd to culture non-participants, but to produce the iconic hip-hop record scratch sound, some amount of damage was done to the records. As technology has improved throughout the years, the damage done to the discs has been mitigated.





A DANCE STYLE THAT EMERGED IN THE 1970S IN THE SOUTH BRONX WHICH COMBINES ACROBATIC AND MARTIAL ART MOVES IN ORDER TO DANCE IN THE “BREAK BEATS.” BREAKDANCING EMERGED AS A CREW STYLE BUT HAS EVOLVED TO ALSO EMPHASIZE INDIVIDUAL DANCERS, REFERRED TO AS B-BOYS AND B-GIRLS.

# BREAKING



**P**uerto Rican and African American youth created breaking using their bodies to speak back to the everyday social ills and violence they experienced in the U.S. context. While mainstream media later referred to this stylized movement as breakdance, most originators and practitioners continue to use the term breaking. In the 1970s and 1980s there emerged many styles of breaking, the most recognizable of which was pop lockin' (popping and locking). Most styles had a distinct geographical posture, meaning you could tell where a dancer was from based on how they performed the dance.

In breaking, the practitioners are called break boys (B-boys) and break girls (B-girls) because they would dance and get down to music called breaks/break-beats in songs. These “breaks” were sections in a musical recording where the percussive rhythms were most aggressive and hard driving. The dancers anticipated and reacted to these breaks with their most impressive steps and moves. DJ Kool Herc, one of the fathers of hip-hop, is credited with extending the time of these breaks by using two turntables and a fader to go back and forth between two copies of the same song so dancers were able to enjoy more than just a few seconds of a break.

As breaking emerged as a crew style, The Rock Steady Crew became one of the earliest crews to emerge from the South Bronx—an all Puerto Rican crew

made up of both B-boys and B-girls. B-boy and B-girl core moves are categorized into toprocks/uprocks, get downs, footwork/threads, freezes, and power moves. Breaking is still a battle dance style where individuals and/or crews showcase their talents in a conversation of body talk, oftentimes still in the space of the streets and at other times in organized competitions.

Many B-boys and B-girls originally wore white shoes and white gloves to accent their footwork and hands in street and club scenes that were dimly lit. The shoe of choice for many originators was the Adidas Shell Top, hence the reason for the song that was popularized in the 1980s by RUN DMC titled “My Adidas.” To be “real fresh,” many breakers who went up to NYC to perform in clubs by 1982 were known to carry a toothbrush in their pocket and sneak into the bathroom to clean their shoes between sets. Style was everything.



*B-boy performing a unique pose at the L.A. Breakers 35th Anniversary event, August 2017. Photo by Dominic Holmes.*

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# B-GIRLING



Richard Colon, aka Crazy Legs, member of “Rock Steady Crew,” 1981. Henry Chalfant Graffiti Archives. Photo: Henry Chalfant.

“B-girl LaneSki, (Lane Davey), was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1970. Later moving to Seattle, she enrolled in a breakdancing class in 1983, taught by the Seattle Circuit Breakers. The group was impressed with her dancing skills and subsequently gave her the name LaneSki. A pioneer in the male-dominated hip-hop world, LaneSki was one of the first female breakdancers to master and develop many of the dance moves created in the early 1980s.”

*RIGHT: B-girl Laneski with the breakdance group, Majestic Rockers in New York City, 1985. Illustration by Anna Teiche. Image derived from the National Museum of American History.*

“THAT’S WHAT YOU STRIVE FOR— YOU STRIVE TO TAKE YOUR MOVE TO THE NEXT LEVEL. IT’S ABOUT SHOCK VALUE, ALWAYS SHOCK VALUE, BUT KEEPING IT FLAVOR AND STYLIZED AND MAKING IT YOURS.”

—Crazy Legs/Rock Steady Crew

Source: Jeff Chang, *Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop*



B-boy doing an  
variation of the  
airfare (powermove)  
at Freestyle Session  
2017. Shot by  
Dominic Holmes,  
November 2017



# SLO BREAKERS



Founded in Spring 2017, Cal Poly SLO Breakers is one of the few hip-hop organizations on campus that aims to promote a community-based knowledge of hip-hop culture. The club's main focus is to provide a creative, inclusive, and inspiring atmosphere for people who are interested in one of the five elements of hip-hop; B-boying. The club offers weekly workshops for beginners, intermediate, and advanced levels every Wednesday. The club also has a competitive and performance team, which is made for those who want to further refine their skills and grow as a B-boy/B-girl. Competitions that the club participates in happen throughout California such as "King of the 805" hosted by UC Santa Barbara b-boys, and Unified Collegiate Breaking League. The club also performs at the biggest cultural events at Cal Poly.





# FROM THE CURATOR: JOHN DUCH

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## WHAT ARE THE CONSCIOUS ROOTS OF THIS ELEMENT?

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Breaking was a style that was created by people of color who lived in low-income neighborhoods. It is still carried out predominantly by people who are part of these communities. Breaking has become an outlet for many youth in these areas, who may not get this creative freedom elsewhere like school, work, home, etc. Breaking was also not limited to just men, there were and still are many women who participate in the dance. Breaking was founded and is still practiced by marginalized people.

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## WHAT IS RADICAL ABOUT THIS ELEMENT?

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This element is radical because it was one of the practices that transitioned youths in low-income neighborhoods in the Bronx from the gang era to something more positive. It creates friendships, communities, and families for those who barely have anything at all; this is their home away from home. For some, this is possibly their only opportunity to have creative freedom, especially in the early days when policies were made to keep these people from progressing in any way in their lives. Breaking gives participants a platform to hone skills such as perseverance, patience, self-discipline, confidence, and the ability to improvise. There are valuable skills taught through this element that wouldn't be found in textbooks or classrooms because one needs to be directly involved with hip hop culture in general to full grasp the positive impacts this culture has brought for so many people.



Photograph of  
Breaking section of  
the exhibit. Photo  
credit Hannah Travis



# GRAFFITI

A SPACIAL AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE OF TAGGING, BOMBING, OR PAINTING STYLIZED PIECES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LOCATIONS. GRAFFITI STYLE LETTERING HAS BEEN USED SINCE THE 1960S TO BEAUTIFY NEIGHBORHOODS AND OFFER POTENT CRITIQUES OF SOCIAL ILLS.



**G**raffiti originated in the South Bronx in correlation with the emergence of hip-hop music. Tags first appeared on subway trains in the cities as a way to spread names throughout the New York City boroughs. As the art emerged, artists' styles became competitive in order to have their work stand out. Soon, they started experimenting stylistically, creating more intricate pieces. Steadily the culture grew, and more experienced artists developed crews and apprentices to extend and teach their practices and graffiti techniques.

As graffiti evolved with hip-hop, parties became the place to showcase both artistic expressions simultaneously. Deejays and emcees would create music while graffiti artists developed aerosol pieces in their venue locations. Women contributed to the development of this element in significant ways. For example, Sandra Fabara, a.k.a. "Lady Pink" is known as the first female graffiti artist who tagged and bombed alone and in a crew. She was an active writer on the trains of the New York City Subway from 1979–1985.

The art of graffiti emerged as highly controversial and criminalized. In 1983, the death of 25-year-old Black graffiti artist Michael Stewart sparked an outcry after it was revealed that he was beaten to death by New York City Transit Authorities—having been caught leaving a tag on a wall while waiting for his train back home to Brooklyn. While in custody, bruised and hogtied, Stewart lapsed into a coma and died thirteen days later. The Transit officers involved were charged in his death but acquitted by an all-white jury. Upon learning about

Stewart's brutal killing, painter Jean-Michel Basquiat (seeing personal parallels in his own life reflected in Stewart's death) painted *Defacement (The Death of Michael Stewart)*. The work was a direct response to racism, police brutality, and the threat of censorship for street art. Basquiat's *Defacement* has become the centerpiece of conversations about Black Lives Matter and is on permanent display at Williams College Museum of Art (Williamstown, MA).



*The Death of Michael Stewart, 1983, Basquiat, acrylic and marker on wood, 63.5×77.5cm, Collection of Nina Clement*

New York City declared its initiative to remove all aerosol art within the city, and by the 1990s all subway cars had been replaced, leaving little to no trace of the art within the transit system. Despite the controversy, artists were propositioned to display their pieces in galleries. Many, however, felt putting it on display outside of their neighborhoods detached the cultural significance from the art. There are currently over a dozen types of graffiti art, some styles emerging with technology that allows for mass reproduction. Today it is still used to communicate the conditions of urban environments as well as declare spatial dominion.

# LADY PINK

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**Q**ueen of graffiti—Godmother of aerosol artistry. Lady Pink emerged as an artist in the late 1970s NYC graffiti movement and whose work is rooted in resistance and reclaiming public spaces. Her preferred canvas was the subway car soon ascending toward solo exhibitions such as Fashion Moda in the Bronx, and public mural commissions

throughout Manhattan and the Bronx, then catapulting into exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Brooklyn Museum. Her hip-hop reign was immortalized in the 1983 film “Wild Style” which cemented the relationship between music, dance, and art in the development of hip-hop culture.



1983, “Lady Pink on CC Train,” Photo courtesy Lady Pink



Lady Pink photographed in Times Square, 1983, wearing a t-shirt by Jenny Holzer from *Truisms* (1977-79). Photo: © Lisa Kahane, NYC All Rights Reserved.

New York Times Op Ed piece "Graffiti Is Young, Cool, Creative – Let It Happen" by Lady Pink. July 11, 2014.

GRAFFITI SCARES THIS CITY. THEY SAY THAT ARTISTS LIKE ME AND MY HUSBAND JUST INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BECOME VANDALS. IF GRAFFITI IS INSPIRING, IT'S BECAUSE IT'S FUN, COOL AND DOES NOT TAKE FORMAL TRAINING. YOUNG KIDS WHO PAINT ON THE WALLS ARE SCREAMING TO BE HEARD AND, YES, WE ALL STARTED THAT WAY.



# FROM THE CURATOR: MAREN HILL

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## WHAT ARE THE CONSCIOUS ROOTS OF THIS ELEMENT?

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Graffiti is consciously rooted in reclaiming space for the people that exist within hip-hop culture. Aerosol art is about beautifying neglected space by dissipating culture through creativity. By overtaking abandoned space and transforming it into a creation, this art also thoroughly changes the way communities are perceived and used. These spaces are repurposed as they become arenas for expression. They begin to give identity and hope, in places where there is not much else.

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## WHAT IS RADICAL ABOUT THIS ELEMENT?

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The guerrilla nature of graffiti makes it radical. It is unapologetically claiming a place of one's own. This defiant art develops a small sense of control for residents that usually have none within their neighborhoods. It establishes a marked existence for those that live there inciting empowerment and authority.





Detail of the Graffiti element of the on site exhibit. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CA. Photo: Hannah Travis/ Kennedy Library



*THE FIFTH ELEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION HAS BEEN ASSERTED BY ARTISTS LIKE AFRIKA BAMBAATAA AND KRS-ONE AS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL THE ELEMENTS. KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IS THE ASPECT OF HIP-HOP CULTURE THAT AIMS TO ADDRESS HISTORICAL AND PRESENT OPPRESSION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR AND WORKING CLASS PEOPLE THROUGH CORRECTIVE NARRATIVES, ACTIVISM, AND SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS MUSIC AND ART PRODUCTION.*

# KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION



All the elements of hip-hop culture produce a type of radical knowledge, which is why the fifth element of knowledge production was named and has been designated by many, including Afrika Bambaata and KRS-One, as the most significant element of hip-hop culture. The radicality of hip-hop culture is both overt and covert. Emcees for instance have been calling out racist power structures through their lyrics and poetics since hip-hop emerged in the 1970s, and many continue this practice today. One of the most profound lyricists in this regard is Chuck D, with his group Public Enemy. Public Enemy's song "Don't Believe the Hype" guides this exhibit for their historic force and commitment to radical lyrics. In that song Chuck D raps: "The minute they see me, fear me / I'm the epitome, of "public enemy" / used, abused without clues / I refuse to blow a fuse / They even had it on the news." Here, he demonstrates how racism continues to be a visceral experience for people of color.

*S1W, Professor Griff, Terminator X, and Chuck D (from left to right), 1988. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Jack Mitchell.*



The B-boys and B-girls of hip-hop culture also speak truth to power. However, they utilize body talk rather than wordsmithing to do so. In this way, breakers are radical because they force a racist and sexist society to see their bodies in public performing a highly crafted dialogue. Graffiti writers similarly stage a radical refusal for their artform to be curated and commissioned only by elite museums. Many of these artists serve their working class communities of color by beautifying concrete walls in their neighborhoods even when the government deems these acts "illegal." In addition, the deejays who were the initial backbone to hip-hop culture's development push boundaries with sound oftentimes with very little economic capital at their disposal, raiding their parents record collections to create sonic masterpieces.

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**▶▶ MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF HIP-HOP CULTURE RESTS UPON THE STREET KNOWLEDGE INHERENT IN THIS CULTURE. ▶▶**

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Most importantly, the specific knowledge of hip-hop culture rests upon the street knowledge inherent in this culture. Namely, to be from the streets is to acquire a sharp sensibility of your surroundings. Young people of color from the 1970s to our current moment continue to wield experiential knowledge of their worlds. For example, hip-hop culture has

confronted persistent police brutality in the U.S. because these are people who have experienced that type of ongoing violence against their bodies. This is why N.W.A. recorded “Fuck Tha Police” in 1988, KRS-One recorded “Sound of Da Police” in 1993, and Kendrick Lamar recorded “Alright” in 2015.

For many young people of color hip-hop is a source of information. Hence, Chuck D has repeatedly called rap music “the Black CNN.” Even very recently, hip-hop artists have helped disseminate information about organizing protests. For instance, Talib Kweli aided the protest efforts in Ferguson, Missouri and rapper Taboo of the Black Eyed Peas organized a number artists to raise consciousness about the unhealthy corporate attack on land and water at Standing Rock. These hip-hop heads underscore how the culture and music produces knowledge and information that is untold elsewhere. As a result, for many young people of color, the microphone, breaking floor, turntable, and spray can are all tools for learning and writing their worlds into existence.

*KRS-One and Ms. Melodie were married from 1987-1992. KRS stands for “Knowledge Reigns Supreme.” Ms. Melodie provided as many hard hitting lyrics as any male wordsmith in the culture. They both worked on the “Stop the Violence Movement” that began in the 1987 to end all types of violence in Black communities.*

*KRS-One and Ms. Melodie, 1988. National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Janette Beckman.*



*Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Roderick Terry.*

*Public Enemy during the “Million Man March” in Washington D.C., organized by the National African American Leadership Summit, 1995. African American Leadership Summit, 1995.*

## PUBLIC ENEMY

Public Enemy set out to make the hip-hop equivalent to Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On,” through narratives emulating Black nationalist rhetoric and speaking truth to power through lyrics centered on empowering African Americans, critiques of white supremacy, and challenges to exploitation in the music industry.





**THE  
REVOLUTION  
WILL NOT BE  
TELEVISED**  
- GIL SCOTT-HERON



**WHAT IS  
HIP-HOP  
TO YOU?**

# LOGAN KREGNESS

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HOMETOWN *PACIFIC REGION*

ELEMENT *DEEJAYING*

For myself, nothing in the world has proven to be as empowering as hip-hop. Even at an early age, I was self-aware; I realized what my social location was, and knew where people of color, the poor, and marginalized communities fell into the grand scheme of the United States. Growing up, I grew more and more tired of listening to the utopian stories of people through music that I couldn't relate to. I became more and more outspoken about my opinions of society, current events, as well as myself, but never had the means to express myself to the audience that I felt that I had a duty to speak to. Hip-hop is the raw, unadulterated voice of people like me. Without the need to invest copious amounts of money into lessons or equipment to get involved (as such with most other genres), young— aspiring, emcees, deejays & producers, B-boys, and street artists could jump into a vibrant, diverse, enabling culture and be welcomed with open arms. One of the best things about hip-hop is that you don't have to necessarily have to perform to be a participant of the culture. Hip-hop is a way of thinking, even a lifestyle for those with the most

holistic view of the culture's history, diversity, and trajectory. Hip-hop gave me a voice as well as provided a tool I could use to further uplift and make change, beyond emceeing being a way for me to channel my creativity and innovation. I can talk about my life and speak to people in similar situations, as well as reach new audiences. Every time I step-up to the stage I feel ready to stand my ground and the on the world, and I hope that the same self-respect and confidence rubs off on every individual like me.





# CHEYENNE LIU

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HOMETOWN *SAN RAMON, CA*  
ELEMENT *B-BOYING/B-GIRLING*

Hip-hop culture has been incredibly influential in the way that I have grown as a person. Hip-hop is truly a community experience—especially at Cal Poly where the groups are small. As someone who was heavily involved with the dance program, you would be hard pressed to find a B-boy or B-girl in that studio. Instead, as a freshman in 2011, I remember sneaking into Chumash auditorium or Mott gym in the evenings with 5 or 6 others just to have a couple hours of practice in. When the Rec Center opened, we would grab the open studios before they even established a class schedule.

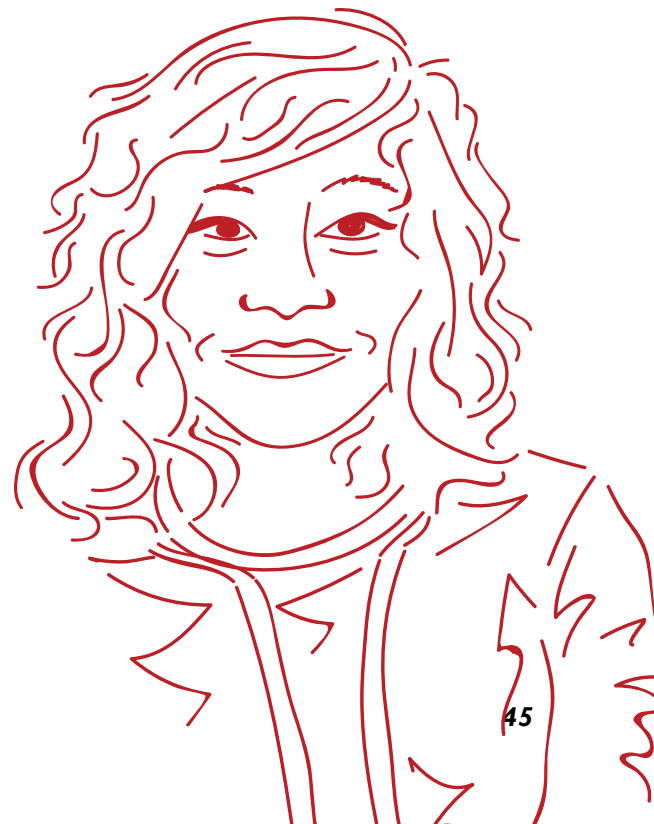
as I graduated, the community has grown tremendously and resources are becoming more available. Recognition is there, and I am incredibly proud of how far it has come. Hip-hop culture is so much more than whatever most media outlets misappropriate it to be. It is the feeling when you are in a cypher and everyone is absolutely out of their mind supportive and the atmosphere is flat out electric. It is the feeling when you can reach out to anyone in the culture and know they have your back. More than anything else, hip-hop Culture at Cal Poly was a family.

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■ ■ HIP-HOP CULTURE IS SO MUCH MORE THAN WHATEVER MOST MEDIA OUTLETS MISAPPROPRIATE IT TO BE. ■ ■

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All this to say, this experience is not exclusive to just the element of B-boying/B-girling. The resources to pursue the elements of hip-hop are not readily apparent at Cal Poly, and almost forcibly creates a small, tight-knit community. In the end,



# JEREMIAH HERNANDEZ

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*JEREMIAH THE PROPHET*

HOMETOWN **CENTRAL COAST/805**

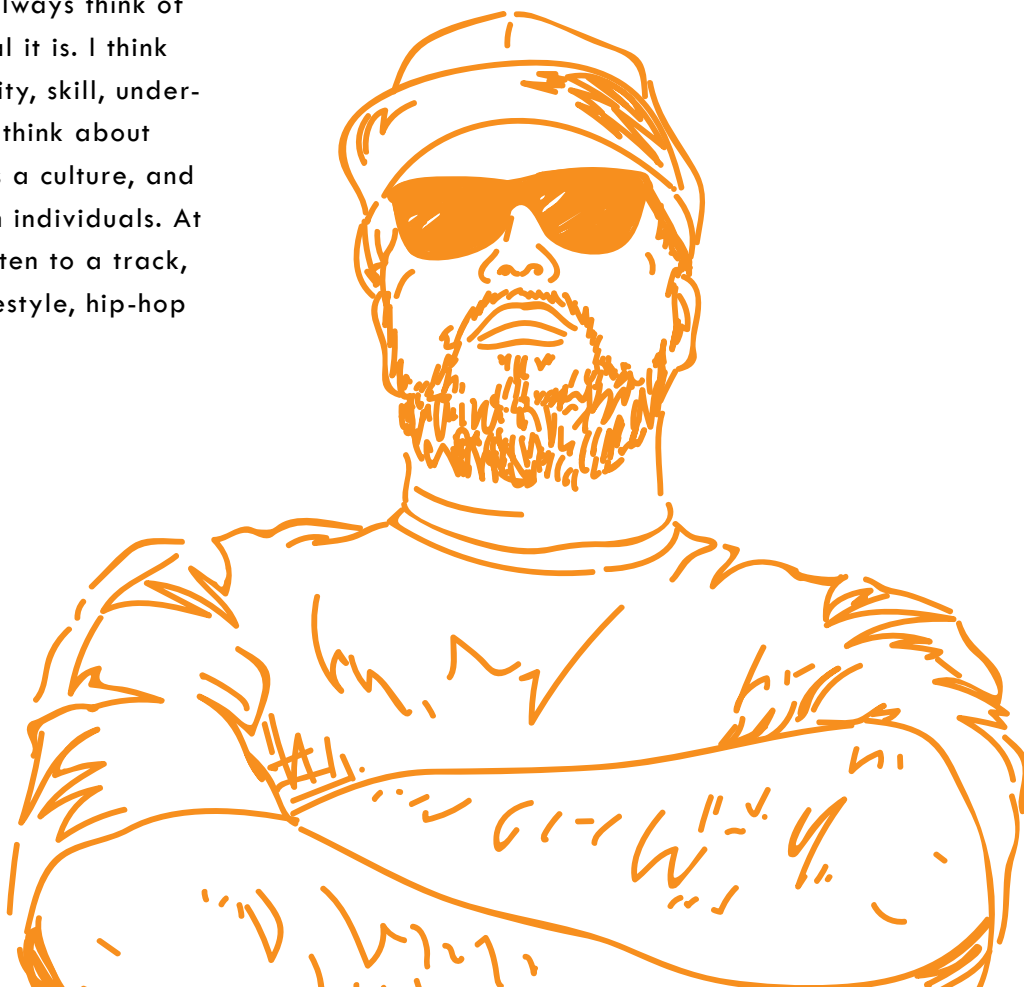
ELEMENT **EMCEEING**

It's hard to explain what hip-hop means to me. Even as a lyricist, I'm almost at a loss for words thinking about just how important hip-hop has been in my life. While many things in my life have come, gone, been given, or been taken away, hip-hop has been a constant since reaching me at a young age. No matter how good or how bad the situation, I felt the embrace of the hip-hop culture and its unconditional ways. When I think of hip-hop, I always think of its beauty and how universal it is. I think about the realms of creativity, skill, understanding coming together. I think about how it can be developed as a culture, and how it develops itself within individuals. At any point in time, I could listen to a track, write a verse, or kick a freestyle, hip-hop stays with me at all times.

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**||| HIP-HOP IS EVERYTHING.  
HIP-HOP IS UNIVERSAL.  
HIP-HOP IS LIFE. |||**

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# JOHN DUCH

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*B-BOY JOHN*

**HOMETOWN LONG BEACH & LOS ANGELES, CA**  
**ELEMENT *B-BOYING/BREAKING***

Hip-hop culture has been a big part of my growth and self-discovery. I've been a low-income student my entire life, and I was always surrounded people of similar backgrounds. The culture was a little familiar to me even before I became more involved. I started B-boying the summer of my freshman year in high school. It started with me wanting to do something cool and spin on the ground, but eventually it grew into a fiery passion that led me to continue the art to this day. Learning about the dance taught me more than just doing cool flashy moves to impress

people; like any other artform, it was a way of self-expression. It taught me about perseverance, self-discipline, and patience because I do admit it's not the easiest dance but not impossible.

The community of breakers in Long Beach, CA provided me with friendships and a community I was able to identify with, until I came to Cal Poly. Arriving at Cal Poly I was disappointed at the absence of a hip-hop community and it forced me to be proactive about fostering the community once more. I saw the value of having a community with similar interests and how important that can be when it comes to growing as a B-boy/B-girl and as a person. I founded the Hip Hop Choreo Club and the Cal Poly SLO Breakers, two of the biggest hip-hop organizations on campus. These aren't just groups however, they've become close, tight communities and even consider each other as family. That is the beauty of hip-hop because people can come from all walks of life but become a family with one interest. The raw feeling of a cypher and battles is something that can't be understood until one is involved with the community, which is also why I wanted to foster a family and for some, a home away from home.



# ALYSSA MANGAOANG

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ES & AGB '19 // ES310

What does hip-hop mean to me? Well, if I'm honest, before this class, it was just music. Yes, it was part of my life, but while I knew hip-hop was a vehicle for change, I didn't appreciate it as such. Last week, Ruby Ibarra dropped the most amazing music video for "Us," a track from her latest album *Circa91*. The track features two other Filipina rappers—Rocky Rivera and Klassy—and Filipina spoken word poet Faith Castillo in its #InternationalWomensDay anthem. The cinematography and raw badassery of the music video filled me with a newfound pride in my culture. It is no understatement when I say I'd never felt as empowered as a young Filipina as when I saw this music video. Every single person in the video was Filipina. They were of all ages, donning cultural attire then everyday wear. They were doing tinikling and rapping. Their performance showcased the diversity

and regal beauty of Filipino culture like the queens they are. Ibarra and her team rap in Tagalog and English, spitting non-stop FIRE. Then, when Faith Castillo comes in with her spoken word... BOOM. "Of all the good things in life/none of which you may be a benefactor of/there is one that you bear/and that is the privilege of being born a Filipina."



Ruby Ibarra

# CALAIS LECOQ

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ART '18 // ES310

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**TO ME HIP-HOP IS A COMMUNITY OF CREATIVE AND EMPOWERED INDIVIDUALS THAT INSPIRE ME TO THINK AND ACT IN A MORE POSITIVE LIGHT.**

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At the beginning of the quarter we were asked this same question. I began my response by relating hip-hop to my life, passions, interests, and taste in music. But over this quarter I have learned that hip-hop's importance exceeds far beyond musical taste and the original reasons why I've gravitated towards hip-hop. I have learned that hip-hop is change, it is community, and it is a tool. It is a thread that tiles political change, people's experiences, history, and art together. As an artist, I know and feel the power that creativity possesses. The thread of what hip-hop is a strong one. The next time I drive home with my radio on and listen to Tupac, it will mean more to me now than it has in the past because of the knowledge I've gained in this class. To me hip-hop is a community of creative and empowered individuals that inspire me to think and act in a more positive light.



# JOSÉ GUDIÑO

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PSY '20 // ES310

Hip-hop gives voice to the voiceless. To those who are unable to speak out, whether because they cannot, or because they don't have the resources to. Hip-hop is a platform for those who have been oppressed to speak for the first time, and for the first time, to be heard.

Hip-hop is an extension of the soul, an astral projection of the inner workings of one's being. A catalyst for an individual to cast their story onto the world. Like the soul, it is immortal. The stories that are told will always connect to individuals; the music, even after it has long gone, will never die.

Hip-hop is an escape, a pure haven for those who have been beaten down. It soothes the mind. The words, the beat, the message, whisks us away like a feather in air. Taking us to places we never thought possible.

Hip-hop is...Hip-hop. There is no other art form like it. Like blues it emerged out of suffering and pain, uniting people, brothers, and sisters. It resonates with the mind and soul in such a way that shakes you to the very core of your being. It is unapologetic, it is the truth, it is the voice of millions.

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**■ ■ HIP-HOP IS AN EXTENSION OF THE SOUL, AN ASTRAL PROJECTION OF THE INNER WORKINGS OF ONE'S BEING. A CATALYST FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO CAST THEIR STORY ONTO THE WORLD. ■ ■**

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# FRANCISCO GASPAR

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ES & SOC '19 // ES310

Hip-hop is a cultural element that embodies artistic expression and exchange. It has emerged as a form of community building in the face of an oppressive, white supremacist society. Through knowledge production, deejaying, emceeing, spoken word, and breaking, communities of color have accessed spaces of liberation. Ultimately, it is a form of art that still exists in contemporary society. This culture has continued to produce the same outcomes of coalition building and resistance for marginalized communities today.

Since the start of the course, one of the largest takeaways for me has been recognizing the power of lyrics in music. The first example that comes to mind is NWA's "Fuck Tha Police." While I understood the significance of the song, it was not until this course that I was able to identify it within a social, political, and economic context. Doing so allowed me to visualize the ways music has empowered people and counteract dismissive perceptions towards the explicit lyrics.

On a personal level, I feel that hip-hop has allowed me to explore and understand my gender identity. I initially understood the history of queer femmes of color in underground spaces, but learned to appreciate it even more while preparing for the symposium. Specifically, I thought of the ways women like Queen Latifah and Rocky Rivera used hip-hop to amplify their voices. In contemporary society, the same outcomes are needed for trans and queer voices in communities of color. I hope to help set the platform for my community through hip-hop, the same way it has uplifted the voices for our straight, cisgender peers.

*Rocky Rivera*



# JABE MARVIS S. WILLIAMS

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ES '18 // ES310

Hip-hop is the legacy of African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx resistance to white supremacy and capitalism. It represents Black and Brown genius and the ability of oppressed peoples to make something out of nothing. Whether it be rap, dance, graffiti, poetry, deejaying, etc. hip-hop transcends all forms of media to capture the minds and hearts of those that come into contact with it.

Since hip-hop was born under a specific socio-historical context, those that seek to immerse themselves in the culture must do so with respect. In this sense, hip-hop is not for everyone. Although hip-hop at its core

celebrates diversity, communication, and the breaking down of barriers. It acknowledges the hierarchies of power and privilege that link the artist to their art. In this way, hip-hop is extremely self-conscious and explicit about its commitment to truth and liberation for the oppressed peoples that use this medium to articulate their lived experience.

Hip-hop is not perfect, nor does it aim to be. It represents a raw reflection of social realities and institutional issues that plague billions. We can still be critical of reality, and hip-hop, while pushing and offering solutions for a brighter future.

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**■ ■ HIP-HOP IS NOT PERFECT, NOR DOES IT AIM TO BE. IT REPRESENTS A RAW REFLECTION OF SOCIAL REALITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES THAT PLAGUE BILLIONS. ■ ■**

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# KRISTIN LEE

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PSY & ES '19 // ES310

Hip-hop means acknowledging that it stems from Black culture but has reached so many other people that are from different communities. Hip-hop is fighting to stay true to yourself in an environment that wants to commodify you while also condemning where you come from even though society created your struggles. Hip-hop is my way of taking part in being proud of my blackness and ecstatic about how innovative Black people are. Hip-hop for me is also being able to recognize that ways in which we can do better as a community. Hip-hop perpetuates, like any other genre,

the oppressions put onto Black people and making money off continuing those oppressions is still hurting Black people. Hip-hop is having a home created out of oral tradition, poetry, prose, and other mechanisms of writing that expose a double consciousness of who we are. Hip-hop has positives and negatives but brings so much joy to the lives it impacts. Hip-hop has a place in keeping Black vernacular alive. To me, hip-hop is extremely important and helped me to stay and become aware.

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**■ ■ HIP-HOP IS MY WAY OF TAKING PART IN BEING PROUD OF MY BLACKNESS AND ECSTATIC ABOUT HOW INNOVATIVE BLACK PEOPLE ARE. ■ ■**

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**ACADEMICS**

# BRENDA BELLO VÁZQUEZ

ES '18 // ES310

There is no doubt that the people who have it the hardest when it comes to getting their foot in the hip-hop industry are women of color. If you ask people to name as many female rappers as they can, the list is minuscule compared to the number of male rappers they could name. And it's not that women aren't rapping or that they aren't active participants in hip-hop; it's the misogyny, racism, and violence that prevents women from being in the same limelight as their male counterparts. Even when women enter the industry, they're dehumanized, seen only as "bitches and hoers."

One of the biggest issues in the industry is the exoticification of women of color, particularly Black and Latina women. This really started becoming a problem when hip-hop music videos began to cycle on MTV and BET. To this day, women are asked to simply display their bodies and 'shake their asses.' As slam poet and hip-hop artist Bridget Gray says in "My Letter to Hip Hop": "And it all seems a bit surreal, 'cause when I was

dancing around I didn't know the damage my soul was gonna feel. And there are times I'm still compelled to move, but I swear to you it's that old school groove that's playing above the lyrics, because if the music wasn't there I definitely wouldn't hear it." Furthermore, the music industry contracts these women sign are no different than the contract Saartjie Baartman signed in the 19th century. As a persistent display of racism and sexism, women of



*Bridget Gray*

color are used as objects of fascination; an oddity for display. Latina women in hip-hop are seen as “tropicalized mamis,” they’re exotic/foreign, they speak Spanish, they’re all the same, and they’re sex symbols. They are stamped with the ‘mark of the plural’ meaning they are fetishized and exoticized. The mentality is that women of color are not real people who are distinct and complex. Instead, they are interchangeable sources of masculine pleasure or pain. Another element that contributes to the issues for women artists is the color-caste systems that aligns ‘lightness’ to desire. Hence, the proximity to whiteness is the reason why women like J-Lo are seen as desirable. Not only is she a Latina but she’s also light-skinned, which makes her even more desirable. Approximation to whiteness is always privileged, lighter-skin is thought to be prettier, straight hair is good hair, and the list goes on.

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**■■ APPROXIMATION TO WHITENESS IS ALWAYS PRIVILEGED, LIGHTER-SKIN IS THOUGHT TO BE PRETTIER, STRAIGHT HAIR IS GOOD HAIR, AND THE LIST GOES ON. ■■**

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Despite these barriers, women of color have well made their mark in hip-hop. There are numerous songs by women hip-hop artists that challenge these notions. For example, Salt-N-Pepa’s “Let’s Talk About Sex” and “None of Your Business” both

seek physical and sexual liberation. Queen Latifah and MC Lyte discuss the importance of the female voice in “Ladies First” and “I am Woman.” Rocky Rivera, a Filipina rapper, talks about colorism and feminism in “Brown Babies” and “Turn You.” FIFTY50 rap about Black excellence and Black Royalty and their videos display images of Black women with their natural features. Women too have been successful in the hip-hop industry and without the need to internalize racism and misogyny. While that does occur, most women of color understand these problems and rather than participate, they dedicate themselves to calling it out and speaking their minds. They not only want their voices heard but they want to stand alongside the men and support them, but they can’t do that when they’re being dehumanized, exoticized, tropicalized, and objectified. Women artists have left their mark, while their success has been hindered, there is no denying that their work is revolutionary, empowering and immeasurably valuable and essential to hip-hop culture.

# FROM PLANET ROCK TO THE MESSAGE

ISABEL HUGHES

ENGL '19 // ES310

Fusion of funk and futuristic beats  
Afrika Bambaataa's Planet Rock  
Had everyone on their feet  
Escapism, it allowed for  
Down at the Roxy  
Threshold to another world  
Harsh reality went to sleep

But harsh reality had to wake up  
When the morning sun rose  
And POC went back to their homes  
In places white folks chose not to know  
A hub for safe voyeurism  
Down in Manhattan  
They could witness hip-hop  
But not know who made it happen

"Just start to chase your dreams,  
Up out your seats, make your body sway"  
Without going to the Bronx  
Without giving hip-hop the time of day  
Because in the Bronx  
Those wheels of systematic racism

Were undisguised, turning  
Because in the Bronx  
Livelihood was literally burning

Hip-hop as an escape  
Hip-hop as a spotlight  
Hip-hop as a critique  
Hip-hop, are you alright?

Planet Rock was timeless  
But muting reality is over  
The Message is here  
Hip-hop as an exposé  
Of injustice, of reality  
Safe voyeurism is so out of line  
Grandmaster Flash said  
"It's like a jungle sometimes"

He outlined profound truths  
Police brutality on black and brown youth  
While myths of Reaganomics ran loose  
Michael Stewart died because of those 11 men in blue

Not one of them served time  
A narrative far too familiar we find  
That neglect, they called it "benign"  
While they claimed colorblind

Trickle down economics?  
More like more money in their pockets  
Meanwhile mass incarceration is on the docket  
Hip-hop was real honest

Seeking to dismantle racism  
The Message and Planet Rock  
Realism and escapism  
So different, but they're not





# REPARATIONS

CAMERON CLAY // ES '18

LEILANI HEMMINGS PALLAY // ES '20

SHOUTOUTS TO DR. DUBLIN MACMILLAN & THE DOCTORS NAVARRO

Reparations

If you ain't melanated<sup>1</sup>  
You prolly just winced  
Black folks thinkin'  
Let the payback commence

Amen!

So you already know  
I'm finna say it again  
RE PA RA TIONS  
We ain't talkin' no 40 Acres and Mule<sup>2</sup>  
I'm talkin' bout what they aint teachin' in school  
The Black Get Back  
The Big Payback<sup>3</sup>

No shame  
Cuz whiteness is welfare<sup>4</sup>  
And that's not an exaggeration  
We'll call it compensation

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<sup>1</sup> *Eumelanin*

<sup>2</sup> *Google that shit!*

<sup>3</sup> *The Godfather of Soul James Brown has a hit song called The Big Payback, and he was fasho a dope MC. The man had bars. "I don't know Karate but I know crazy"*

<sup>4</sup> *Google: Homestead Act, The History of Whiteness, Jane Elliot,... the list goes on. Ain't nobody got time give you all that so take an Ethnic Studies Class. Specifically ES 381 The Social Construction of Whiteness.*

## Reparations

Here goes my demonstration, observe as I formulate these verbal equations

See Reparations is about elevation

We've been beat down and spit on

Like we 808's and kickdrums

Since day one we've been A1<sup>5</sup>

Dipped in sauce<sup>6</sup>

Uhhh who you think paid the cost<sup>7</sup>

The Black and Brown

The Red the Yellow, The Beat Down

Oh cuz dre got beats, you think he's safe from police<sup>8</sup>

Aww I see cuz you think you a scholar or you make top dollar<sup>9</sup>

You think they won't eenie meenie miney<sup>10</sup>

Mow you ass down

Rest in Peace Mike Brown

Can't forget to #citeasista<sup>11</sup>

When they always been down

So shoutout to Harriet

Queen of the Underground<sup>12</sup>

Hip hop scholar

From knee high to a duck<sup>13</sup>

Already told ya we don't give a fuck

Fuck ya feelin's and yo guilt<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> A1 = Top notch, it's also a steak sauce

<sup>6</sup> R.I.P Mac Dre

<sup>7</sup> Another James Brown reference

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Dre may dumb famous and hella money, but google "Dr. Dre handcuffed in driveway"

<sup>9</sup> Money or Education can't necessarily erase or shield POC from racial violence.

<sup>10</sup> The tea is, this "nursery rhyme" originally said nigger instead of tiger but like I said before you got google and access academic search engines

<sup>11</sup> Google: #citeasista

<sup>12</sup> Paying Homage to Harriet Tubman and highlighting the relationship between the Underground Railroad & Underground Hip Hop #citeasista

<sup>13</sup> R.I.P Phife Dawg

<sup>14</sup> white guilt

Yo soft ass cryin' over spilled milk  
Flip that shit and undo what you built  
Tried to drop dimes but ya couldn't relate<sup>15</sup>  
Take a step back and I'll elaborate

#### Reparations

You won't reach these elevations  
Never on my level and yo shit is all wack  
11 letter word to pay it all back<sup>16</sup>  
You know you owe us more than a single green stack  
Dollaz & cents?  
Ya thinkin' simplistic  
Our frequency, high grade,  
Vision Afrofuturistic  
Mouthpiece ballistic  
Hip to the game  
Never a Statistic  
But word is you missed it  
So even after all my logic and theory  
I add a "Motherfucker" so you niggas can hear me<sup>17</sup>

Closed Mouths Don't Get Fed  
If you want food for thought  
Black Folks been bakin bread  
Ain't nothin new  
Struggles we been through  
Textbooks try to hide it  
Truth, you try to deny it  
  
If you tell it?  
We over exaggerate  
But if you ain't tryna hear me?  
How we pose to conversate?

---

<sup>15</sup> ATCQ reference bout folks not being able to understand Black Folks even when we choose to speak Standard English.

<sup>16</sup> The word Reparations got 11 letters

<sup>17</sup> Ms. Lauryn Hill reference, she's Top 5 offtop.- Zealots by the Fugees

Oh Miss America  
The Great White Hope<sup>18</sup>  
Quick to shoot me down  
Leave me hangin' from a rope<sup>19</sup>  
Momma told me you'd shove your words down my throat<sup>20</sup>  
And ain't much changed  
Since they threw us on them boats<sup>21</sup>

Oh Miss America with a neck full of pearls  
Playin liteweight games in a heavyweight world  
Black Boys died for "whistling" at white girls<sup>22</sup>  
Pleaseeeee  
Ain't got the time for your rhetorical masturbation  
Always armed with 50 shades of justifications<sup>23</sup>  
But 12<sup>24</sup> ain't never seen any ramifications  
So ima say it one more time  
Gimme my damn Reparations!

---

<sup>18</sup> A reference the boxer Jack Johnson, Google: the great white hope Jack Johnson

<sup>19</sup> Unarmed Black Folks being shot down by the police is akin to lynching.

<sup>20</sup> By virtue of the relationship of power and discourse in America, Black Folks are steady misquoted, misunderstood, and misinterpreted. i.e. Miss Nina Simone, Colin Kaepernick (Did you listen to his interviews? or Just scroll through the comments section)

<sup>21</sup> Slave Ships

<sup>22</sup> Google: Emmett Till p.s. he not the only one

<sup>23</sup> Ignorant folks try to justify racism, inequity, and inequality. 50 shades is an allusion to the numerous justifications people employ to avoid discussing race. Shade has two meanings one is a reference to skin color, and the second is shade with one of its AAVE definitions meaning, "to question or doubt."

<sup>24</sup> 12 is AAVE for the police. Who by and large, are scarcely held accountable for the violence they commit against POC.

# LYRICS & LANDSCAPE

MAREN HILL

LA '18 // SENIOR PROJECT

## THESIS

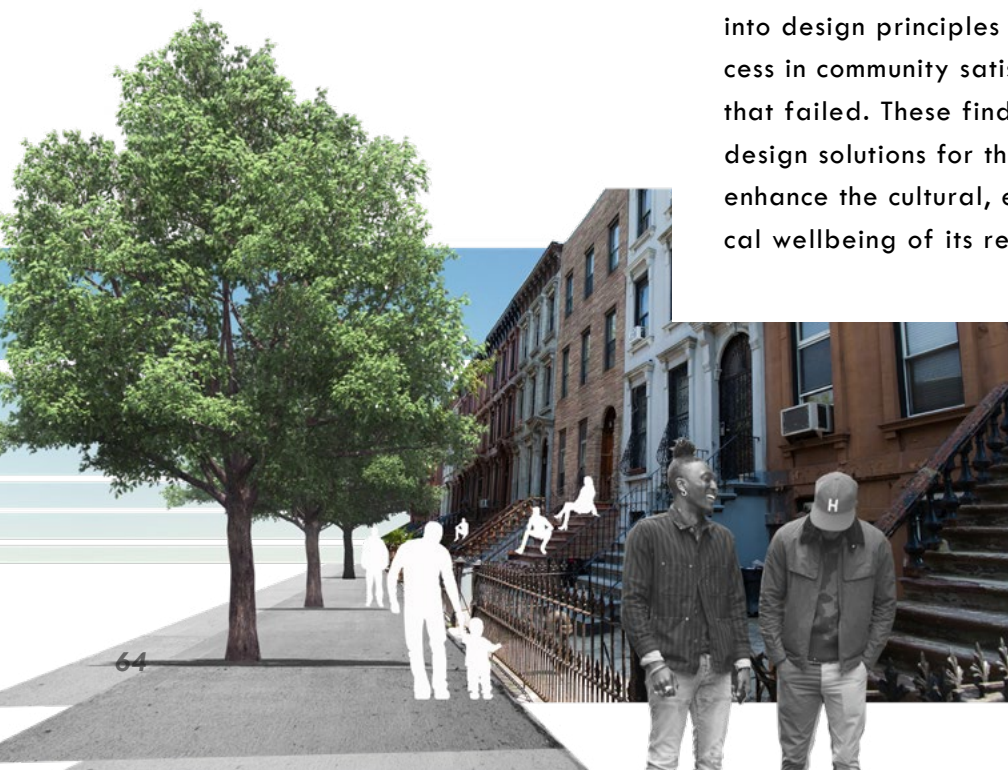
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An analysis of representations of place attachment and place aversion within New York City hip-hop culture, in order to understand elements within its urban fabric that are valuable or detrimental to its residents.

## INTRO

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This research is a discursive analysis study partnered with a design application theory. The information in this research focuses on the ties between social dimensions of hip hop culture and landscape architecture. In order to achieve this, representations of place attachment by hip hop artists in the New York City area are compared with concepts of place attachment and place aversion. Given the history of displacement and poor urban planning within New York City communities that consequently sparked hip hop culture within South Bronx, analysis on forms of place attachment and place aversion within this culture lends insight into design principles that achieved success in community satisfaction and those that failed. These findings are applied into design solutions for these communities that enhance the cultural, emotional, and physical wellbeing of its residents.





## PROPOSED APPLICATIONS

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- Focus on gathering spaces that provide flexibility, seating, and access to green space.
- Provide large entryways that accommodate gathering, communication, and performances.
- Allow neglected spaces to be used for artistry.
- Zone housing to provide affordable options for all family types.
- Create defensible space that provides privacy, responsibility, and mobility.
- Aim for ideals that do not change way finding or place attachment: health, unity, opportunity.

## CONCLUSION

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As this research developed, it has remained clear that hip-hop culture has the ability to provide strong insight into its physical surroundings. Hip hop is different from any other genre because of its strong emotional and physical ties to place, making it an ideal resource to understand community workings and needs. By analyzing the way in which artists perceive, move through, and affect their place, landscape architecture can more successfully anticipate the current and future state of these communities. Ultimately, this research set out to understand how hip-hop and its environment were related, and it in turn discovered how hip-hop has the capability to influence design. From these findings, it is clear to understand these communities, artistic comprehension is necessary.





***DON'T BELIEVE  
THE HYPE***

**SINGLE BY PUBLIC ENEMY  
ANNOTATED LYRICS**

**ALBUM** *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*  
**RELEASED** April 5, 1988  
**FORMAT** 12"  
**GENRE** Political hip-hop  
**LENGTH** 5:23  
**LABEL** Def Jam Columbia CBS Records  
**SONGWRITERS** Carl Ridenhour "Chuck D"  
Hank Shocklee  
Eric "Vietnam" Sadler  
William Drayton "Flavor Flav"  
**PRODUCER** The Bomb Squad  
*Annotations* \_\_\_\_\_

A sample from Rufus Thomas performing "Do The Funky Chicken" live.

Chuck D, in the July 9, 1988 issue of *Melody Maker* shared: "This [song] deals with the critic[al] situation on the TV and the weight of misinformation. Just don't believe something coming at you and just take it for what it's worth. You can't do that, you got to be able to challenge it. All this is on the album and it don't sound like what I just said. It has to be digested. There's a trend in America now where they're phasing out that we were slaves. They're saying, 'They wasn't slaves really, there wasn't really slaves.' You know what I'm saying? You can't beat around that. We was slaves, period. But the truth is like rain, man. You go outside and it falls on everyone the same" (courtesy of the Adler Archives).

In the face of discrimination, Chuck D is living "low"—on the low end of the U.S. racial hierarchy (which makes him feel low). He jokes that this puts him "next to the bass"—i.e., near the low frequencies in the musical spectrum.

Chuck D is referencing the fact that Black men are highly criminalized in the U.S. and they experience police violence at high disproportionate rates.

Ethnic Studies scholarship shows that racism is tied to structural and systematic oppression of people of color. Because people of color have never wielded that kind of power in the U.S., they can be discriminatory or prejudiced, but not racist.

**[INTRO: FLAVOR FLAV + SAMPLE]**

Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
("Now here's what I want y'all to do for me")

**[VERSE 1: CHUCK D + FLAVOR FLAV]**

Back, caught you lookin' for the same thing  
It's a new thing, check out this I bring  
Uh, oh, the roll below the level, 'cause I'm livin' low  
Next to the bass, (C'mon!), turn up the radio  
They claiming I'm a criminal  
But now I wonder how, some people never know  
The enemy could be their friend, guardian  
I'm not a hooligan, I rock the party and  
Clear all the madness, I'm not a racist  
Preach to teach to all ('Cause, some, they never had this)  
Number one, not born to run, about the gun  
I wasn't licensed to have one

The minute they see me, fear me  
I'm the epitome, of "public enemy"  
Used, abused without clues  
I refuse to blow a fuse  
They even had it on the news

**[HOOK: FLAVOR FLAV]**

Don't believe the hype  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype

**[VERSE 2]**

"Yes" was the start of my last jam  
So here it is again, another def jam  
But since I gave you all a little something that I knew you lacked  
They still consider me a new jack  
All the critics you can hang 'em, I'll hold the rope  
But they hope to the Pope, and pray it ain't dope  
The follower of Farrakhan  
Don't tell me that you understand until you hear the man  
The book of the new school rap game  
Writers treat me like Coltrane, insane  
Yes to them, but to me I'm a different kind  
We're brothers of the same mind, unblind  
Caught in the middle and not surrendering  
I don't rhyme for the sake of riddling  
Some claim that I'm a smuggler  
Some say I never heard of ya, a rap burglar  
False media, we don't need it do we?  
(It's fake that's what it be to ya, dig me?)  
Yo, Terminator X, step up on the stand  
And show these people what time it is, boy)

A reference to Public Enemy's previous single, "Rebel Without a Pause."

"New Jack" refers to a newly arrived, notable male character in a community. New Jack as pertains to music is defined as: The Slicker, more affluent with street knowledge and street style succeeded hip-hop culture and was associated with jazz, electronica, funk, and rhythm and blues.

Chuck D reminds his listeners about the normalized practice of lynching Black men in the U.S. in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Chuck D shouts out Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, as he did on seemingly every song during this period of his career.

By 1961, legendary saxophonist John Coltrane was leaving behind his earlier styles and entering into more avant garde territory. While his later work is well-regarded now, critical response at the time was extremely negative.

A classic Chuck D lyric, inferring that he doesn't rhyme just to put words together or hear himself talk, but as a means for political and social change.

A common criticism against sampling in hip-hop is that the artists don't know anything about the artists they are sampling from. Chuck D obviously disagrees (and so does Flavor Flav, who responds "The media says this?").

The Roots would expand on this line in their 2006 song "False Media."

**[HOOK]**

Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype

**[VERSE 3]**

Don't believe the hype, it's a sequel  
As an equal can I get this through to you  
My '98 booming with a trunk of funk  
All the jealous punks can't stop the dunk  
Coming from the school of hard knocks  
Some perpetrate, they drink Clorox  
Attack the Black, because I know they lack exact  
The cold facts, and still they try to Xerox  
The leader of the new school, uncool  
Never played the fool, just made the rules  
Remember there's a need to get alarmed  
Again I said I was a time bomb  
In the daytime radio's scared of me  
Cause I'm mad, plus I'm the enemy  
They can't come on and play me in prime time  
Cause I know the time, cause I'm getting mine  
I get on the mix late in the night  
They know I'm living right, so here go the mic—sike

*Chuck D often rhymes about his personal '98 Oldsmobile.*

*Meaning some perpetrators whitewash the true history of race in the U.S.*

*The line that would solidify the term "New School" which was an age of rap that followed the original old school (DJ Kool Herc, Flash and Bambaata).*

*A few years later Chuck D and Hank Shocklee bestowed the name "Leaders of the New School" upon a group from Long Island that they had been mentoring. They also gave group members Busta Rhymes and Charlie Brown their names.*



Before I let it go, don't rush my show  
You try to reach and grab and get elbowed  
Word to Herb, yo if you can't swing this  
Learn the words, you might sing this  
Just a little bit of the taste of the bass for you  
As you get up and dance at the LQ  
When some deny it, defy it, I swing Bolos  
And then they clear the lane I go solo  
The meaning of all of that, some media is the wack  
As you believe it's true  
It blows me through the roof  
Suckers, liars, get me a shovel  
Some writers I know are damn devils  
For them I say, don't believe the hype  
(Yo, Chuck, they must be on the pipe, right?)  
Their pens and pads I'll snatch cause I've had it  
I'm not a addict fiending for static  
I'll see their tape recorder and I grab it  
(No, you can't have it back, silly rabbit)  
I'm going to my media assassin, Harry Allen—I gotta ask him  
(Yo, Harry, you're a writer—are we that type?)  
(Don't believe the hype)

*The "LQ" in this rhyme is famed Latin Quarter nightclub in NYC. From 1985–89, the club was a hip-hop Mecca, referenced in songs by Boogie Down Productions, Ice-T, and others.*

*This is a reference to commercials for the cereal Trix and its mascot, the Trix Rabbit. In it, the cereal's mascot the Trix Rabbit tries to eat his Trix cereal, only to either fail or be denied and told, "Silly rabbit, Trix are for kids!" Just like the rabbit being denied any Trix, Flavor Flav is denying the reporter his tape recorder.*

**[HOOK]**

Don't believe—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype  
Don't believe—  
Don't—  
Don't—  
Don't believe the hype

**[VERSE 4]**

I got Flavor and all those things, you know  
 (Yeah, boy, part two bum rush the show)  
 Yo Griff get the green, black and red, and  
 Gold down, countdown to Armageddon  
 '88 you wait the S1's will  
 Put the left in effect and I still will  
 Rock the hard jams, treat it like a seminar  
 Reach the bourgeois and rock the boulevard  
 Some say I'm negative, but they're not positive  
 But what I got to give, (The media says this?)  
 Red, black, and green, you know what I mean?

**[OUTRO: FLAVOR FLAV]**

Yo, don't believe that hype  
 They got to be beaming that pipe, you know what I'm saying?  
 Yo, them Megas got 'em going up to see Captain Kirk  
 Like a jerk and they outta work  
 Let me tell you a little something, man;  
 A lot of people on daytime radio scared of us  
 Because they too ignorant to understand the lyrics of the  
 Truth that we pumping into them clogged up brain cells  
 That just spun their little wooden skulls they call caps  
 You know what I'm saying?  
 But the S1s'll straighten it out quick-fast, in a hurry  
 Don't worry, Flavor vision ain't blurry, you know what I'm saying?  
 Yo, Terminator X

**[HOOK]**

Don't—  
 Don't believe—  
 Don't believe the hype  
 Don't—  
 Don't believe—  
 Don't believe the hype  
 Don't believe the hype  
 Don't believe the hype  
 Don't—  
 Don't believe—  
 Don't believe the hype

*Public Enemy's prior album was titled "Yo! Bum Rush the Show."*

*The Pan-African Flag was created as the official banner of the African Race in 1920 by members of Marcus Garvey's UNIA organization. The flag consists of three equal horizontal bands colored red, black and green.*

*The S1W's were the security wing of Public Enemy. Their name stood for 'Security of the First World' because Public Enemy firmly believed that Black people were first world people. The S1W's brought a militancy to the stage at Public Enemy concerts with their synchronized dance steps and fake weaponry. While they were security guards for Public Enemy, their presence also demanded respect for the Black man at-large.*

*A seminar is, generally, a form of academic instruction, either at an academic institution or offered by a commercial or professional organization. Chuck D's music drops knowledge, in this he draws parallels between a seminar and the educational knowledge produced in his lyrics.*

*At the time, commercial radio was still very resistant to hip-hop, especially the political hip-hop that Public Enemy produced.*

*Annotations adapted from Genius.com with contributions by Dr. Jenell Navarro*

**MOST OF  
MY  
HEROES**

**DONT  
APP  
ON**

**EAR  
NO**



**STAMPS**

**-CHUCK D**



*INSTALLATION*  
**PROCESS**  
**WORK**

**5TH YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDIO**

**PROFESSOR TOM DI SANTO**

Josh Barnabei

Griffin Chierici

Kerry Northwood

Mackenzie Stickney

Alyssa Parr

Suki Kwan

Sam Tenreiro Theis

Daniel Han

Marcus Simons

Alexa Shafer

Margie Godoy

Mark Whittock

Taylor Silleman

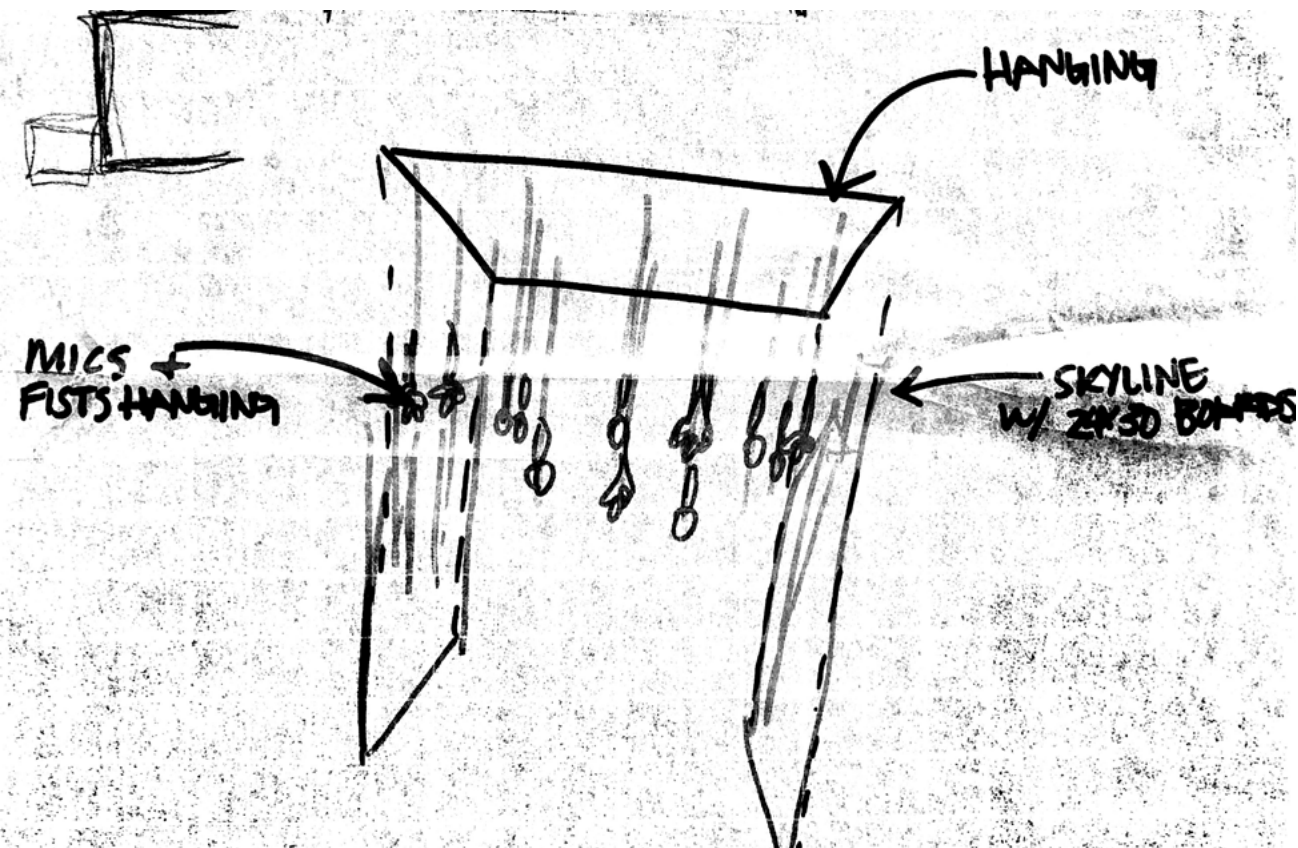
Hannah Mackay

John Kim

Nick Davis

Austin Kahn

Zac Vega



Preliminary sketch of Emceeing Installation design

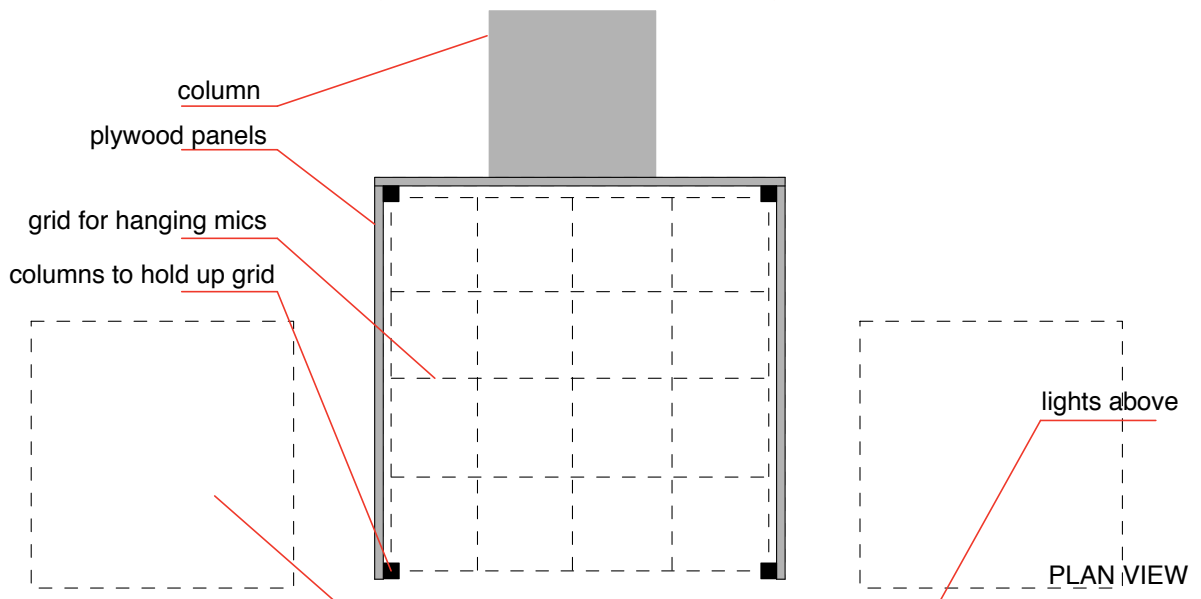
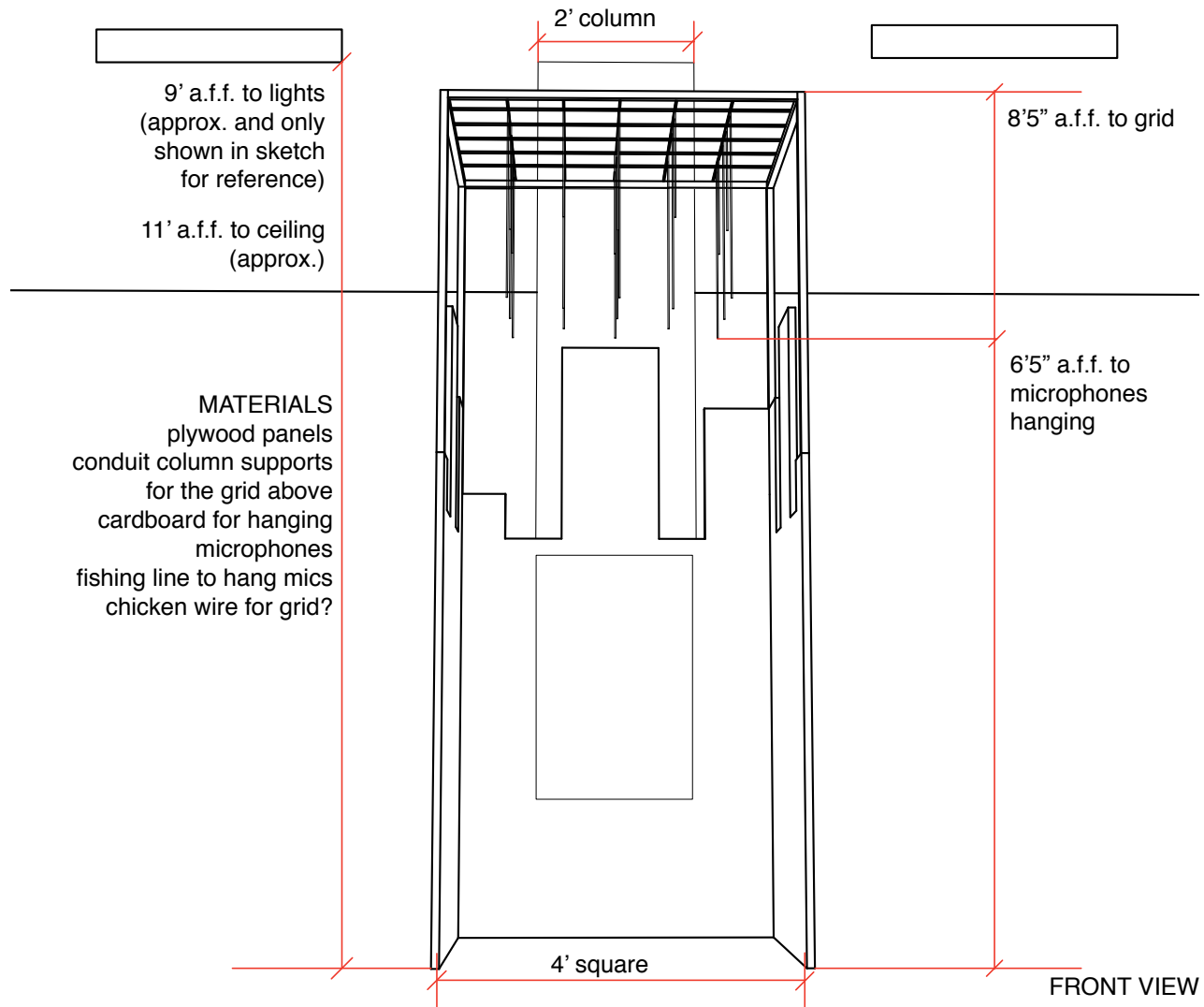
# EMCEEING



Exhibit visitors interacting with the Emceeing Installation. Photo credit Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library



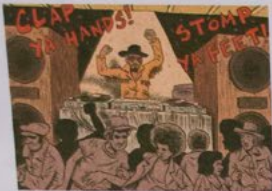
Digital Rendering of  
Emceeing installation  
design.



# DEEJAYING

other using his turntables. One energetic night on August 11, 1973, at his sister's party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, marked the birth of hip-hop, when Herc put his observations to the test. Here, B-baying, B-girling, emceeing, and deejaying all formed a new interaction and a newly celebrated culture. Deejaying has since evolved as much as the other branches of hip-hop, with new power players rising to prominence and new technology supplementing new techniques.

The next to leave his mark on deejaying history was the revered Grandmaster Flash with his "quick mix theory." Flash would plug his headphones into his turntables while one record



Comic from "The Hip-Hop Family Tree", depicting the energy of a hip-hop party, directed by the deejay.  
Illustration from "The Hip-Hop Family Tree" graphic novel by Ed Pisker

and mentally bookmark the break. Once the time came to make a transition, Flash would mix immediately into the break of the same song on a duplicate record while spinning the second record back into the break again. This repetition made it possible for him to spin the break indefinitely, extending the dancing and energy much longer than previously possible, marking the birth of looping. Another deejay by the name of Grand Wizard Theodore, a student of Grandmaster Flash, pushed the art of deejaying forward by experimenting with the way records were handled on the turntable. Stories tell of a young Theodore Livingston honing his mixing skills one day in the mid-1970s in his Bronx home when his mother walked into his room to reprimand him to turn the music down. To stop the music, Theodore applied pressure to his record to bring it to a slow, scratching stop, much to his interest. He began playing with records during the verse and break sections to add a new, fresh, energy to his sets, giving rise to the art of scratching. Such techniques and technology have evolved over time, spurring the birth of a branch of deejaying, Digital Audio Production, that allows for a higher level of detail in recorded instruments that helped push hip-hop culture forward into what we now celebrate.

the iconic hip-hop records were damaged. As technology has improved throughout the years, the damage done to the discs has been mitigated.



DJ Kool Herc deejays his first block party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, 1973.

Photo: Koolhaas

## CAL POLY FLAK MOB

Hip-hop Culture is alive and well in the Cal Poly community. There are a significant number of deejays spinning at all kinds of events around San Luis Obispo, including Raham, Lifegrid, and Luke Liberatore among many others. These deejays often spin for the handful of rap collectives that exist within the community, including Music Production Union's hip-hop group, Flak Mob, and the fun-loving Hobbyists Collective.



Detail of Deejaying Installation. Photo credit Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library



Preliminary sketch of  
Deejaying Installation  
design



Model of early  
iteration of Deejaying  
Installation



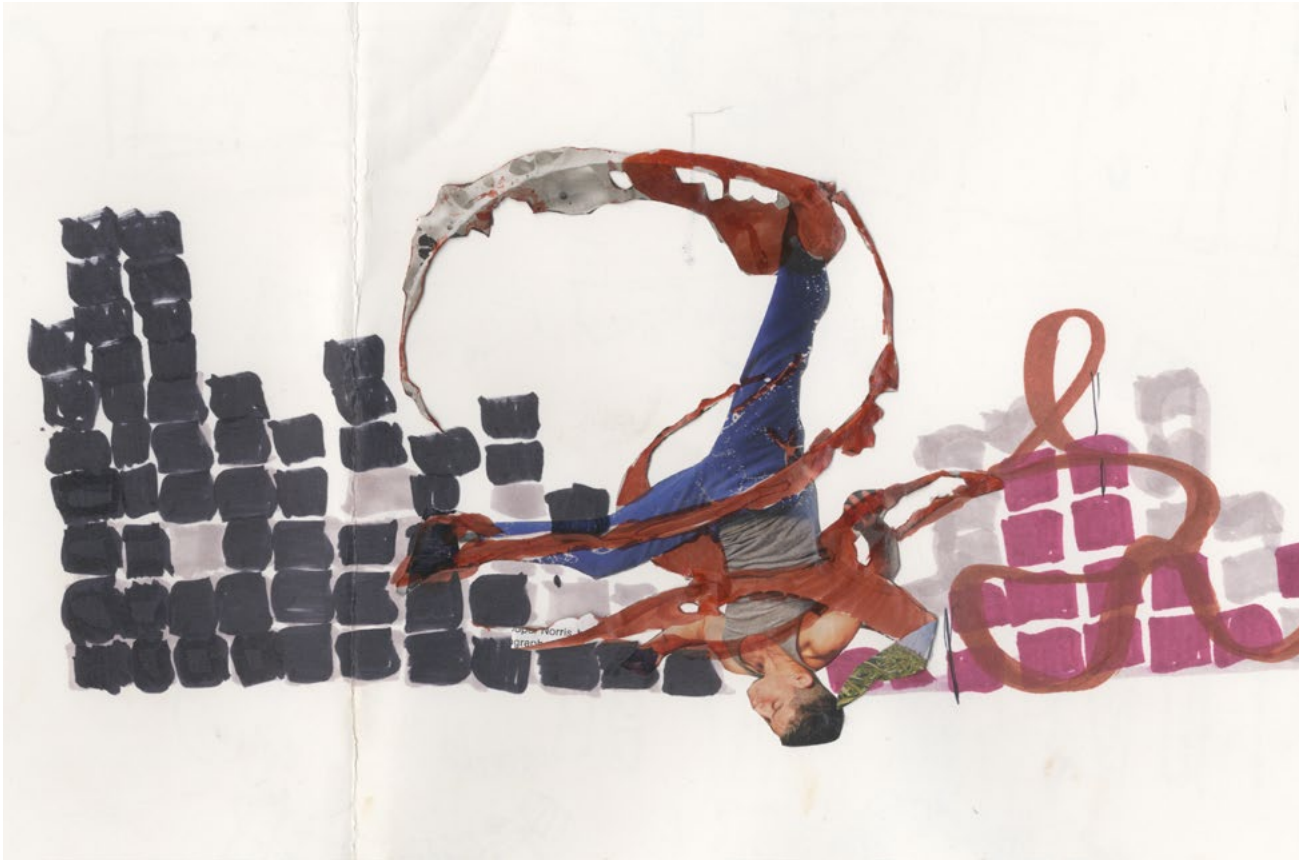


# BREAKING

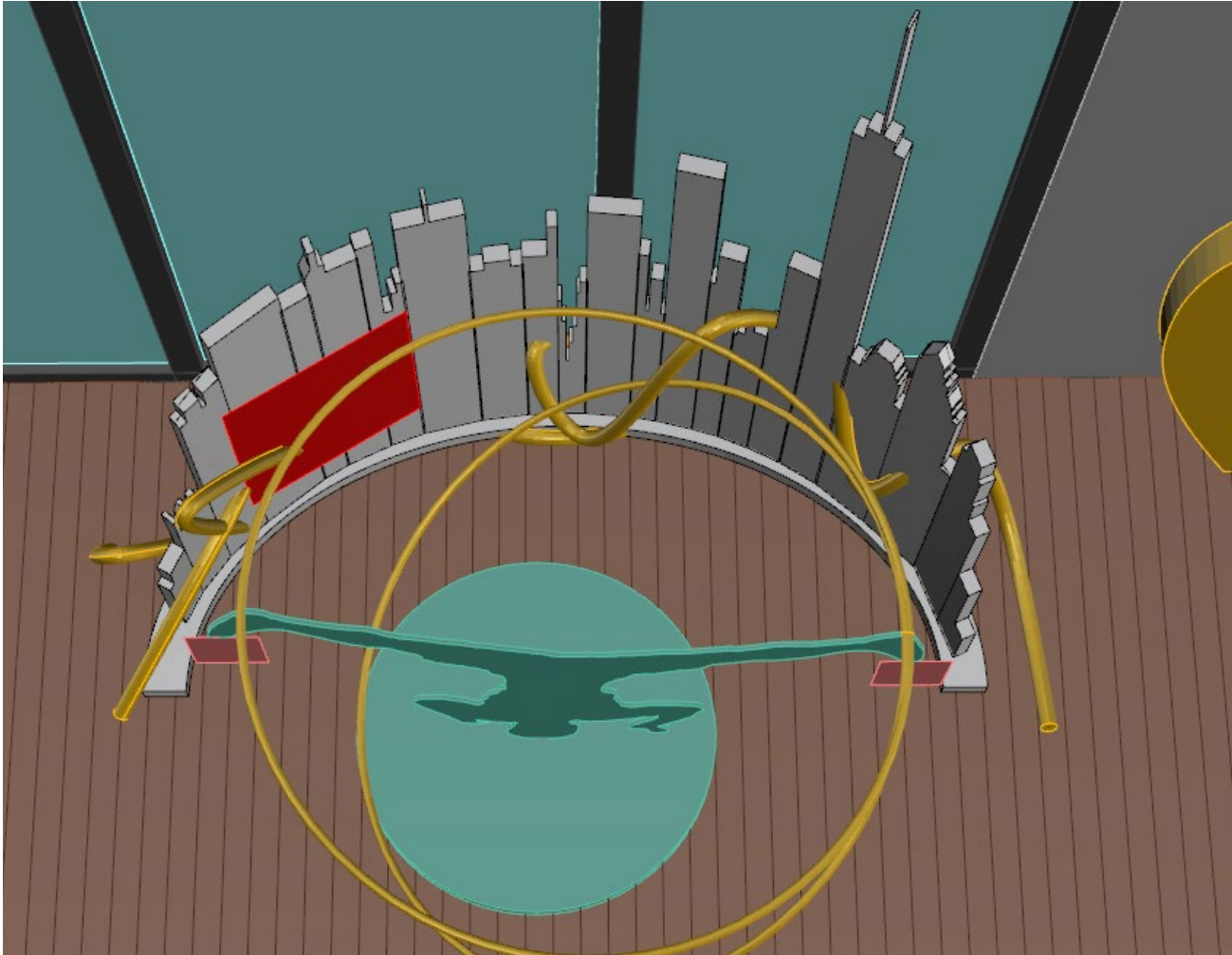


*Detail of Breaking Exhibit Installation.  
Photo credit Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library*

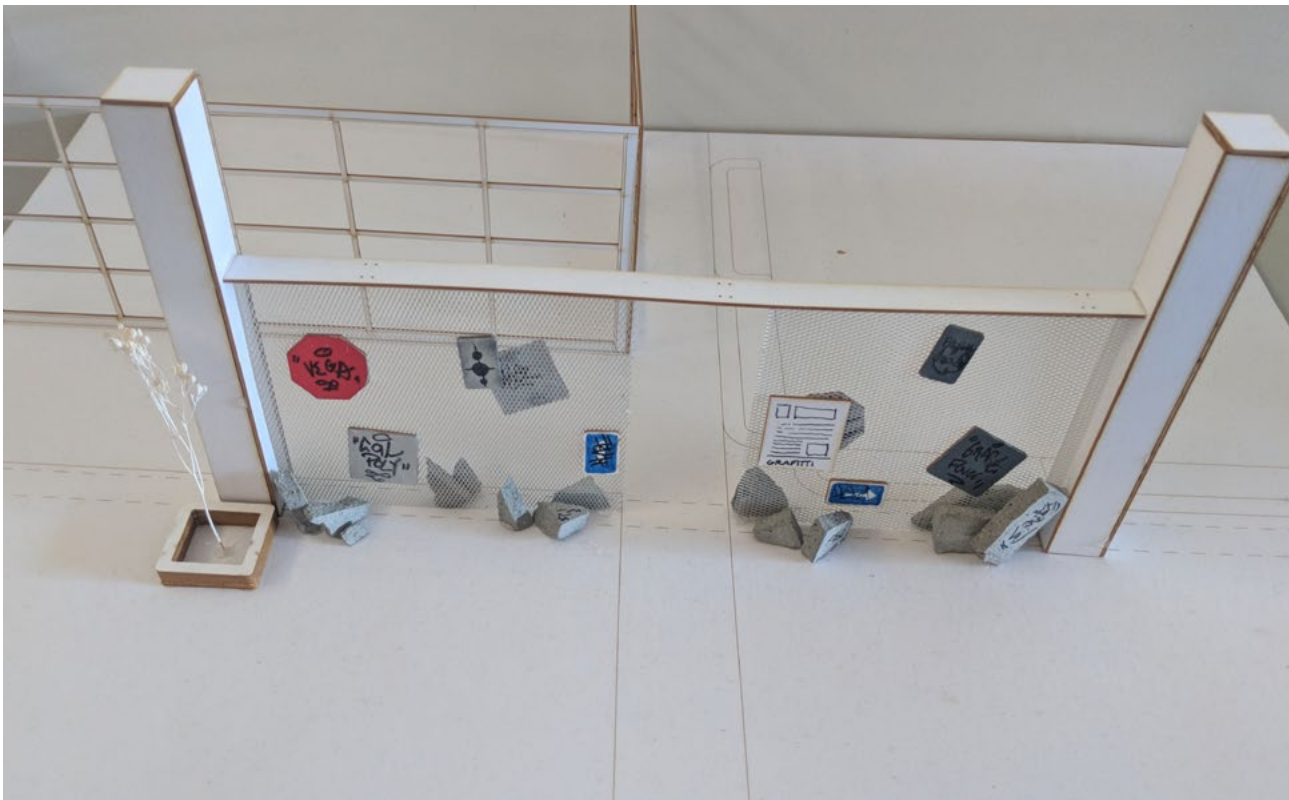
*Preliminary sketch  
of Breaking  
Installation design.*



*Digital rendering  
of Breaking  
Installation.*







Model of Graffiti  
Installation. Photo  
credit Catherine Trujillo

# GRAFFITI



Vinyl Design by  
John Kim. Photo credit  
Catherine Trujillo



Detail of Graffiti Installation. Photo credit Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library



BLACK LIVES MATTER

# GRAFFITI

A national and artistic practice of tagging, bombing, or painting sprayed stencils in public and private locations. Graffiti, which has been used since the 1940s to beautify neighborhoods and other public places, has evolved.

Graffiti emerged in the South Bronx in the 1970s as a form of self-expression in the face of a city in rapid decline. As the city's economy collapsed, graffiti artists used their art to express their frustration and anger. They used spray paint to create colorful, stylized letters and designs on the sides of buildings. This form of art became a way for young people to gain recognition and fame in a neighborhood where they were often overlooked.

In the 1980s, graffiti spread to other parts of the country. Artists used their art to express their views on social and political issues. They used their art to challenge the status quo and to demand change. Graffiti became a form of protest and a way for young people to make their voices heard.



GRAFFITI IS A FORM OF ART THAT HAS BEEN USED SINCE THE 1940s TO BEAUTIFY NEIGHBORHOODS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES. IT HAS EVOLVED INTO A FORM OF PROTEST AND A WAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD.

## LADY PINK

Lady Pink is a graffiti artist who has been active in the South Bronx since the 1970s. She is known for her colorful, stylized letters and designs. She has been a prominent figure in the graffiti community and has inspired many other artists.



## FROM THE CURATOR: MAREN HILL

WHAT ARE THE CONSCIOUS ROOTS OF THIS ELEMENT? Graffiti is a form of art that has been used since the 1940s to beautify neighborhoods and other public places. It has evolved into a form of protest and a way for young people to make their voices heard.

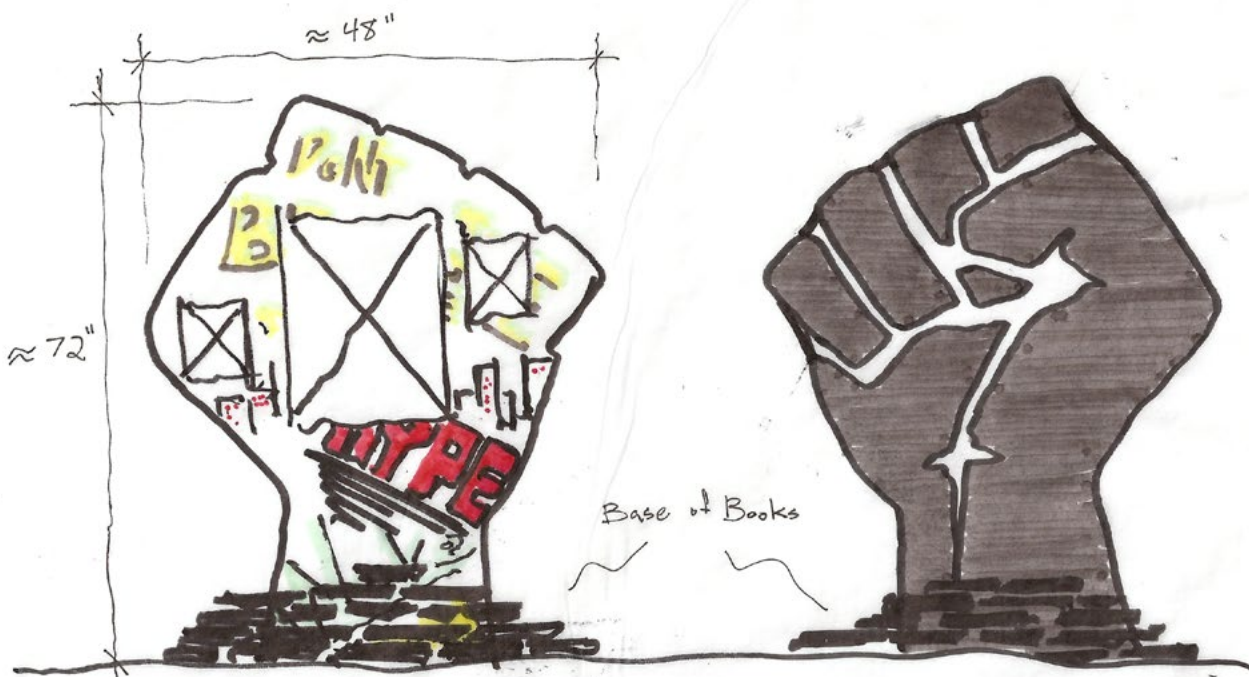
WHAT IS RADICAL ABOUT THIS ELEMENT? Graffiti is a form of art that has been used since the 1940s to beautify neighborhoods and other public places. It has evolved into a form of protest and a way for young people to make their voices heard.

GRAFFITI IS A FORM OF ART THAT HAS BEEN USED SINCE THE 1940s TO BEAUTIFY NEIGHBORHOODS AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES. IT HAS EVOLVED INTO A FORM OF PROTEST AND A WAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD.

SCS  
KEEP UNDER



# KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION



- silhouette of fist
- plywood painted white
- graffiti
- space for didactic posters
- facing throne

- detail in fist on reverse side
- both side emerge from base of books

Preliminary sketch of Knowledge Production installation design

Detail of Knowledge  
Production Installation.  
Photo credit Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library





# ON-SITE EXHIBITION





WHAT'S YOUR  
PLAYLIST?  
ERVE  
Ethan  
Ogeju  
2019

Yellow bulletin board with various papers and photos pinned to it.

Don't  
STOP  
Protest signs and graffiti on a chain-link fence display.

Large black and white fist sculpture resting on a stack of books in various colors (red, yellow, blue, brown).





Exhibition space and  
Knowledge Production  
Installation  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library





*Performance by member of SLO Breakers during exhibit reception. Photo: Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library*



*Performance by Logan Kregness from Flack Mob, during exhibit reception. Photo: Hannah Travis/Kennedy Library*



Hip-Hop throne and  
introduction panels.  
Graffiti piece by  
Self-Help Graphics.  
Throne design and  
construction by  
Thomas Stoeckinger  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



Detail of Hip-Hop  
throne, 3D printed parts.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library







Detail of Knowledge  
Production installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library









*Exhibition Space,  
including Hip-Hop  
thorne and Breaking  
Installation  
Photo credit: Hannah  
Travis/Kennedy Library*





HIT PUNCHY  
WITH THE HOP









Detail of exhibit space, with interactive quotations and graffiti installation pictured.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



Environment photo of the Emceeing installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library







Detail of the  
Emceeing installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



Environment photo of the Deejaying installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



# DEEJAYING

A deejay is a sound specialist that can utilize two turntables to mix and scratch music to create a unique sound. Disc jockeys in hip-hop culture have also mastered the art of seamlessly transitioning between songs by talking together toward samples of funk, disco, salsa and many other musical genres.

Widely observed in the early 1970s, young disc jockeys (deejays) began spinning, scratching and mixing records and vinyl records. The invention of hip-hop was marked by the simple desire of a young, aspiring deejay, Che Coltrane, to make the crowd. Coltrane's career first met parties he would play at would be dull until his records hit the "break" section, when the dancer's and audience's energy amplified significantly. Che, going by the name of DJ Kool Herc, was the first deejay to figure out how to make the 8-beats and 8-beats more by cutting up the records, mixing and looping them one each other using his turntable. One energetic night on August 11, 1973, at his sister's party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, marked the birth of hip-hop, when Herc put his observations to the test. There, 8-beats, 8-beats, 8-beats, mixing and deejaying, all formed a new, interactive and a newly celebrated culture. Deejaying has since evolved as much as the other branches of hip-hop, with new genres artists using to promote and new technology incorporating new techniques.

The next to mark his mark on deejaying history was the revered Grandmaster Flash, with his "back scratch." Flash would drop his headphones into his turntable, which are turned

on spinning, takes to the record record and audibly backbeat the break. Once the time came to make a transition, Flash would use his turntable to mix the break of the song into a duration, would while spinning the record record back into the break again. This repetitive made it possible for him to spin the break indefinitely, extending the dancing and energy much longer than previously possible, marking the birth of looping. Another deejay, by the name of Grand Wizard Theodore, a student of Grandmaster Flash, pushed the art of deejaying forward by experimenting with the vinyl records were treated on the turntable. Instead of a young Theodore bringing his mixing skills one day, in the mid-1970s, in his Bronx home when his mother walked into his room to request him to turn the music down. To stop the music, Theodore applied pressure to his record, making it to a side, scratching into, back to his interest. He began playing with records during the verse and broke sections to add a new, Flash, deejay to his sets, giving rise to the art of scratching. Such techniques and technology have evolved over time, opening the birth of a branch of deejaying, Digital Audio Production, that allows for a higher level of detail in recorded artwork.

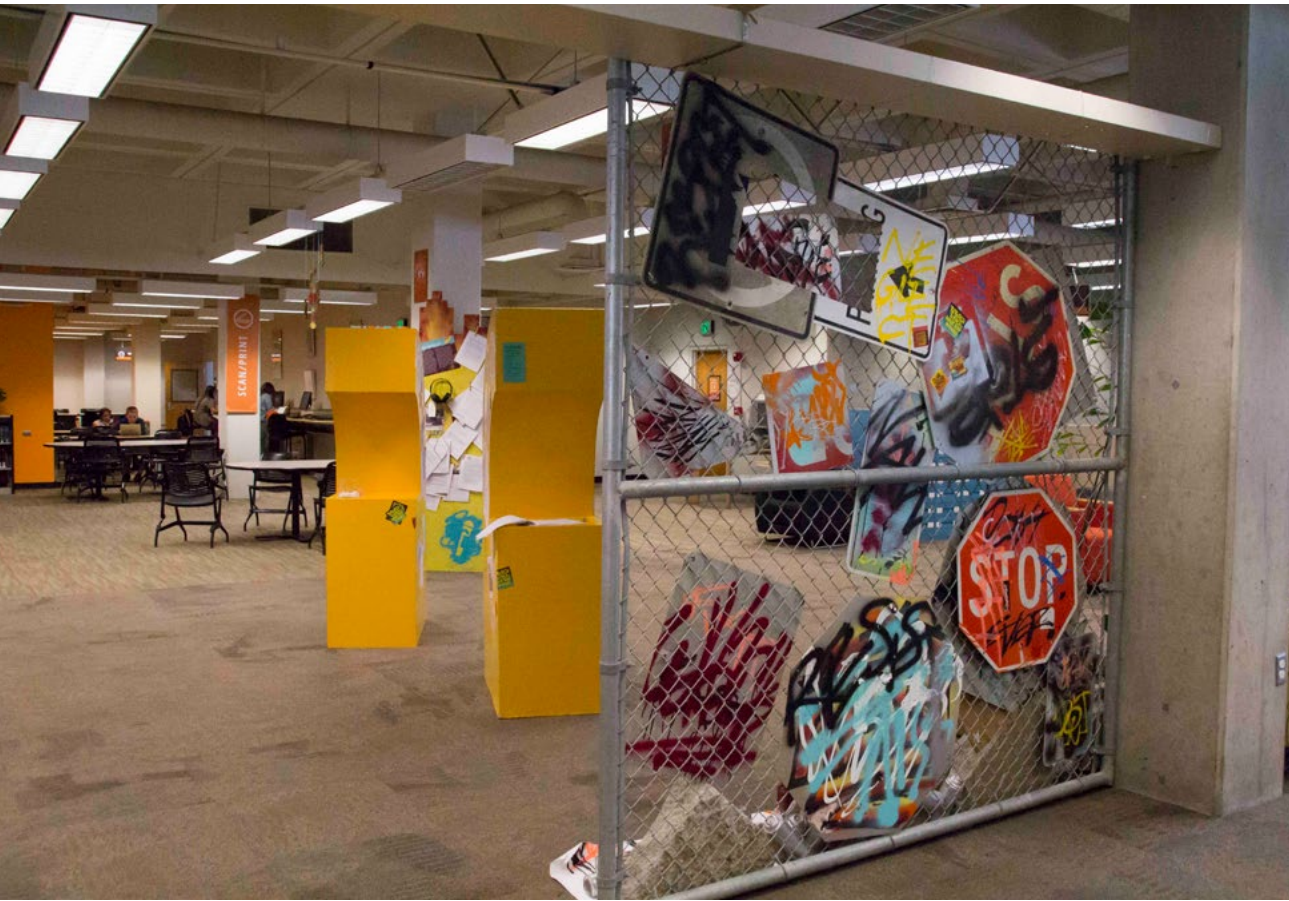
RESEARCH HELP



Caption: This hip-hop family tree" depicting the energy of a hip-hop party, situated in the Bronx.







Environmental photos of the Graffiti installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



Detail of the Graffiti installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library





Detail of the Annotated Lyrics.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library







Detail of student research and creative works panels.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library



Detail of Breaking installation.  
Photo: Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library







**COLLABORATORS**

# JENELL NAVARRO

Faculty Scholar



Jenell Navarro is an Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies. Her fields of research and teaching include Hip-Hop Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Women of Color Feminism. One of her favorite courses to teach is titled *ES 310: Hip-Hop, Politics and Poetics*, which she teaches every winter quarter. She is the founder of the annual event on Cal Poly's campus called the Winter Hip-Hop Symposium where student rappers, breakers, deejays, and graffiti writers perform alongside featured artists. Her published works focus on Indigenous Hip-Hop as a means to cultural transmission, language revitalization, and innovation for Indigenous young people across the Americas. She is also an activist and artist. Her artistry involves bead weaving, both traditional and contemporary, and producing indigenous zines (self-published magazines), with her latest edition titled *Beadwerk: An Indigenous Hip-Hop Beadwork Zine*. She has lived on the Central Coast for almost six years with her partner, José Navarro, where they raise their two fierce children, Nayeli and Joaquín. Her favorite hip-hop albums are Public Enemy's *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* (1987) and Salt-n-Pepa's *Very Necessary* (1993).



# JEREMIAH F. HERNANDEZ

*Emceeing Curator // ES '18*



Jeremiah Hernandez is a transfer student hailing from Santa Maria, California. He is a senior and will be graduating in the Spring of 2018 with a major in Ethnic Studies. Growing up in this small farming community, he had the same goal as many of his peers; get out by any means possible. With few opportunities available, writing raps and poetry were always an outlet to freely and safely express himself. Over time, trials, and tribulations, Jeremiah's goal for the future began to shift and change. Instead of trying to leave Santa Maria, he began working to exemplify how much value the community holds. Older and (wishfully) wiser, he returned to school after a hiatus of several years. During this process, he has continued working to bring awareness to the lack of equity and justice not only in the community of Santa Maria, but in our society as a whole. After graduating, he hopes to continue his community work, along with one day working in higher education to help underprivileged students reach their own goals as well, all while keeping hip-hop at the forefront of his artistic expression.

# LOGAN VAUGHN KREGNESS

*Deejaying Curator // IE '18*



Logan is a fifth-year Industrial Engineering major and Political Science minor at Cal Poly. Born into a military family, Logan spent his childhood in various locations around the Pacific, including the United States' West Coast, Okinawa, and Hawaii. Crediting himself as being “from nowhere, but everywhere at the same time,” Logan has a wide appreciation of several cultures. At Cal Poly, Logan has been involved in a myriad of student organizations, in membership and leadership. In his freshman year, Logan founded Music Production Union (MPU), a thriving, diverse community of musical artists of all trades and skill-levels. Years later, with the help of Cal Poly’s Cross Cultural Centers and John Duch, Logan proceeded to develop Operation: Hip Hop, an annual concert hosted by MPU, featuring student Emcees, deejays, B-boys and other guest artists. After graduation, Logan plans to immediately develop his career as an Engineer and an artist. Applying his minor studies (Political Science), Logan aims to pursue equality for underrepresented communities, as well as further his craft as an Emcee and Producer to use his music to encourage activism, awareness, positivity, and to help push the hip-hop culture forward.

# JOHN DUCH

*Breaking Curator // ART '18*  
Graphic Design Concentration



John Duch is a fourth year Art & Design student with a concentration in Graphic Design at Cal Poly. John was born in Los Angeles, California and identifies as a first-generation low-income Cambodian American. John aims to spread awareness on social inequality through his projects, photography, and dance.

John is a Graphic Design Intern at the Cross Cultural Centers, co-founded Hip Hop Choreo Club in 2015, and is the founder and president of the Cal Poly SLO Breakers. The hip-hop element he is the most drawn to is B-boying. John started B-boying summer of 2014 and is still dancing today. Outside of school, John enjoys going to weekly B-boy sessions with his crewmates and sees dance as a way to promote self-growth with skillsets that are not found in the classroom.

After graduation, John hopes to start off by working in his field as a product designer or UI/UX designer along with freelancing projects on the side that involve graphic design, photography, and B-boying.



# MAREN HILL

*Graffiti Curator // LA '18*



Maren Hill is a fifth year Landscape Architecture student at Cal Poly. Her senior thesis is focused on studying the relationship between hip-hop culture and landscape. She is passionate about exploring design theory and cultural landscapes in her studios at Cal Poly. Maren has interned with Architron, a company that focuses on sustainable, restorative architecture projects in the upper New York City area and hopes to continue in this line of work. She plans to pursue a career and graduate studies that emphasize environmental justice.

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# CATHERINE TRUJILLO

Kennedy Library



Curator Catherine Trujillo oversees Kennedy Library's Creative Works department—curating and designing exhibits that support cross-disciplinary student and faculty scholarship as well as managing the campus fine art collections. She has worked with designers, artists, architects, and photographers to create long-standing contributions to the cultural life of the Central Coast. She moved to San Luis Obispo from East Los Angeles, with a commitment to work in the arts and a focus on the preservation and dissemination of multicultural history and art.

The hip-hop element that she identifies most with is “Knowledge Production.” Collaborating with hip-hop scholars at Cal Poly, provided a medium to explore community-produced knowledge and creativity and demonstrates the value of hip-hop as a relevant educational vehicle to engage in critical conversations and social change.

# ANNA TEICHE

ART '18 Studio Art Concentration



Anna Teiche is a fourth year Art & Design student originally from Bainbridge Island, Washington. She came to Cal Poly to find some adventure and new experiences outside of her small rainy island home. She works at Kennedy Library as a Design Student Assistant for the Exhibits Program. She is passionate in the study of visual arts and how they can influence and define culture, and is fascinated with how Graffiti has evolved within the hip-hop culture. After graduation she hopes to further her education in fine arts practice as well as museum studies, in order to bring cultural awareness and education to the public through art.

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# TOMMY STOECKINGER

ART '18

Studio Art Concentration



Tommy is a senior transfer student from Los Angeles, California. Passion for visual art has brought him to Cal Poly to receive a bachelor's degree in art after working as a landscape and construction tradesmen out of high school. He is interested in visual art as a cultural and intellectual field of inquiry that contains the capacity to expand perspectives, empower marginalized voices and create interactions between conventionally disparate people and ideas. He works in the Kennedy Library as the gallery student assistant and enjoys facilitating various artistic voices on the Cal Poly campus. After graduating from Cal Poly, Tommy hopes to attend graduate school and pursue a career in art production and critical theory while concentrating on ways to connect and empower a wide range of people through creativity.

# HANNAH TRAVIS

Photographer // ART '19

Photography and Video Concentration

Environmental Studies Minor



Hannah Travis is a third year Art & Design student exploring the beauty and subtleties of the human experience through photography. She has an eye for fleeting frames; adventurous lifestyle photographs that she captures as quick as the moments unfold, with an aesthetic that is simple and serene. In the future, Hannah would like to work and travel as a photographer and/or documentary filmmaker, further exploring and sharing reality through different cultural and social (and camera) lenses.

The hip-hop elements that she is most intrigued by are the cultural roots of the music and in what ways those roots are altered and/or preserved in today's hip-hop music and art scene.

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# SWASTI MITTAL

ART '18 Graphic Design Concentration

Ethnic Studies Minor



Swasti Mittal is in her fourth year at Cal Poly. She is a Design Student Assistant for the Kennedy Library and a student assistant for the University Art Gallery. Having grown up in the Bay Area, she is passionate about diversity in the arts and the impact of good design. Her greatest loves are museums, television, and food. After graduating, Swasti would like to continue to work in design and most importantly—adopt a dog. The hip-hop element she is most drawn to is Graffiti because of its creative and ever-evolving use of lettering.



# TOM DI SANTO

Architecture Faculty



Tom Di Santo AIA, Architect is the Principal Architect of M:ome and a Professor in the Architecture Department at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, where he teaches design, theory, watercolour representation, book publication, and the implementation of sustainable principles. He achieved his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and earned a Master of Architecture degree (M.Arch II) from L'Ecole d'Architecture de Paris-La Defense. His interests range from family (wife Eva and children Trinity and Nico) to watercolours, from poetry to music, from furniture to design-build, from graphic design to fine art and film, and from photography to travel. He is also a DJ. His show "Speak Low" can be heard Sunday evenings on KCBX in San Luis Obispo.



Students from the 5th Year  
Architecture Studio, 2017-18.  
Photo credit Hannah Travis/  
Kennedy Library

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## **FACULTY SCHOLAR**

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Dr. Jenell Navarro, Ethnic Studies

## **STUDENT CURATORS**

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John Duch, ART '18

Jeremiah F. Hernandez, ES '18

Logan Vaughn Kregness, IE '18

Maren Hill, LA '18

## **IN COLLABORATION WITH**

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Ethnic Studies Department

Architecture Department

Robert E. Kennedy Library

Kennedy Library

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Hannah Travis, ART '19

Catherine J. Trujillo, Curator

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Margie Godoy

Mark Whittock

Taylor Silleman

Hannah Mackay

John Kim

Nick Davis

Austin Kahn

Zac Vega

## PERFORMERS

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Steve Hernandez

a.k.a. *DJ GreenLeaf*

Jeremiah F. Hernandez

a.k.a. *Jeremiah the Prophet*

### **SLO BREAKERS**

John Duch

Ethan Franciliso

### **FLAK MOB**

Logan Vaughn Kregness

Adam Massini

John Griffin

Brian Park

Sam Shafer

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Alyssa Mangaoang, ES/AGB '19

Jabe Marvis S. Williams, ES '19



# RESOURCES

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## REFERENCE IMAGES FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

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- MC Lyte at an event for VH1 Hip Hop Honors: All Hail the Queens, 2016. Photo: Marion Curtis/StarPix.
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## PHOTOGRAPHS & MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

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B-boy performing a variation of airfare (powermove) at Freestyle Session, November 2017. Photo by Dominic Holmes.

B-boy performing a unique pose at the L.A. Breakers 35th Anniversary event, August 2017. Photo by Dominic Holmes.

Lady Pink photographed in Times Square, 1983, wearing a t-shirt by Jenny Holzer from Truisms (1977–79). Photo: © Lisa Kahane, NYC All Rights Reserved.

1983, “Lady Pink on CC Train”, Photo: Lady Pink

The Death of Michael Stewart, 1983, Basquiat, acrylic and marker on wood, 63.5×77.5cm, Collection of Nina Clemente.

Richard Colon, aka Crazy Legs, member of “Rock Steady Crew,” 1981. Henry Chalfant Graffiti Archives. Photo: Henry Chalfant

B-girl Laneski with the breakdance group, Majestic Rockers in New York City, 1985. National Museum of American History

Female Icons of Hip-Hop. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Janette Beckman

MC Lyte on Manhattan’s Lower East Side. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Al Pereira

Public Enemy. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of the Jack Mitchell Archives. Photo: Jack Mitchell

Queen Latifah. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Al Pereira

1968 Prospect Ave., Bronx NY party flyer for Showcase Studio, 1981. Cornell University Library Hip Hop Collection.

Charlie Chase spinning using turntables and a mixer in the South Bronx High School gym, 1980. Cornell University Library. Photo: Joe Conzo.

Flier for the party that birthed hip-hop. School’s out : The original invitation for Cindy Campbell and DJ Kool Herc’s ‘back to school jam’ on 11 August, 1973. Cornell University Library Hip Hop Collection.

DJ Kool Herc deejays his first block party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, 1973. Photo: Ebet Roberts.

Comic from "The Hip-Hop Family Tree", depicting the energy of a hip-hop party, directed by the deejay. Illustration from 'The Hip-Hop Family Tree' graphic novel by Ed Piskor

Sketch of Public Enemy Logo, undated. Cornell University Hip Hop Collection

Handwritten list of all songs on "Nation of Millions..." written by Chuck D, 1988. Faxed to Bill Adler at Def Jam. Cornell University Hip Hop Collection

Public Enemy during the "Million Man March" in Washington D.C., organized by the National African American Leadership Summit, 1995. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Photo: Roderick Terry

KRS-One and Ms. Melodie, 1988. National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Janette Beckman

Public Enemy in the studio recording "Fight the Power," 1989. Adler Hip Hop Archive, Cornell University Library

S1W, Professor Griff, Terminator X, and Chuck D (from left to right), 1988.

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo: Jack Mitchell

**I NEVER BEEN**

**THE TYPE TO**

**BACK DOWN**

**I BOUNCE BACK**

**AND I'M BACK**

**NOW**

**-RUBY  
IBARRA**