

Janette Beckman Reveals What Hip Hop Artists Used to Look Like

Written by Robert ID4305

Monday, 14 April 2008 08:00 -

In the fall of 1982, celebrated photographer of the British music scene Janette Beckman moved to New York City, where she found hip hop on the edge of explosion. After a decade underground, the hip hop DJs, MCs, b-boys, fly girls, and graff writers were finally getting their due from the downtown crowd. While trains were covered in graffiti and boomboxes were blasting on the corners, DJs were up in the clubs while the dancers rocked the floor. Artists were getting signed and local hip hop legends were born. And while others called hip hop a fad, Beckman knew better.

Her photographs, collected in *The Breaks: Stylin" and Profilin" 1982-1990*, transport us back to a time before music videos, marketing departments, and uber-stylists took control. The queen of the 80s album cover, Beckman shot the hip hop icons of the era: Africa Bambaataa, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, Fearless Four, the World Famous Supreme Team, Lovebug Starsky, Salt'n"Pepa, Run-DMC, Stetsasonic, UTFO, Roxanne Shante, Sweet T, Jazzy Joyce, Slick Rick, Boogie Down Productions, Eric B. and Rakim, EPMD, NWA, Ice-T, 2 Live Crew, Tone Loc, Gang Starr, Ultramagnetic MCs, Rob Base and DJ EZ Rock, Special Ed, Leaders of the New School, Jungle Brothers, Beastie Boys, Rick Rubin, and countless others. The era was as original as it was innocent, and Beckman's images remind us of a culture that brought forth *The Message* before it got *Paid in Full*.

Londoner Janette Beckman began her career at the dawn of punk rock, working for *The Face* and *Melody Maker*. Her portraits celebrating the music and attitude of bands like *The Clash*, *The Sex Pistols*, *The Jam*, *The Specials*, *The Police*, *The Ramones*, and the punk, mod, skinhead, 2-tone, and rockabilly culture in the UK are collected in *Made in the UK: The Music of Attitude 1977-1983* (powerHouse Books, 2005). Beckman's work has appeared in *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone* and *Glamour*, to name a few. She lives and works in New York.

TASCHEN invites you to meet award-winning photographer

Janette Beckman who will be signing copies of her book

THE BREAKS *Stylin" and Profilin" 1982 – 1990*, Thursday, April 19 at 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM at 354 N. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA

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For more information on *The Breaks: Stylin' and Profilin' 1982–1990*. Photographs by Janette Beckman

Texts by Bill Adler and Tom Terrell visit <http://www.powerhousebooks.com/books!/TheBreaks>

"These images, which span music, street culture, and hip hop icons from 1982 to 1990, feature entertainers at the breaking point of their careers. The pictures manifest the genius of underground scenes and highlight their influence on today's music scene."

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