



**HERE
TODAY
GONE
TOMORROW**

**WELLINGTON
STREET ART**

JAIMIE D BAIRD

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DESIGN MATTHEW BARTLETT

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FOREWORD

*'Sneaking with imaginary enemy at night
An eye in the needle falling red and glowing bright
It's got balls, it's written on the walls
Graffiti crimes in the shopping malls.'*

— 'Graffiti Crimes', 1979

When Kiwi rockers Misex recorded their hit song 'Graffiti Crimes' in 1979, daubing city walls was still seen as outright vandalism, wilful damage, earning a 'bomber' with a spray can a *big* fine or up to three months in jail. No wonder graffiti artists (of all genders) needed 'balls'.

Looking back, Misex had the synthesisers, strobe lights and tight leather trousers and tank tops, but today their look and sound is obsolete. Hip-hop, on the other hand, the branch of music most associated with graffiti, remains alive and kicking, still a moving part of modern pop. And this is a story inseparable from hip-hop.

Last year, 2023, hip-hop reached the ripe old age of fifty. In 1973, a cultural revolt, based on music, street art and dancing, was born in New York City. Eventually hip-hop washed into Aotearoa (before the internet, things took longer) and when it did, it ignited and changed lives, including that of author and photographer Jaimie Baird.

Picture this: Manners Mall, early 1980s, a dirty cement strip of wind-whipped pavement in the heart of Wellington, the unlikely melting pot of hip-hop in Aotearoa. It's a popular gathering place

of rappers, break dancers and graffiti artists, mainly teenage males, clad in black cords, sneakers and oversized US Army issue jackets. The ground shakes with beats thudding out of a radio cassette player.

Breakdancer Siliga Fa'alogo (aka Kosmoe) is a fixture here. He's a local hero, a twisting superstar of hip-hop dance. Young Māori and Pasifika like Kosmoe and the equally famous DJ Tee Pee are taking up this influential black American subculture, making it their own.

So what's that got to do with this book? Kosmoe has another identity as Frosty K, graffiti criminal extraordinaire, painter of great sprawling murals in wildstyle letters. He leads a group called the Bloodz, notorious for creating urban inspired art on city walls using spray cans and felt-tipped markers. They're the scourge of council cleaning crews with high pressure hoses and chemicals.

We can guess the rest. Jaimie Baird meets Kosmoe in the mall and they talk of a shared love and respect for graffiti. By day, Jaimie is a buttoned-down public servant, but he's fascinated by hip-hop art, ready to start working nights for the cause. Camera in hand, he joins Frosty K and the Bloodz, documenting their guerilla street art, recording it before the council trucks roar up and blast it all away.

Which brings us to Club Graffiti. Jaimie and his new associates boldly set up a collaboration to locate and record the best graffiti as it is created. A key mouthpiece is 'The Uncut Funk Show' on station Radio Active, founded by Mark Cubey (now the Wednesday Night Jam). Last year it celebrated 40 years, another hip-hop milestone.

In an unsigned press release sent out to newspapers in 1985, Jaimie encourages graffitists to write in (to Box 3766, Wellington) with the chance of having examples of their work recorded for posterity. 'It is left to individuals to judge for themselves whether Club Graffiti is historically valuable or the dreams of a lunatic'.

Either way, lunatic or not, for almost forty years Jaimie has followed the evolution of street art: recording graffiti in all its varied forms, in all sorts of weather. The hundreds of compelling images in this book are proof of his astonishing commitment to listening to – and passing on – the voices in words and images daubed on walls across the capital.

Today graffiti is an accepted, even expected part of the cityscape. No longer reviled by city councils, its likely to be done on commission by a new field of superstars, some trained as artists. Much has changed since the heady days of Frosty K and his Bloodz, sneaking through Cuba Street, cans at the ready, ready to commit those graffiti crimes.

REDMER YSKA



Cuba St. Apr 2015



Jan 2022



Abel Smith St, Nov 2010



Opera House Ln. Oct 2020



Aro Park, Mar 2015



Opera House Ln, Apr 2013



Trentham Railway Station, Upper Hutt, Oct 1985



Porirua College, May 1985



Valhalla, Vivian St, Jun 2022



Aro St. May 2016



Waitangi Park. Nov 2016



Waitangi Park. Jan 2017



May 2012



Waitangi Park. Dec 2018



Abel Smith St. Jan 2023



Abel Smith St. Jan 2023

CHARACTERS



Gluznee St. Feb 2011



Gluznee St. Aug 2020



Waitangi Park. May 2018



Newtown Avenue. Aug 2017



Valahalla, Vivian St. Dec 2012



Car park building, Wakefield St. May 2012



Cuba St. Mar 2016



Riddiford St, Newtown. Jan 2021



Opera House Ln. Dec 2011



Abel Smith St. Jan 2021



Cuba St. Sep 2021



Otaki. 1986



Furness Ln. Nov 2019



Sep 2023



Oct 2023



Wellington Motorway/Adjacent Rail Line. Oct 1985



Waitangi Park. Nov 2023



Under Epuni Bridge, Lower Hutt. Oct 1985



Aro St. May 2016



Cable St. Mar 2012



Wigan St. Mar 2012



Upper Cuba St. Nov 2010



Aro St. Jun 2017

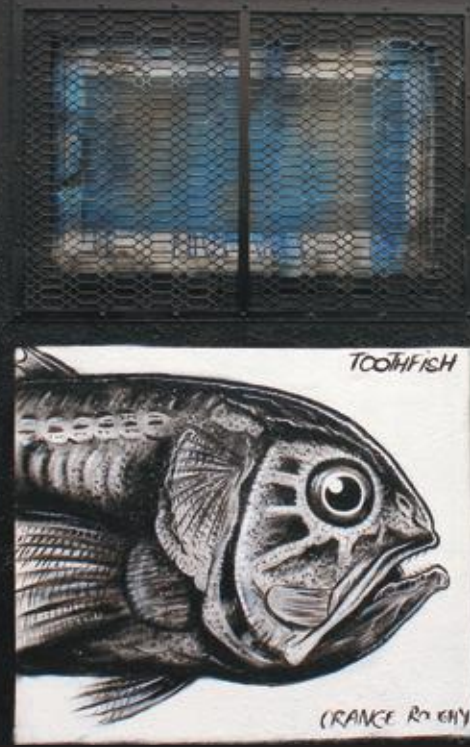


Manners St. Dec 2011

Swan Ln. Jun 2011



Oct 2019



Abel Smith St

Photo James Gilbert

Island Bay. 2014

Toothfish is a project started in 2010 trying to bring some social and environmental justice into the local street art scene, which for the most part had no social or political dimension. Toothfish is a fictional environmental activist cum street artist who uses posters to raise awareness of environmental and political issues. Some of these posters have appeared on walls in over forty countries around the globe. Learn more at toothfish.org

TOOTHFISH



Cuba St. May 2015



Jan 2021

My friend Jo lets me paint pictures on her garage at 43 Palmer Street because I have so much to say. Originally, other local graffiti artists had a go, most recently Joe McMenemy, whose birthday picture for his daughter Echo became so tag-covered that I turned it into the 'NO MORE WAR!' message seen here at far left. After that I remember painting in succession: a 1917–2017 Hammer and Sickle, a Māori Madonna (pictured), a portrait of Greta Thunberg, "Livin' in lockdown" with the moon over Wellington City, and "Vote for the trees cause the trees can't vote!" – that's where the tree image in these pictures comes from, added to over months with a variety of birds, animals, national flags and anti-war messages. The chequered pattern in the top left corner is the 'Wiphala', the indigenous people's flag of Bolivia, painted in support of the government of Evo Morales.

TIM BOLLINGER



Mar 2022



Jan 2023



Aro St. Feb 2021



Aro St. May 2016

Te Aro School, The Terrace. Jul 2021



Lukes Ln. Apr 2011



Jan 2013



Marion St. Jan 2011

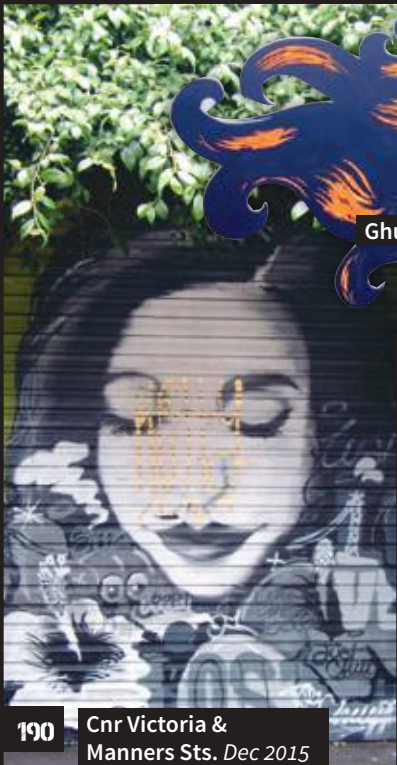
Jul 2012



Rosie's Cantina, Queens Wharf. Aug 2022



Marine Pde, Paraparaumu Beach. Apr 2022



190 Cnr Victoria & Manners Sts. Dec 2015



Ghuznee St. Jul 2014



Wallace St. Oct 2010



FOUR DECADES '200+ IMAGES

Art or vandalism, protest or social commentary – how you see street art depends on where you stand.

Jaimie Baird's *Here Today Gone Tomorrow* documents his 40-year fascination with these ephemera as “a testament to human imagination, innovation and cultural diversity.”

Whatever you make of it, this book's riot of colour and off-beat street images cements Wellington's reputation as “one of the coolest little capitals in the world” (*Lonely Planet*).

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