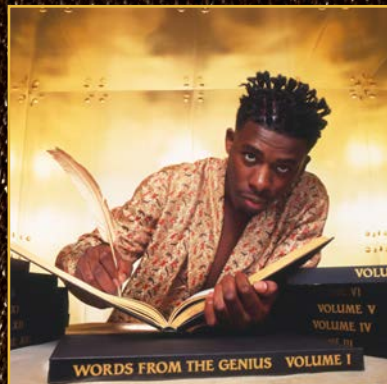


George DuBose began his work with NYC's Hip Hop artists at the very beginning. When he heard the first Hip Hop hits, he thought it was part of New Wave. It was a wave alright, a tidal wave that swept the country. This book traces his work with Afrika Bambaataa, Biz Markie, Kane, G. Rap, Roxanne Shanté, MC Shan, Masta Ace, Man Parrish, The Genius aka GZA, Craig G, Marley Marl, Grand Daddy IU, King Sun, MC Jay and Thomas Ontime of 2 Deep, Run-DMC, The New York City Breakers, XCLAN, Mobb Deep, Rammellzee, Shelley Thunder, Scoob and Scrap, Double J, Bootsy Collins and The Notorious B.I.G.

In all, DuBose has created more than 300 album images and designs and over 50 of his projects have achieved gold status. Bonafide magazine (UK) called DuBose "the godfather of Hip Hop photography".



an imprint of  
Wonderland  
Publishing

all photos and text ©2013 George-DuBose.com



THE BIG HIP HOP BOOK OF PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEORGE DUBOSE

# The Big Book of Hip Hop Photography

by George DuBose

# The Big Book of Hip-Hop Photography

all text and photos by George DuDose

art direction and design by George DuDose

An imprint of Wonderland Publishing

©2013 George-DuDose.com



all text, photos and mistakes are solely the responsibility of the author  
George DuBose asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

Copyright ©2013 by George DuBose

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system, without the permission in writing from the author

“The Big Book of Hip-Hop Photography”

First Edition

ISBN 978-0-9889-2346-1

Printed in the United States of America  
Library of Congress cataloging-in-publication data

all of the images in this book are available  
as signed, numbered limited edition fine art prints  
for more information contact:

[boss@george-dubose.com](mailto:boss@george-dubose.com)

Other books from the series “I Speak Music”

“I Speak Music - Ramones” (English Edition)	ISBN 978-0-9889-2340-9
“Hablo Musica - Ramones” (Españoles Edición)	ISBN 978-0-9889-2341-6
“Eu falo Música - Ramones” (Português Edição)	ISBN 978-0-9889-2345-4
“I Speak Music - Hip Hop - Old School Volume One”	ISBN 978-0-9889-2342-3
“I Speak Music - Hip Hop - Old School Volume Two”	ISBN 978-0-9889-2343-0
“I Speak Music - Hip Hop - Volume Three”	ISBN 978-0-9889-2344-7

## foreword

This book is not about “how to” be a photographer or a history of Hip-Hop.

It contains the roster of Hip Hop artists I collaborated with during the 35 years I lived and worked in New York City and documents my work with the artists that made Hip-Hop music popular worldwide. This book is for fans and people interested in photography and the challenges of producing photography and designs that serve as the first visual impressions that one has when learning about a newly discovered artist.

While these are not histories or biographies of the artists or “how-to” photography books, I hope that the reader will gain new insight to artists that they already know and like or find information about an artist that they haven’t heard of yet.

This book is arranged in chronological order and is meant to give the reader an overview of the creative process and relationship between the artists and their packaging. Soul Sonic Force was the first of a long list of these artists that ends with The Notorious B.I.G..

Many people are cautious when presented with new ideas, new art or new cultural styles. Then there are other people who are more curious and when they are presented with ideas or concepts that are “out of the box”, become immediately interested in this new “thang” just because it is new and different. When I first heard Hip-Hop music, it was “Planet Rock” by Soul Sonic Force. What caught my immediate attention was that the music was a direct copy of the New Wave song

“TransEurope Express” by the German group, Kraftwerk, with the lyrics completely changed.

I had the honor of working with the Hip-Hop artists that have become known as “The Old School”. Artists like Soul Sonic Force, Biz Markie and Big Daddy Kane didn’t start Hip-Hop or “disco rap”, but they took it out of the Bronx to Queens and Brooklyn. I consider them the “second generation” after Kool Herc, Bambaataa, the Sugarhill Gang and Kurtis Blow. At my favorite New York City nightclub, the Mudd Club, the DJs were known for playing a wide variety of musical styles. One would hear everything from old Michael Jackson to Plastic Bertrand. All the cutting edge music was played for our dancing pleasure. Blondie’s “Rapture”, “White Lines” by GrandMaster Flash were just some of the new music we were exposed to at Le Club Mudd.

Obviously, we kids who lived well below 125th Street in Manhattan, weren’t exposed to the rooftop parties produced by DJ Kool Here and Afrika Bambaataa and when we heard the first Hip-Hop “hits”...Well, I for one, just thought it was more New Wave. New Wave was a pretty expansive genre and as a description, pretty loose.

When Hip-Hop began, it was an underground phenomena, there was no fixed fashion look or formula for the music. There was no Karl Kani, South Pole, Sir Benni Miles labels and Tommy Hilfiger hadn’t jumped on the Hip Hop bandwagon yet, because there was no wagon. It was a culture being born. Often the artists had no idea about what clothing to wear for their shoots. There was Dapper Dan, the tailor to the stars in Harlem, but Dan was making clothes on order, the

artists or sports figures that went to Dan had to bring their own ideas.

Often I had to tell an artist that he couldn't wear a certain outfit, because another artist had worn a similar look on a recent album shoot. Likewise with the poses, the Hip-Hop culture was so new, that the visual resources the artists could draw on were limited. I always had to pay attention to what the artists were doing in their photos and push them to do something original.

My life as a young photographer, struggling to make a living in New York, documenting the lifestyles of young artists, rock and new wave musicians who were giving New York City a cultural revival in the late '70s and '80s, allowed me to be in the middle of this constant bombardment of new sounds and ideas that were rocking our culture.

MTV was still over the horizon, the music and fashion we had was our own. Our lifestyles were still unattractive commercially and that made it ours alone.

In those days, no one could sell us "a look" or a sound, 'cause we were still working on creating them ourselves. The artists featured in this volume didn't start Hip-Hop, but added more power to the force behind the bandwagon.

Generations of teenagers have continually searched for fashion and music that differentiates their generation from that of their parents. The more the fashion and music styles appall and upset their parents, the more the kids know they are on the right track.

My grandparents upset their parents by listening to jazz and bebop in the '30s and '40s, my parents upset my grandparents by listening to

Elvis and early rock in the '50s. My generation upset our parents by listening to the Rolling Stones and Jimi Hendrix in the '60s.

I remember my father coming into my bedroom and telling me to lower the volume of the stereo.

"How can you listen to that crap!" My father asked as I had "Satanic Majesty's Request" by the Rolling Stones blaring out of the box.

"The music is terrible and no one can understand the words!" He said.

Well, it certainly wasn't Dave Brubeck or Errol Garner. But it was MY music. The fact that my father didn't like/understand it, just made all the better and more personalized.

This continues...

Many of my generation didn't understand Hip Hop culture, didn't understand Hip Hop fashions (hats and clothing on backwards, huge flashy colorful sneakers) or Hip-Hop music. The vulgar language, the disrespect of everyone and everything, put a lot of people off Hip-Hop. It wasn't any part of their culture and it scared them.

That made the Hip-Hop fans even more confident that they were on to something...cool. Something that their parents couldn't understand and didn't like.

That made Hip Hop even cooler...

The artists in this book blew Hip Hop up even more.

In 1998, I quit my job as senior art director and photographer for Island Records, ending a 30 year relationship with the best little record label in the world.

I have had a career that brought me a much more exciting life than I ever would have

imagined of living. I have met people that I never would have otherwise. I never got rich from this work, but I think I helped a lot of musicians become more popular and fans get a better picture of these artists. Money was never my motivation. My self-imposed challenge is to make a cover for an LP or a CD that the musician is proud of.

My “prime directive” always was and still is: “To make the cover LOOK like the music SOUNDS”.

I speak music...all dialects.

– George DuBose - Cologne, Germany 2013

## testimonials

It's the media, which gives cultural movements a name. During the time George DuBose began his New York City servitude, the current big things were the Punk & New Wave movements. George was already leaving his fingerprint on those scenes, by creating covers for bands like the B52's, The Ramones, Kid Creole, Klaus Nomi and others.

At the time, he didn't realize the next huge movement was about to knock on his door... Hip Hop. It just hadn't found it's way from the South Bronx to Downtown New York yet.

In the beginning, B-Boying, as the founders/activists called it, was just a way to make a change for yourself in the hard living conditions of New York's ghettos. Soon it was recognised by the music industry and bands like the Sugarhill Gang or Afrika Bambaataa and Soul Sonic Force created a buzz with their first records. One of these bands would be DuBose's

first Hip Hop band to shoot and the beginning of what made him one of the most influential Hip Hop photographers today. But I'm not here to give you history lessons. Read the book and find out for yourself how he managed to be the first to shoot peeps like Biz Markie, Big Daddy Kane, Notorious B.I.G. and others who never stopped spitting 'til today.

Apart from his work, you'll find what makes George really special.

It's his personality, energy and enthusiasm. It just seems like this guy doesn't get old and doesn't get bored with/about what he's doing. Keep in mind, that today he's about 20 years older than most of the artists he's shooting. At a concert, the age and experience difference between him and the crowd is probably even bigger. But who's one of the last men standing, after all these kids already went home to mommy? Mister George DuBose!

This man is punk to the core and I'm not only talking about the music. After all these years you might think he's all jaded and shit, but this photographer-to-the-stars has been there and done that. I have seen musicians from Rock to Rap, who sell records with the help of their filthy or dangerous images, turning into divas after only a couple of years in the industry.

Not so Mr. DuBose, who will chill with Rappers, Rockers, Grafitti Artists, Breakdancers, DJs, etc... getting to know their story and to understand where their energy is coming from.

As long there's a cold beer, a smoke, good music and authentic people, you won't hear George complain.

– Bob Bierekove - BeatEvolution Berlin

Whether travelling by plane, golf cart or space hopper, the route from 'Bridge to market was destined to become truly scenic when the Juice Crew's path crossed that of George DuBose. It was a perfect match.

Following a brief but memorable warm-up in Hip-Hop's deep end with Soulsonic Force, the iconic imagery DuBose stomped all over his work for Cold Chillin' was as bold as Marley Marl's Godzilla snares, the animated covers perfectly housing whatever rap monster lay within. Biz, Kane, Shante and Kool G Rap sounded effortless in the booth, and DuBose, having already left a trail of killer images in his wake - most famously for the Ramones - knew how to put a memorable record sleeve on the block. The project's elements were already perfectly formed, no Frankenstein experiments necessary (though a few chemistry sets got used anyway). Before he was done, George ended up papering studio walls in Mylar and throwing custom cereal boxes, dancing flowers and plenty of gold into the diabolical mix, adding blinding technicolour and super-hero fonts just to be sure his full-bleed cartoon epics were bulging outrageously out of their shrinkwrap.

The finished products landed in shops with enough force to leave four-dimensional imprints in rap fiend's brains and a stylistic blueprint firmly embedded in Hip-Hop's visual DNA forever.

If the Juice Crew were Marvel, then Marley has to be Stan Lee. But George DuBose, the New Yorker who made rap heroes leap out of their covers, is our own Jack Kirby.

Excelsior! – George Mahood  
Big Daddy/Grand Slam/Concourse Records

George DuBose did not just take photographs of some of Hip Hop's historic elite, he captured the essence of their sound and brought their characters to life. His lens introduced us to the zany antics of Biz Markie, showed us the masterful prowess of Big Daddy Kane and brought the bitch out of Roxanne Shanté. He was one of the first people to let such individualism jump off of the wax and onto the front cover. He introduced the idea of elaborate costumes and wardrobes, environments and props; he brought art direction and style to the world of Rap, previously dominated by an artist or group photographed standing in front of a brick wall or generic cityscape. The "Black Ceasar" Kane shoot, the "Juvenile Hell" where a sickle-toting Mobb Deep dwelled or G Rap and Polo's "Noosed Narcs" all come to mind. I think this is what caught my attention as a youngster as I gravitated to any release with that beloved Cold Chillin' logo printed on the back.

It wouldn't be until a few years later that I recognized that the same man had not only shot all these beautiful, vibrant images, but actually art directed and designed all the print for the projects. No wonder they stand as such a legacy, both then and now up to twenty years later. I feel strongly that the images and overall look help solidify the classic status of these albums just as much as the press, publicity and the radio play.

Looking back on it, these conceptual, innovative covers, paved the way for a new design standard as Hip-Hop music journeyed into it's toddler and teenage stages.

When I was ten years old I wanted to be like Biz Markie.

When I was ten years old I wanted to be like Biz Markie.

When I was fifteen years old I wanted to be like Kool G Rap.

Now that I am thirty, I realize all these years later, I really wanted to be like George DuBose.

– Trevor ‘KARMA’ Gendron - Art Director  
Traffic Entertainment Group/Brick Records

Cold Chillin was the first production company and crew label with a lot of classic records in the late 80s and early 90s. Most of the releases were Juice Crew Allstar members based in Queens, New York City, with DJ/Producer Marley Marl in the epicenter.

George DuBose is responsible for most of the classic Juice Crew picture covers. All these classic picture covers will be an important part of the Hip-Hop history. I think if these pictures were never used for the LP-covers, these LP’s would not be the classics that they are right now.

I met George last year in Amsterdam, when I was working with Biz Markie, DJ Cool V and Roxanne Shanté. We did a show in the Melkweg, Amsterdam and I saw George with his world famous Cold Chillin’ baseball jacket, so I thought “This is George!”, ‘cause I read an interview with him in the English “Grand Slam” magazine with some pictures of George wearing that old Cold Chillin’ jacket.

I took George DuBose that night with me to hook up with the Juice Crew members at their hotel before the show. After that, we keep in contact, I organized a photo exhibition for him in

Amsterdam and have visited George DuBose in his studio in Cologne where he let me dig through his deep LP archives.

A great photographer, great friend, with fuckin’ great talent in making all kind of music pictures.

– Martijn Kinket  
[www.live-and-legendary.nl](http://www.live-and-legendary.nl)

It’s strange, but I don’t remember where or when I met some of my closest friends. It’s as though they were always there. I can easily recall specific days in my childhood with those friends and all the details of certain days, but not the circumstances of how we first met.

My professional music career started in 1988 and George Dubose was there in the beginning.

I found out from the label that George was sort of the in-house photographer for its artists. Although he wasn’t an employee there, it was clear from the many classic album covers and press shots on the walls of their offices that George was the “go to guy” for photography.

In 1990 I got my first chance to work with George on my “Take A Look Around” cover. I wanted to duplicate a Curtis Mayfield cover and George was more than willing to give it his best effort. That shoot on Coney Island Beach was quite extensive and I remember spending several hours out there on the sand trying out different camera angles and lighting options. George was a very detailed guy and was always open to trying to execute my ideas. For that reason I asked him to continue working with me when I switched



labels in 1993.

His work on my album cover for “Slaughterhouse” was some of his best work. Musically I had taken a much darker approach on that album and I needed the artwork to reflect what it sounded like. For the 2nd time, we hit the streets and shot on location. George pulled out all the stops, experimenting with different photography techniques.

At times during that shoot, I really had no idea what he was doing behind the camera but I knew from his demeanor he was in “Mad Scientist” mode. George was always excited to try and execute new camera tricks. This was well before the digital age but he was willing to push the envelope using film, which was very expensive.

– Masta Ace  
Brooklyn 2013

# Chapter One

featuring

Soul Sonic Force

Alphonso Ribeiro

Biz Markie

Big Daddy Kane

Kool G. Rap and DJ Polo

Roxanne Shanté

## On the radar screen

I don't know when I first became aware of Hip Hop. It kind of snuck up on me. During the late Seventies and early Eighties, there were so many new music forms being created that when one noticed a new sound, one didn't think that it necessarily would become a new genre. I probably heard Blondie's "Rhapsody" or "White Lines" at my favorite haunt, the Mudd Club.

The Mudd Club was a downtown escape from Studio 54 and the NY disco scene. The DJs that spun their platters at Le Club Mudd were very experimental and would play all genres of music. From Plastic Bertrand to Kraftwerk to Ray Kroc giving a scathing pep talk to his McDonald's executive staff. Frank Zappa was even a guest DJ.

David Bowie, Keith Haring, Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat and hundreds of yet unknown artists and musicians came to the club to mix and mingle with the like-minded kindred spirits that regularly congregated there. Always on the lookout for the newest music, fashions and probably a line of cocaine in the ladies room. I looked at the Hip Hop that was

occasionally played there as just another direction of the "new wave" music that was headed in all directions. The motto of these times was, "Anything goes."

One of my earliest memories of Hip Hop was when I was trying to get to my 34th Street photo studio and was standing in the middle of Herald Square in Manhattan one hot summer day. Herald Square is where Macy's is and Broadway crosses 6th Avenue and 34th Street, the heart of midtown.

My photo studio was the top floor of a 5-story building that was right next to the Empire State building. I also lived there. It had been a former Korean massage parlor and had many small rooms. I had removed most of the smaller rooms and created a space for making photos. Two bathrooms, two huge showers, an elevator directly to the floor, it was a great place for making photos and having parties.

The traffic from the three intersecting major Manhattan thoroughfares had knotted itself into what is locally known as "gridlock". Cars were completely blocked in the middle of the intersection and no one could move in any direction. I couldn't even cross the street to get to my block on 34th. I was

pondering my options, like just skipping across the hoods of the stationary cars or going down into the subway station and crossing Herald Square UNDER the traffic.

Suddenly over the blaring car horns and shouts of the irate drivers, I heard music this extremely loud bass music blasting out of one of the cars' windows. I recognized the music as "Trans Europe Express", one of the recent new wave hits by the German electronic band "Kraftwerk". But something was wrong. The words were different. Not the mechanical drone of the words, "Trans Europe Express", rather "Rock, rock, the planet rock..." What was this...?

## Soul Sonic Force

I didn't know it, but I was listening to the new Hip Hop hit by Afrika Bambaataa and his group, Soul Sonic Force. It wasn't the first time I heard Hip Hop music, but it was the first time I recognized the music in a Hip Hop hit as being "stolen", I had never heard the word, "sampling".

A month or so later, I was contacted by Monica Lynch of Tommy Boy Records. It was the first time that label had called me. She told me that she knew my work from the new wave and punk album covers I was creating and the ongoing documentation of the club scene that I was involved with. She wanted me to photograph her band, Soul Sonic Force for a publicity shot.

I had never heard of Afrika Bambaataa or Soul Sonic Force. A week or so passed, and the group, who I had never seen perform or heard their music, arrived at my studio. Four extremely large black gentlemen got off the elevator and walked into my studio carrying four large garbage bags. What was in the sacks was obviously bulky. You can imagine my surprise to see these guys pull out horned and winged

metal helmets, an elaborate American Indian beaded costume complete with a feathered headdress and a fourth costume appliquéd with the shapes of the continents. They proceed to dress in these outlandish outfits.

I learned that each of these characters had a stage persona. Afrika Bambaataa was dressed like a Viking, Mr. Biggs dressed like a Roman soldier, Globe was wearing an outfit with shapes of the Earth's continents all over and Pow Wow was dressed as the Indian chief.

As my photo commission was to produce a press photo, I was shooting color and black and white films on a white background paper. These four guys were huge, I mean, tall and wide. So wide that they wouldn't fit together on my background paper in the studio, no matter how closely I asked them to stand to each other, the guys on the sides were visually hanging off the edges of the background paper. The paper simply wasn't wide enough.

When I asked Bambaataa what record was this photo to publicize, he replied, "Planet Rock".

Oh my God! I remembered that was the lyric I heard a month ago in the middle of Herald Square.



Like I said, in the early '80s, there was so much new music hitting our culture that SSF was just something different, who could have known in these days of Kurtis Blow, Fab Five Freddy, SSF, The Furious Five, that this new Hip Hop music would become one of the longest lasting genres of music in our modern era and that the ensuing Hip Hop culture would impact the world like no other music ever has.

I had never met or seen a performance by Soul Sonic Force, so there wasn't a great rapport between us during the photo shoot. I did the job, got some good photos, but it was months later before I was able to consciously connect the "Trans Europe Express" rip-off and the four large gentlemen that I met in my studio that day.

At this time, I was working with some promoters from NY and Boston, who were running a monthly event in Boston, called New York Nights. I was on the front line of musicians breaking out, I was frequently photographing unknown artists for their initial publicity and promo photos, I had photographed Madonna's first concert at Uncle Sam's Blues in Roslyn, Long Island, the B52's and Klaus Nomi's first concerts at Max's Kansas City,

Man Parrish for Andy Warhol's Interview magazine, so I was very aware of what artists were about to break into the mainstream. Having a pretty good nose for commercial music, I would recommend bands to these Boston/NY promoters. We took Soul Sonic Force to Boston.

I read in a newspaper some years later, that at the time Globe and Pow Wow were signing their contract with Tommy Boy, they were robbing banks to make ends meet.

Bambaataa went on to be one of the most famous figures in the Hip Hop culture, founding the Zulu Nation that has since grown worldwide. I saw Bam spinning at a club in Cologne, Germany many years later. He was on a "DJ Culture" tour of Germany sponsored by Coca-Cola. I gave him a print from that photo session so many years ago, but I don't think he remembered me.

Soul Sonic Force is one of the original old school Hip Hop groups, but once I was asked by a young Hip Hop fan, if the group in the photo is The Village People.

Dooooohhhh!!!





## Alphonso Ribiero aka Carlton from Fresh Prince

There was a new album project on the Island Records release schedule. Prism Records, the predecessor of Cold Chillin' Records, had signed a contract with the 14-year-old star of Broadway's hit musical, "The Tap Dance Kid", Alphonso Ribiero. Prism had a distribution deal with Island Records, where I was working as the senior art director.

I had never seen The Kid's performance or even heard the music from his upcoming album, but Tony Wright, Island's creative director and I had learned that not only was The Kid a friend and fan of Michael Jackson, whom Alphonso more-than-slightly resembled, but Jackson had given The Kid a red sequined jacket that was a copy of one that Jackson had trademarked for himself.

Alphonso would wear his Jackson jacket in the shoot and when my photo assistant inadvertently cast a shadow on the background paper while moving a ladder and we incorporated this shadow into the rest of the shooting.

I don't remember EVER hearing

Alphonso's debut album, I don't know if it was actually ever released, but it led me in a direction that would have a major influence on my career.



## Marcel Gull aka Biz Markie

Mr. Lenny Fichtelberg of Prism Records called me sometime later, after the shooting with Alphonso Ribiero and asked me if I would photograph another of Prism's new artists, Biz Markie. Biz was proclaiming himself to be the "Human Beatbox" and his debut single was to be titled "Make the Music with your Mouth, Biz" featuring T.J. Swann.

Although in a staff and salaried position at Island Records, I was allowed to freelance for other record labels. At the first creative meeting with Dee Joseph at the Prism Records office, I was told that Biz wanted to be photographed with a mouthful of little golden plastic musical instruments, guitars, saxophones, trumpets, the sort that one would decorate a Christmas tree with. The day of the shooting, Biz and Swann arrived and Biz was wearing a striped shirt like an American football referee and a black baseball cap.

Remember the cap...

It was still not clear to me that Hip Hop was its own genre of new music. There was so many new musical styles coming out, punk rock from the

US, England and France, electronic music from Germany, it seemed to all fall under the umbrella term, "New Wave".

When Biz performed his "Human Beatbox" routine for me in the photo studio during the photo session, it sure seemed like something "new" to me.

Was it "New Wave"?

Could be.

Seemed to me that "New Wave" was a pretty open genre.

TJ Swann, Biz's sidekick, was also very interesting. While Biz seemed to be the epitome of the "class clown" and could make these really cool sounds with his mouth and throat, TJ was a "real" singer. He had a great falsetto and tenor and could do amazing vocal imitations. I remember that he could perfectly mimic a "young" Michael Jackson and an "older" Michael Jackson.

I was pretty impressed.

When I delivered the shots to Prism and Dee Joseph and I were going over all the photos, I asked Dee if Prism had a designer to do the design layout for this single.

Dee said, "No." She said that she would appreciate it if I prepared the graphics for the cover.

Looking over the possible

2/2/93



FUJI-RHP

FUJI

selection of photos and thinking about the design, I had a brainstorm. I called Biz Markie and asked him where did he get his ball cap with the Gothic lettering inscribing his name on the crown of the cap. Biz told me that there were many shops in Times Square where you could have your name, your girlfriend's name, your dog's name or any text you liked written on caps or t-shirts with iron-on lettering.

When I went to Times Square, I found a shop that provided this iron-on service and though there was a limited selection of lettering styles, the shop had the Gothic style that Biz had used on his cap. I purchased enough letters to create the words in Biz's name and the single's title, "Make the Music with your Mouth, Biz.

I made high contrast photocopies of all the letters and laid out the letters so they could be used in the design of Biz's first single. This font based on the Gothic font, Fraktur, was to be used by dozens of other Hip Hop artists in their packaging designs, but more popularly in their tattoos. Years later, when I moved to Cologne, Germany, I was asked why I used "that Nazi font" for the designs of Biz's first recordings. I was told that Fraktur was a font favored by the Nazis. ...Oh. Really?

Due to budget restrictions imposed by Prism, Biz's first single cover was black and white, but Prism must have been pleased with the job I did, even though we were soon to have a little bump in the road here in my relationship with Prism.

A short time after completing the Biz single project and submitting a substantial bill, not high, but fair for an independent label, Mr. Fichtelberg called me on the phone and asked, "George, what kind of film do you use for shooting record covers?"

I could immediately see where this was going. "Kool-ass Lenny" was becoming "Tight-ass Lenny".

I told Lenny that it isn't the film, it is the camera. I shoot my covers with a Hasselblad camera made in Sweden, because LPs are square and the Hasselblad takes a square picture.

"Oh, OK. How much does a Hasselblad cost?" Lenny asked.

"Over \$2000 with only one lens."

"Oh."

Lenny called me a week later and told me he had another project for me, but that is for a later story.

Biz's first LP project came up and the original concept for the LP cover was simply a portrait of Biz and his DJ,