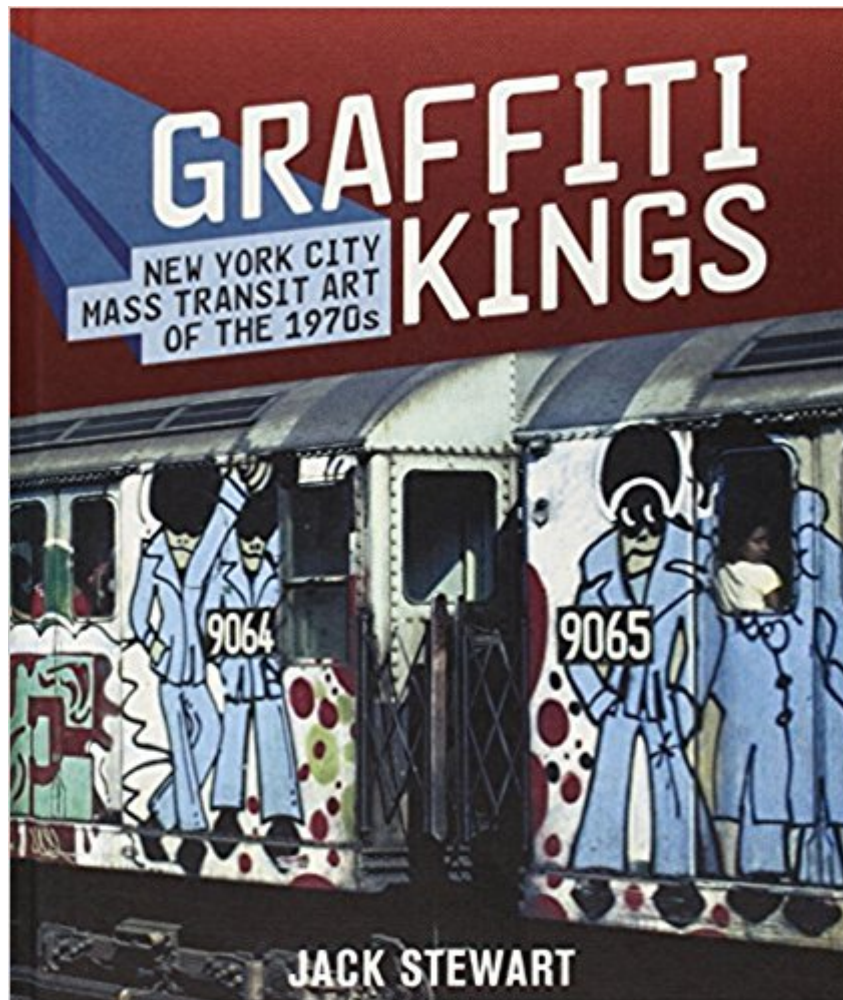


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# Graffiti Kings: New York City Mass Transit Art Of The 1970's



## Synopsis

*Graffiti Kings* is the definitive book on New York's subway graffiti movement, an unprecedented creative explosion that occurred across the five boroughs during the 1970s. This rare, firsthand account of the birth of this movement is the first and only graffiti book to reveal what happened behind the scenes when writers put their lives on the line to grab a piece of fame from a faceless urban landscape. Through personal interviews and over 275 full-color, previously unpublished photographs, the colorful origins of subway graffiti are brought to life. Legends such as Taki 183, Blade 1, Phase 2, and Co-Co 144, as well as the city officials who saw the writers as public menaces and their art as vandalism, give accounts of everyday struggles, each full of new advancements, excitement, and risk. Although author and photographer Jack Stewart maintained a low profile at the time, his work is now a graffiti-world legend: rumored to exist, seldom seen, a near-equivalent to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Alongside archival photographs of everything from vibrant bubble-letter and 3-D pieces to the Holy Grail, the whole-train pieces, are maps, images, and ephemera that help fill out the complete story. A celebration in words and pictures of graffiti's golden age, *Graffiti Kings* is a book sure to be coveted by those fascinated and inspired by this uniquely American urban art form.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jack Stewart, a painter, muralist, and art historian, first began to photograph graffiti as it made its transition from the streets to the subways. He was one of the first observers to understand the power and significance of tags, and he befriended and interviewed many of the writers who appear

in this collection. This text is based on Stewart's doctoral thesis, and has been curated and edited by his wife, Regina Stewart.

an absolutely amazing collection of sharp, clear and vividly colorful photographs of the maturation of the new york city subway graffiti scene circa early to late seventies. i was there and remember it well. any writer/artist interested in the roots of "modern" graffiti needs to see this. amazing to compare this old skool flavor with today's awesome cutting edge graffiti from here and all over the world. it belonged to new york once and now the whole world shares in this most unique art form. the author starts out by giving respect to the old philly scene, most notably cornbread and kool haerl. but clearly jack stewart's intentions were to document the evolution of a renegade art form that few people realized was happening in the subway tunnels and train yards in new york city, brooklyn, bronx, and queens. so many old skool cats are represented here and a lot of these fella's (and ladies) were overlooked when graf blew up in the 80's. this book gives them their due. graffiti kings is sort of like the next chapter to john naar's magnificent the birth of graffiti. whereas the birth of graffiti's photos were a little on the arty side featuring an even mixture of trains, walls, playgrounds etc. graffiti kings is almost entirely trains. and again these are really good photographs. no blurry polaroids here. the first photo you will see in this book is the bathroom door in jack stewart's studio which is covered with a who's who of old skool bombers tags. a caption claims over 190 hits! it took me about fifteen minutes to get past the first page! this door belongs in the smithsonian. but then the trains come. and it's just page after page after page of whole car wild styles, throw ups, and tags from tracy 168, fdt 56, blade, comet, clyde, ajax, cliff 159, butch, kindo, super kool, mono, etc, etc, etc. the book has numerous interviews with, and observations by many of the writers from that time. there is also mention of graffiti in the media news paper articles etc pertaining to that era as well. so in conclusion; if old skool is your thing then by all means pick up this book you will not be disappointed. if you're new skool see where it all began and be amazed by progress. five stars plus.

well what can i say. short and simple, this book is dope. worthy of your hard earned cash for sure. full colour flick after flick, great interviews, even some old graff that i hadn't seen, so for me this was a great delight. being a huge fan of nyc graffiti, even more so subway nyc graff, this book scores a home run in my book. i had been waiting for months to peep it, and it was well worth the wait. also being a hardcover, you know this book will still be in top condition many years from now. if you like/love any sort of ol school nyc graff, then don't miss out on this book. you will not be disappointed. i can't even think of something i didn't like it, even the size of this book, fits snugg into your hands..lol.

This book has one of the best and most interesting stories of the beginnings of graffiti in NYC. Tons of great pictures.

Great book! Any fan of graffiti art and its origins must have this! Many train photos that i have never seen before and i have seen zillions! Excellent!

Great book if you are an avid or novice fan or collector of graffiti art. Nice color photos to reference

very good

A++

As a graffiti historian myself, I am always looking for books that deal with the history of graffiti on trains in America. I read Jack Stewart's dissertation (Subway Graffiti; An Aesthetic Study of Graffiti On The Subway System Of New York City 1970 - 1978) long before this book was published. Since it is from that dissertation this masterpiece was derived, I was familiar with much of it already. However, the copy of the dissertation is in a basic typeset and the photos are poorly reproduced photocopies. With all that said, Graffiti Kings was a refresher course in the birth of Writing for me....in full color. Seeing it all again, this time in full color, made it a welcomed read, now for the 4th time (I read the dissertation 3 times). The fact that he begins with Philly is all but perfect as it lets the world know that what is known today as graffiti, or more accurately Writing, began in Philly. The remainder of the book takes you year by year through the development of the fundamentals of how this culture began. Because Jack Stewart was not a writer, there is no bias. Anyone who writes (does graffiti) or anyone interested in writing needs to have this book. It is hands down the best book on Writing (not just subway writing) since Subway Art.

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