

00:00:00	Music	Music	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:00:05	Oliver Wang	Host	Hello, I'm Oliver Wang.
00:00:06	Morgan Rhodes	Host	And I'm Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> . Every week we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock. You know, fire, flammables, an album that burns forevermore; and today we will be uprocking back to 1983 to talk about the foundational hip-hop soundtrack for <i>Wild Style</i> .
00:00:24	Music	Music	"Stoop Rap" off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Double Trouble. A capella rap with a beat kept up with finger snapping.

RODNEY CEE
Here's a little story that must be told

KK ROCKWELL
About two cool brothers that were put on hold

BOTH
Tried to hold us from fortune and fame
They destroyed the crew and they killed the name
They tried to step on our ego and walk on our pride
But true blue brothers stand side by side

RODNEY CEE
Through—

KK ROCKWELL
—thick and thin—

RODNEY CEE
—from beginning to end

KK ROCKWELL
This battle we lost—

RODNEY CEE
—but the war we'll win

BOTH
'Cause Double Trouble is in the house

KK ROCKWELL
I'm KK Rockwell—

RODNEY CEE
—and Rodney Cee

BOTH
We'll turn it out!

[Instruments kick in as they say "Double Trouble" several times. The music fades to the background and continues as Oliver and Morgan speak.]

00:00:48	Oliver	Host	You've heard it on the radio.
00:00:49	Morgan	Host	You've seen it on the TV.
00:00:51	Oliver	Host	A to the K.
00:00:52	Morgan	Host	A to the mother-[beep] Z. The film opens with a shadowy figure scaling a wall. A wall covered with graffiti, and the word "graffiti" in the background.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
			The sound of one time in the distance, then a train, then the shake of a spray can, young love, and finally, the main title sequence, which shouts out the G's of rap, and break beats.
			The Crew, Lady G, Grandmaster, Busy Bee, Double Trouble, The Popomatics, Cold Crush, and the Fantastic Freaks. The film and the soundtrack establish the genesis of a million samples, and the birthplace of the genre, its architects, the five elements, MCing, DJing, breakdancing, knowledge, and graffiti.
			We meet a cast of characters as true to hip-hop then as they are now. The artist, the promoter, the benefactor, the hater, the accidental tourist. <i>Wild Style</i> explains a lot. Melle Mel; Diamond D' T La Rock; Slick Rick; a pair of Kools, Keith and Herc C.; Yo MTV Raps; KRS-One; red lights; and house parties.
00:01:57	Morgan	Host	Released in 1983, it was what hip-hop had become, ten years after a summer party at 1520 Sedwick Avenue. It used its never-thickened plot and improv to let us know that hip-hop is freestyle, its set design to establish the art behind the culture, real people—not actors—for the cred, and a soundtrack to carry us through the movement.
			<i>Wild Style</i> the film, and its soundtrack, is about birth in the Bronx, wax and the syntax of Double Trouble, Busy Bee and Rodney C and others, battles and basketballs, stoops and subways, kings and queens, and about taking your skills to the amphitheater. It's also about colors.
			Zoro's palette is rainbow and he doesn't need the light to serve it. He prefers the dark. He knows his kaleidoscope of colors by heart, he says. Dozens of murals, train pieces, and an hour and twenty-two minute film, and a whole soundtrack later, one thing is clear: the dominant colors are actually black and brown. The heartbeat and the genre and a style built from swag, from scratching and surviving, good times, a style no doubt born to be wild.
00:03:05	Music	Music	"Stoop Rap - Film Version" off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Double Trouble fades in as Morgan speaks. Singers repeat "Double Trouble!" several times repeatedly before the music fades out.
00:03:22	Oliver	Host	The <i>Wild Style</i> soundtrack was the album pick of our guest today, author, educator, indie hip-hop pioneer, and the DJ formerly known as Zen, better known these days as Jeff Chang.

In the early 1990s, a young Oliver Wang was a student at UC Berkeley, writing a class paper about Asian-Americans in hop-hop, and folks kept telling me, “Oh, you gotta talk to Jeff Chang.” At the time, Jeff was part of a movement of emergent music writers across the country, helping to change the language, style, and politics of how we wrote about race, hip-hop, and society.

Roughly ten years later, and he would author what’s considered to be one of the great histories about hip-hop, *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop*. And he’s since followed that up with *Who We Be*, about the history of multiculturalism and American art and culture. As well as *We Gon’ Be Alright*, which became a collection of essays about race and segregation; and just this year has turned into a series of television shorts directed by Bao Nguyen, and airing on PBS’s *Indie Lens* story.

00:04:20 Oliver Host And side note, by coincidence, Jeff was recently on our sister show, *Bullseye*, to talk about the new series; so if you want to catch more of that, check that one out.

On a personal note, as I have said throughout the many years, as a fellow Chinese-American from Cal who was into college radio and ethnic studies, Jeff showed me what was possible in my own life through leading by example, and he still does that today.

Jeff, I am so thrilled—we are so thrilled—to have you here on *Heat Rocks*.

00:04:47 Jeff Chang Host It’s so awesome to be here with you two as well, and I love your intros. You guys have the best intros everywhere.

00:04:52 Oliver Host Thank you.

00:04:53 Morgan Host *[Laughs]* Thanks, man.

00:04:54 Oliver Host It’s all Morgan, really.

00:04:56 Morgan Host No way.

00:04:57 Oliver Host So in the early 2000s I had an incredible opportunity to edit a collection of essays all about important hip-hop albums. The book eventually was called *Classic Material: The Hip-Hop Album Guide!* And naturally, Jeff, you were one of the very first that I reached out to to contribute to it; and as such I gave you carte blanche to pick whatever album that you wanted to write.

Morgan, you want to guess what album that he picked?

00:05:20 Morgan Host *Wild Style?* *[Laughs.]*

00:05:21 Oliver Host Yes! Which I was not expecting, and once again here we are, X amount of years later, and given the choice of what album you wanted to talk about here at *Heat Rocks*, you went with *Wild Style*.

So, Jeff, what’s up with you and *Wild Style*, man?

00:05:33 Jeff Guest I just—wow, that’s a trip, because I completely forgot about that

essay. I remember the KRS-One one—

00:05:39 Oliver Host It was kind of forgettable. Nah, I'm playing. I'm playing.

00:05:40 Jeff Guest *[Laughs]*

00:05:41 Oliver Host It's great. It was awesome.

00:05:42 Jeff Guest It probably was. I'm sure it was.

00:05:43 Morgan Host Shots fired.

[Morgan and Oliver respond affirmatively and emphatically several times as Jeff speaks.]

00:05:45 Jeff Guest Oh man, *Wild Style* was, uh. It means the world to me. I was a kid growing up in Honolulu, Hawaii, and I think that we had heard Rapper's Delight in '79 and that kind of thing as everybody else had, and wanted to learn all the lyrics to it, and that kind of thing.

Then in '83, '84, that's when you started seeing the movies, I wanna say. All these hip-hop-sploitation movies that came out. Like, *Breakin'* came out—which should have been called California Funk Styles, because it wasn't really about breaking, it was about popping and locking.

00:06:21 Oliver Host And of course, *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*.

00:06:23 Jeff Guest Electric Boogaloo. Yeah. I digress. *Beat Street* came out. *Style Wars* came out in '84 on PBS, and we were passing that around the island. Somebody had videotaped it on a video recorder, one of those early ones; and I got, like, a fifth hand dub of it, and that's how we saw that.

And I remember sometime in '84, it must have been the spring of '84, the Academy of Arts, which was our big art museum, had a screening of *Wild Style*, so I was like, "Woah." You know, there were magazine articles and all this kind of stuff, and we were all getting into this thing that was called hip-hop, but information was hard to come by, um... so you couldn't really see stuff like you can now. You can just go to YouTube and find the latest dance that they just invented yesterday around the world.

And instead, it was—you really had to search in Hawaii to try to find that kind of thing. So, when we heard that *Wild Style* was coming, I remember I tried to get folks to go, and it ended up just being seven of us in that theater, at the Academy of Arts.

[All three laugh.]

It was me; my brother; my brother's best friend, Howie; and the four hippies from the University of Hawaii that were at everything, um, anything art. You just saw them everywhere. We just went in there not knowing what to expect and left transformed.

00:07:49 Music Music "Cuckoo Clocking" off the album *Wild Style Original Soundtrack* by Fab 5 Freddy. Funky, smooth hip hop instrumental. It plays for several seconds before fading out as Oliver speaks.

00:08:04 Oliver Host So you had some expectation, like you had heard of it, you just hadn't seen it until that point.

00:08:08 Jeff Guest Yeah, I don't think that we knew what all was going to be in it. It was like, *Wild Style*, okay, that's—oh, there's graffiti in this? We're all taggers, we should go and do that. They were breaking—as it turned out, one of the things that happened was, my brother's best friend became one of the legendary hip-hop artists, graffiti artists, from Honolulu, a guy named Catch One, and that was sort of the beginning of our road, so to speak, to where we're all at now.

00:08:40 Oliver Host What was that thunder bolt moment for you about?

00:08:43 Jeff Guest It was a sort of a dawning of an awareness, sort of. I was always really into music, so I grew up with A.M. radio, everything from The Spinners to Pablo Cruise. You know, Little River Band to, whatever, Billy Paul.

And, um... it was a kind of thing where... you know, musically I could start seeing the relationship between art and social justice, actually, when the Hawaiian folk rock movement started taking off in the '70s. And, uh... and so there was a lot of songs about land. This was guitar music, it was folk rock based, it was the kind of thing that was expressing ideas about self-determination, and we could see that going hand in hand with all the protests that were happening over land issues and development and that kind of thing, um... what, you know, has become sort of anti-displacement work now.

And that was my, like, older cousin's generation. They were the ones who could get into the clubs then, and that kinda thing. And then there was this moment where that folk rock movement bloomed into a jazz rock movement, and so you have all these crate-digging, you know, classics now that came out of that era.

00:10:05 Oliver Host La Maria, Society of Seven.

00:10:28 Jeff Guest Kalapana. You know, uh, groups like that. And—And I think that, for us, hip-hop was the thing that, we're like, "Oh, this is ours." Like, this is not anything that my older cousins can understand, let alone my parents—*[laughs]*—or my teachers. This is us, this is our thing.

It's funny, because in some ways the local identity movement in Hawaii primed us to be able to receive a lot of ideas about, um, race and ethnicity, and, um... and so, to be able to see these kids that had their own kind of style, their own swagger, their own... you know, music, their own art, their own dance, their own—

00:10:53 Morgan Host Slang.

[Morgan and Oliver respond affirmatively several times as Jeff speaks.]

00:10:54 Jeff Guest —everything. Their own slang, everything, their clothing, their presentation.

And, you know, so, before that you would just read an article in a magazine, and if you were lucky then you might see a late-night

video on *Night Flight*, which was on WTBS back then. Um, and... but you had to really search, and so to see this *Wild Style* in all its glory, all of its unrefinement, all of its rawness, and... that kinda thing, just, it was... it was just electromagnetic for us.

00:11:30 Music Music "Military Cut" off the album *Wild Style Original Soundtrack* by Grand Wizzard Theodore. Scratch hip-hop with frequent record scratches.

00:11:48 Oliver Host How about you, Morgan? When did you first see the movie?

00:11:51 Morgan Host Last night.

00:11:52 Oliver Host Okay!

00:11:53 Morgan Host In prep for the chat, I was like, "Well, let me bring this up." And I was like, "It's got to be on YouTube. YouTube don't let me down."

[Oliver starts laughing.]

Then YouTube let me down.

[Oliver laughs harder.]

Shoutout to YouTube! Uh, so I had to go ahead and buy that thing, rent that thing, I think for \$7.99, uh... but it was great. The one thing that I thought—I was like, this has to be improv, because this acting is thin.

00:12:18 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jeff:** It was pretty bad.

Morgan: Yeah.

Oliver: Little rough, there's no doubt.

Jeff: *[Laughs.]*

Oliver: Yeah.

Morgan: Low key, low key.

00:12:23 Morgan Host But I thought, but damn, that's hip-hop. Thinking about it at the time, I was like, if something had been released about the state of hip-hop today, it would be glossy. You'd have legitimate speaking parts, no extras, everyone would have a SAG card and a moment.

I like that about the film, that it was janky, camera angles were janky. There was a lot of location shots that I thought served the story, because this is about the Bronx, this is about the culture, and hell, if you need to be on the subway for 25 minutes and you don't move—

[Oliver and Jeff laugh.]

—okay, you know what I mean? Cool.

Um, so last night was my first experience; but it made sense, which is what I was trying to say in the intro. It was the connective tissue

to a lot of things that I had grown up on, specifically Yo MTV Raps, that logo, and the DJ, turntablism, that culture; and you brought up “Rapper’s Delight”, and that was one of the first songs that I memorized as a kid. Not going to get into the specificities of my age at the time.

[Oliver and Jeff laugh.]

But I memorized it. For the audience, though, I memorized that thing. So that brought that back, sort of me coming back to the Bronx and the birthplace that I think, as a west coaster, sometimes we take for granted.

[Morgan responds affirmatively several times as Oliver speaks.]

00:13:36 Oliver Host Yeah. I fall somewhere between the two of you, which is to say that I did not grow up seeing the film. I think it was probably somewhere towards the end of the 90s that I finally got around to like, just for the same of self-education, watching this and then watching *Style Wars*. But the thing about *Wild Style* is when I first came to it, it suddenly made me recognize... dozens if not hundreds of clips and samples that I had heard throughout the 90s in hip-hop were all borrowing from, and I had no idea that was the origin.

Morgan, you and I recently had that show around *Illmatic*, and the first track on *Illmatic* is Nas flipping, or using “Subway Theme” from *Wild Style*. I didn’t really know that until I watched the movie. I’m like, oh shit, this is where the Nas joint is from!

00:14:21 Music Music “The Genesis” off the album *Illmatic* by Nas. Fast-paced hip hop that samples dialogue from *Wild Style*.

NAS:

[Rapping underneath the below dialogue from Wild Style]

Street's disciple, my raps are trifle

I shoot slugs from my brain just like a rifle

Stampede the stage, I leave the microphone split

Play Mr. Tuffy while I'm on some Pretty Tone shit

Verbal assassin, my architect pleases

When I was twelve, I went to ...

HECTOR:

[Spoken]

And you're sitting at home doing this shit? I should be earning a medal for this. Stop fucking around and be a man, there ain't nothing out here for you.

ZORO:

[Spoken]

Oh yes there is...this!

00:14:42 Oliver Host And you can do that with dozens and dozens of songs throughout hip-hop. So, I guess my point being is that *Wild Style* in a certain way was already preformed for me simply because, in a weird kind of reverse-engineering, just watching the movie and then recognizing, oh, wow, this is where everything I’ve heard through

years and years of listening to hip-hop, it all comes back to this in the formative nature of *Wild Style*. It's imprint is so, so deep, across generations of hip-hop listeners.

[Oliver and Morgan respond emphatically several times as Jeff speaks.]

00:15:11 Jeff Guest Well, I think it's the ultimate document of the old school, actually. So, if you are like me and you're a total, like, hip-hop nerd, then you probably have collections or mp3's or you've gone to YouTube to hear the old mixtapes that people used to record at the live shows, before hip-hop was put on wax. You know, they'd take their boombox, and they'd put it on the speaker, and then you'd capture... you know, these—whatever, three hour long performances of folks.

And when you see *Wild Style*, actually, and when you hear, actually, the soundtrack—for me now, going back and listening to the soundtrack, it's like, oh, what they did was they actually—it was almost like a greatest hits of all of these live performances. So, to me, it's one of the greatest live albums in all of music, let alone hip-hop. It's probably the best live hip-hop album ever; um, but it's definitely one of the best live musical albums, because it captures that particular moment.

And so, if you're thinking about that particular period in hip-hop, hip-hop had already gone two generations beyond what was being depicted in the film. So you had already moved to *Planet Rock*, and *The Message*, and then we were coming back out of that to the third generation of hip-hop with Run DMC, who were trying to go back to the hard break beat type of stuff, and actually if you listen to all that, "Sucker M.C.", or "Here We Go [Live At The Funhouse]", or all those kinds of things, like, Run DMC, they're just imitating Double Trouble. They're trying to capture the vibe of Shy Rock and The Funky 4+1.

00:16:51 Morgan Host Yeah.

00:16:52 Jeff Guest So, it's interesting because—and then later on, De La Soul, I think is probably—Jurassic 5—but certainly De La Soul most tried to capture and embody, like, that sort of party rocking spirit as they moved on in their years.

00:17:09 Oliver Host Is there a favorite use of part of this in something more contemporary? So for example, I think of DJ Premier's "In Deep Concentration", which uses the part from "Stoop Rap." Like, here's a little story that must be told. That, to me, is a great moment.

00:17:24 Music Music "In Deep Concentration" off the album *No More Mr. Nice Guy* by DJ Premier. It begins with the beginning of "Stoop Rap"—a capella rap over fingersnaps—before quickly fading into a smooth instrumental that scratches back to the lines of "Stoop Rap" several times.

RODNEY CEE
Here's a little story that must be told

KK ROCKWELL

About two cool brothers that were put on hold...

[Music fades out.]

00:17:49	Oliver	Host	Common and De La reuse “Gangbusters” on, I think, one of the songs off of Common’s third album, for example.
00:17:56	Music	Music	“Gettin’ Down at the Amphitheatre” off the album <i>One Day It’ll All Make Sense</i> by Common with De La Soul. Smooth, electric hip hop. <i>Just dance, you know you gots the feelin Just dance, ah come on and get down And just dance, you know you gots the feelin Just dance, ah come on and get down And just dance, you know you gots the feelin Just dance, ah come on and get down</i>
00:18:20	Oliver	Host	But for each of you, is there a more contemporary version? In other words, post ‘83-’84 use from this album that has been a favorite for you.
00:18:29	Morgan	Host	Mine is The Tribe moment, the <i>Midnight Marauders</i> . I like that song. I’m not going to say it on here, but you know. I like that he uses it, I like the context; and when I saw the film, I was like, oh damn, and this came from a moment at a party where he just shouts out, and that’s my favorite.
00:18:44	Music	Music	“Sucka N----” off the album <i>Midnight Marauders</i> by A Tribe Called Quest. Fast-paced rap. <i>They rock to the rhythm To my body, rock, rock Hey, sucka n----, whoever you are Hey, sucka n----, whoever you are...</i> <i>[Music and vocals start distorting and sliding into slower hip-hop.]</i> <i>Hey, sucka n----, whoever you are Hey sucker n----, hey sucker n---- Whoever you are, whoever you are</i> <i>I be hating sucker MCs, and the sucker n----s</i> <i>[Music fades out]</i>
00:19:03	Jeff	Guest	Maybe it’s the beginning to, you know, the Fantastic at the Dixie, where they’re doing the countdown, and Public Enemy using that.
00:19:11	Morgan	Host	Mm.
00:19:12	Oliver	Host	Oh, yeah.
00:19:13	Jeff	Guest	And, you know, just some of those indelible kind of ... moments. That’s been used a lot; but I think when PE used it, it just felt totally perfect. It felt like, yeah.
00:19:24	Music	Music	“Raise the Roof” off the album <i>Yo! Bum Rush the Show</i> by Public Enemy. An a capella call-and-response.

Say, "Turn it up!"
(Turn it up!)
(Come on!)
Ten!
(Come on!)
Nine!
(Everybody!)
Eight!

[Music scratches in—a funky, hip-hop, electric beat]

Raise the roof, come on!
Come on, come on!
Come on, come on,
Come on...

[Music fades out]

00:19:40 Oliver Host Jeff, one of the things that you wrote in that—I guess it's now 15 years ago, for *The Classic Material*—you wrote, "*Wild Style* remains the only hip-hop film and soundtrack that adequately conveys the communal thrill of merging with the tide, riding the lightning." I'm wondering about—

00:19:58 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jeff:** [Surprised] I wrote that?

Oliver: You did.

Jeff: [Impressed] Damn! Wow.

Oliver: It's a good line, man.

Morgan: Fire.

Jeff: It's pretty good.

Oliver: You had some heaters back then.

Jeff: Yeah, yeah, it's alright.

Morgan: Fire.

Jeff: Yeah, it's okay.

Oliver: You got some talent with the words, there—

Morgan: [Laughs.]

Oliver: —with the bards.

Jeff: Might want to do something with that one day.

00:20:09 Oliver Host Yeah, um. I mean, fifteen years later, do you still think it's true? What else comes close, if anything?

00:20:14 Jeff Guest Absolutely. I mean—you know, I think it was this thing of, like, finally feeling like, “oh man, like, I’m not the only kid in the world that—” There’s only three of us in this theater that are under the age of seventeen. The other ones are probably *[laughs]* three, four times that; and at the same time we felt connected suddenly to this big thing. We’re not just this little pond, we’re actually in this huge ocean.

00:20:43 Oliver Host Yeah.

00:20:44 Jeff Guest I think everybody who would subsequently see that in whatever context—because we were all, like, tiny little cliques, we were like these nerds that nobody like—what are you doing? What is all this stuff that you’re scribbling on a desk, *[chuckles]* or going out at night to paint on a wall, that kind of thing. Um, what are you doing, what is all this about?

I remember that three years after the screen—two years after the screen actually—I had graduated and gone to college, and my mom started sending me all of these newspaper articles about how the graffiti kids were tearing stuff up in Hawaii. *[Laughing]* and she worked for the police department. So it was funny because, I was just laughing at how little the cops actually knew what was going on.

It was just about, maybe 50-100 kids at that time, who were just devastating the island, and it was because, like, we had all passed around this one copy of *Style Wars*. And the legend of *Wild Style* and the records, and that’s all we had to go on.

00:21:52 Morgan Host And that gave birth to the graffiti artists in your hood, tagging everything up?

00:21:56 Jeff Guest Yeah! The islands, like the whole—all the islands were tagged up by ‘86. Shoutout to Skez 320 and everybody, Whiz 10, and Bam and Estria, and everybody who are still out there doing it.

00:22:11 Music Music “Wild Style Lesson” off the album *Wild Style Original Soundtrack* by Phat Kev. Upbeat hip-hop.

*I’m a warrior, my art is my sword
My place in society is my reward
Because a mind is a terrible thing to waste
Success is something we all wanna taste*

*Everyone has talent on this earth
And you can take it or leave it, for what it’s worth
No matter how hard things may seem
You’ve got the potential, fulfill your dream!*

*‘Cause we’re the future!
And it’s up to us...*

[Music fades out]

00:22:32 Oliver Host One thing I was just thinking about is, the day that we’re taping this, I just got back less than 24 hours prior from a week and a half in Paris with my family; and one of the things we did out there is we

took a street art tour of the Belleville neighborhood.

And... I mean, so much of that *Wild Style* era of graffiti is still very much alive in cities like Paris. Like, across Europe, and of course in different cities in the States; and it's just crazy to me how you can trace that lineage back to basically this moment when this drops, when *Style Wars* drops. Twenty... no, thirty-five years later, it's still influencing people, which is—that's amazing. That's really, really amazing.

00:23:12 Morgan Host Yup. And one of the things I was saying a little bit earlier was, at the moment that the main title sequence comes on for *Wild Style* I'm like, oh damn, *Yo MTV Raps*. It's almost the s—it's almost an identical logo, with a little starburst thing about it, and it put that into perspective for me.

Getting a real education about the birthplace of hip-hop came through films, particularly this one, which I needed to be like, okay, that put the Bronx into perspective.

So the question that I had for you is, what does the film tell us really about this time in the Bronx and what was going on? Racially, politically, and culturally?

00:23:50 Jeff Guest Mm. So much. So, so much, and I think that's part of the continuing importance and significance of the film. They begin shooting this, uh... I think around '82, like they just met. Charlie Ahean and Fab 5 Freddy had just met, like, maybe 12-16 months, 12-18 months before. Um, and they're shooting this in 1982.

And so, at this particular point, hip-hop is beginning to desegregate the clubs downtown, and you have b-boys from the Bronx and Uptown, Zulu Nation coming downtown, and people like Fab 5 Freddy and Chris Stein and Debbie Harry, like... opening these doors for folks to suddenly gather together. Kool Lady Blue, like, come together and meet and encounter each other, literally, *[chuckles]* for the first time.

So you find, like, this mixing happening, even at the bottom of the Reagan recession. So, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five—it's really Grandmaster, Melle Mel, and Duke Bootee who are doing *The Message*. Um, that comes out in '82, at the bottom of the Reagan recession; and there's the beginning of a sense that, oh man, the Reagan years are going to really, really be horrible for folks of color, for communities of color.

00:25:13 Morgan Host Yeah.

00:25:14 Jeff Guest And at the same time, folks are figuring out how to meet each other, how to engage each other, how to make work like this.

00:25:22 Morgan Host Was the point ever to try and make a documentary, and it ended up being a narrative feature?

00:25:27 Jeff Guest No, no, no.

00:25:28 Morgan Host Okay.

00:25:29	Jeff	Guest	So, the point was actually to make a feature film, and they had had a whole plot; and the plot was around Zoro, this graffiti writer, who is supposed to be underground, but he wants to become better known. I think Charlie and Fab were trying to encompass all of the tensions that they were seeing in the hip-hop movement at that particular time in this one character. But the problem was that... Lee couldn't act. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:25:55	Morgan	Host	Listen.
00:25:56	Jeff	Guest	<i>[Laughing]</i> He couldn't act.
00:25:57	Morgan	Host	There were some scenes where I was like, yo, I'm gonna yell cut.
00:26:00	Jeff	Guest	I haven't met Lee and I understand he's a really nice guy, I'm sure he wouldn't be offended if I said that. Um, Pink. I've talked to Pink. Pink was like, "Yeah, you know, we weren't acting."
00:26:10	Morgan	Host	No.
00:26:11	Jeff	Guest	There was a script, and there was a plot, and what happened I think was, was they got caught up with the set pieces. Right? The set pieces at the Dixie. There was two shows at the Amphitheater, actually, we could talk about that. One of them didn't make the cut, and it's sort of this great lost story, and lost history, and lost soundtrack. But I think they got caught up with the set pieces, and they were like... that's actually the show. And so I was going back and checking out some of the stuff that Charlie had written about <i>Wild Style</i> , and he said there's a scene at the end where Pink and Lee meet on the river. You know, Lee is trying to—or Zoro, I should say Zoro, the character—is trying to develop this grand mural, and he can't—
00:27:01	Morgan	Host	But he can't finish it.
00:27:02	Jeff	Guest	Yeah, he can't finish it, and she gives him this great speech about, "It's not even about you. It's about the rappers, it's about the audience, it's about the crowd, it's about all of that stuff, so just let it go."
00:27:12	Morgan	Host	Yeah.
00:27:13	Jeff	Guest	I think that what had happened was, as Charlie describes it, his wife, Jane Dickson, who's also an amazing artist, was like, "You're focusing so much on this character, let it go. It's not about that. It's about all of the stuff that's happening around it. So, invert it. Invert the plot, and have it be about the context rather than the character." We didn't want to necessarily be captivated by Zoro's like, you know like—
00:27:37	Oliver	Host	Character arc.
00:27:38	Jeff	Guest	Yeah! Existential problems. We're like, damn, these are real kids that are really doing it.
00:27:43	Music	Music	"M.C. Battle At the Dixie" off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Busy Bee. Fast, upbeat hip hop with a fast beat.

*I said bein' an MC just wasn't my choice
But I soon found out I had the golden voice
I was too hot to handle, too cold to hold
Because MC's ran, from mic control
When it came to that, I was one of the best
I can rock it non-stop, the east and west
And like, Mickey Mouse, the Son of Sam*

[Music fades and continues quietly as Oliver speaks]

00:27:57 Oliver Host We've been talking so much about the movie. We need to talk about the music on this, and we will. But first, a couple words from our sibling *MaxFun* podcast. Keep it locked.

00:28:06 Music Music *[Music grows louder again]*

*Two motherfuckers trying to freak with me
So I done the freak, and I done my best
So then all of a sudden, I had to grab my chest
I rock the All Ages, I rock the C
Everybody know the chief rocker Busy Bee*

[Music fades out entirely]

00:28:19 Promo Promo *[Intense sci-fi music.]*

Narrator: Friendship is tough, especially when you're constantly slaying carnivorous hellbeasts bent on your destruction.

[Squishing sounds are audible in the background.]

Morgan Kay: Hey, make sure to clean the tub. I might actually need to shower today.

Annie Powell: Oh, don't give me that. You've been wearing the same pair of track pants since Tuesday. I mean, they still have the size sticker on the leg.

Morgan Kay: Oh, yeah, they do. Well, still, I was thinking today might be the day.

Annie: Yeah, yeah—oh, it's still alive! Kill it!

Morgan Kay: I don't have any weapons!

Annie: Hit it with the showerhead!

[Yells, grunts, and splatters.]

Annie: Ugh. Shit. My burrito got some gunk on it.

Narrator: But that's just Fairhaven. We make it work. *Bubble*, the sci-fi comedy from MaximumFun.org. Just open your podcast app and search for *Bubble*.

00:29:14	Promo	Promo	<p>Speaker 1: I listen to <i>Reading Glasses</i> because Brea and Mallory have great tips.</p> <p>Speaker 2: My suggestion for book festivals is just go for one day.</p> <p>Speaker 3: I listen for the author interviews.</p> <p>Speaker 4: I was a huge Goosebumps fan.</p> <p>Brea/Mallory: Yes!</p> <p>Speaker 4: R.L. Stein was totally my jam!</p> <p>Speaker 5: I don't even read. I just like their chemistry together.</p> <p><i>[Clip from an episode plays]</i></p> <p>Mallory: Literally if on the back it said like, "this book made me shit my pants," I'd be like, "That's—I'm buying this book."</p> <p>Brea: Yeah.</p> <p>Mallory: Like, I think the problem with blurbs a lot of times—</p> <p>Brea: I like that we both want to crap ourselves over books.</p> <p><i>[Clip ends]</i></p> <p>Brea: I'm Brea Grant.</p> <p>Mallory: And I'm Mallory O'Meara.</p> <p>Brea: We're <i>Reading Glasses</i> and we solve all your bookish problems every Thursday on Maximum Fun.</p>
00:29:51	Music	Music	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs plays for a few notes and then stops.
00:29:54	Morgan	Host	And we are back, yo, on <i>Heat Rocks</i> , talking <i>Wild Style</i> and the soundtrack with our guest, Jeff Chang.
00:30:01	Oliver	Host	Jeff, you had mentioned in the first half how this is one of the great, if not greatest hip-hop live albums. So, can you talk a little bit about the music on this album? Because, I think by 2019 soundtrack standards, this is a very different kind of soundtrack; and so it has to do with a lot of the live performances that we've been talking about. So, how did they end up developing the music for this?
00:30:22	Jeff	Guest	Um... basically, Fab 5 Freddy went to Chris Stein, you know, from Blondie, and was like, "We need to create some music, can we get a band together and do some stuff?"
00:30:34	Morgan	Host	He's the guitarist. Is he the guitarist?
00:30:37	Jeff	Guest	Yeah. So they got Lenny Ferraro, drummer, and they filled out the band with some other folks, and they literally cut these records... <i>[chuckles]</i> as fast as they could. They did like twelve one minute

tracks and pressed it onto acetate, and they gave it to the DJs, and—and as you know, acetates, can't really scratch with it. It's going to be gone after a couple of scratches.

So they ended up pressing a hundred records, and they gave those records out; and as it turned out, the word got out about these special breakbeats, and everybody was fiending for these records. So I don't know how much they're worth these days or if they're even available but, um... man.

And there are literally six tracks on each side, if I am remembering correctly; and the DJs cut it, and they ended up actually focusing in on "Down By Law", because it was the track that was a little bit more up tempo and more suited to the scene at that particular time. Actually, if you hear it, in most cases the DJs have sped that up to... from whatever it is, 105 to maybe 110 or 112, or something like that. They've sped the record up.

00:31:51 Music Music "Down By Law" off the album *Wild Style Original Soundtrack* by Fab 5 Freddy. Funky, grooving hip hop. Music plays for a moment, then fades out.

00:32:07 Oliver Host I really appreciate that context, because I think the first time I listened to this soundtrack, the first thought was, there is different tracks, but they keep coming back to this one, especially when the rappers are performing. I'm like, how come they didn't—why wasn't there more of a diversity of it? But I think this kind of makes sense. This is the one people gravitated toward.

[Oliver and Morgan respond emphatically several times as Jeff speaks.]

00:32:24 Jeff Guest Yeah. It's— you know, the beats don't really slow down in hip-hop until... you know, 1986-1987, and so this is still— the context is, you're at a club, you're at a community center, you're in the park, that kind of thing, and it's about getting folks live, keeping the crowd jumping. And so one of the things about the— if you go back through the records and stuff, which you can hear— not the records. If you go back through the tracks, I should say, is what you can hear are all the conventions of old school MCing as opposed to rapping. The introduction, the passing the mic type of introduction.

It actually is much more elaborate than these days, than for many decades actually. It was much more elaborate back then. Then people come in, they drop their bars, and then they do the introduction for the next person. Usually what happens is there's, if you're in a group, there's a unison piece, and that's substituting for the chorus; but this is the part where everybody's all like—where the energy in the room just kinda rises, because everybody is doing this together. Cold Crush were known because they harmonized, and Fantastic 5 were known because they did these chants that brought people in.

The great lost record of *Wild Style* is the record—the visual record and the audio record of the first show at the Dixie—or, excuse me, at the Amphitheatre—that they did. That featured Grandmaster

Flash and the Furious 5.

00:33:58 Morgan Host *[Sound of disappointment.]*

00:33:59 Jeff Guest When Charlie first told me that was what they had done, and that they couldn't, for whatever reason, save the audio and the video for that, I fell out of my chair, and I literally, I stopped, probably for about ten minutes, and I couldn't continue the interview. *[Laughs.]*

00:34:17 Morgan Host Oh, no.

00:34:18 Jeff Guest *[Laughs.]* There is one record that's out there on Bozo Meko Records called *Flash to the Beat*. That's a record of one of the live tapes of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5 at Bronx River, and it's—

00:34:33 Oliver Host Yeah. It's classic.

00:34:34 Jeff Guest It's the famous routine that actually ends up on their first record, *SuperRappin'*; and that has the stuff that gave rise to the title of the book, where they're like, "can't, don't, won't stop rockin' to the rhythm, 'cause I get down when Flash is on the beatbox." And Flash is—Flash is playing his little like, um—

00:34:50 Oliver Host Like, early drum machine.

00:34:51 Jeff Guest Early drum machine! Like a handheld drum machine.

00:34:53 Music Music "Flash it to the Beat" off the album *Greatest Messages* by Grandmaster Flash. Fast hip hop with a steady drum beat. The track sounds old and is filled with static.

Funky sound
Can't, won't, don't stop, rocking to the rhythm
'Cause I get down even when I'm walking in the spot
Watching the girl get high (Rock, rocking the spot)
When Flash is on the new beat box
Could've, would've, should stop rocking to the rhythm
'Cause I, get down, when Flash is on the beat box

[Music fades out]

00:35:12 Jeff Guest Can you imagine? Like, that was the—

00:35:14 Oliver Host They had that footage.

00:35:15 Jeff Guest They had that footage. And so they had to go and do it again, so the film is of the second show that they did at the Amphitheatre. But yeah, so, everybody came with their best routines.

You'll hear some of the routines done, like, a few times, a couple few times, you know what I mean? Particularly like, Lil Rodney Cee and KK Rockwell from Double Trouble. They do their things a couple of times. Lil Rodney Cee does his things a couple times.

But yeah, these are the rhymes that people would go out to listen to the folks do on the weekends, whether that be at the club uptown, or whether that be in the park. And, um. And the other thing that's

happening is that there's all these battles that are going on.

00:36:03 Morgan Host Battles. Battles on top of battles. But I love it, though. I love it.

One of my favorite moments in the film is... is the moment where "Limousine Rap" comes up.

00:36:14 Jeff Guest *[Laughs.]* Yeah.

00:36:15 Morgan Host It's just hysterical! The first thing I thought is, "I love my people," because you're just in the back of a limousine and all of a sudden it becomes this great moment with Busy Bee, and a finger snap, two girls. But going into the limo—

00:36:28 Jeff Guest Not just two girls, if I may interrupt.

00:36:30 Morgan Host No, go ahead.

00:36:31 Jeff Guest Queen Lisa Lee.

00:36:32 Morgan Host Queen Lisa Lee.

00:36:33 Jeff Guest From Zulu Nation, who is on wax in *Beat Street* because she's part of Us Girls, but has never, like— yeah. Another great, lost legend.

00:36:43 Morgan Host Classic.

00:36:45 Jeff Guest Why didn't you record Lisa Lee while you were at it, yo?

00:36:48 Music Music A deleted scene from *Wild Style* featuring Lisa Lee. Fast-paced rap with audio that sounds fuzzy and a bit distorted.

*It's time for me to introduce myself!
I'm the queen of the moon
And then you see me at the top
Then you know it's time to rock*

*Time to rock, time to rock
Rocking all around the clock
I'm Lisa Lee, I'm gonna shock the rock around
You block your mic, you block your mic*

*'Cause when you see me on the top
Then you know it's time to rock
Time to rock, rock the shock*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:37:08 Morgan Host It's a great moment. It is a great moment, and it's great because the limo's sort of suspect. I'm like, that's the limo? Right, when they get in? Sus.

00:37:14 Jeff Guest *[Laughs.]*

00:37:15 Oliver Host *[Laughs.]*

00:37:16 Morgan Host And also just how hyped they are. My mans has the champagne, money's out, they about to turn up. And then it becomes this great song.

00:37:25	Music	Music	<p>“Limo Rap” off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Busy Bee. A capella rap with rhythmic finger snapping to keep the beat.</p> <p><i>[Sound of a car starting]</i></p> <p><i>BUSY BEE:</i> <i>2, 4, 6, 8</i> <i>Hey, Lisa Lee</i> <i>Don't hesitate!</i></p> <p><i>LISA LEE:</i> <i>You go on and on</i> <i>On and on and on</i> <i>I say, the beat don't stop</i> <i>'Til the break of dawn</i></p> <p><i>'Cause I'm riding with</i> <i>The man Starski</i> <i>We're gonna rock, rock, rock</i> <i>'Til the funk is gone</i></p> <p><i>With Starski, my man</i> <i>What you got to be?</i></p> <p><i>BUSY BEE:</i> <i>Well, clap your hands</i> <i>And stomp your feet</i> <i>As you're grooving with</i> <i>The Busy Bee</i></p> <p><i>[People laugh]</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:37:52	Morgan	Host	<p>That moment is ill. That's one of my favorite, uh, my favorite moments in the film.</p>
00:37:59	Oliver	Host	<p>I keep thinking about how, as you talked about, Jeff, this film is really in the soundtrack. It's such a document of a particular era, and it's one where, as someone who started to get into hip-hop by the late 80s, I thought this was an era that was largely forgotten. I think that by the time you get into the early 90s, with perhaps the exception of Jurassic 5, it's an era that's treated almost as an embarrassment, I think, for the golden age of lyricism and Nas and Biggie and all those folks—</p>
00:38:26	Jeff	Guest	<p>Hm. I beg to differ.</p>
00:38:27	Oliver	Host	<p>No, no. The impression I always got is that people look back on the disco rap era as being really primitive, and whenever they talked about the history of hip-hop, they sort of acknowledge it in the sort of four elements way of acknowledging. Oh, yeah, it was there. But they never really celebrate it. At least, that's the impression I had as a 90s hip-hop guy. You clearly disagree, because—</p>
00:38:51	Jeff	Guest	<p>Yeah. I disagree. Well, two things. One is, I think you might be conflating the disco rap of folks like Eddie Cheeba and Love Bug</p>

Starski and DJ Hollywood, who were literally rapping—mostly uptown—to the more disco-type crowd, the older crowds.

What folks who were on stage in *Wild Style* were doing—which, you know, they were rapping over disco beats, especially folks like Busy Bee; but the other folks were not doing as much disco rap. They were much more on breakbeat stuff. So, if you listen to a lot of these old records, like, I think a lot of us that came up in the 90s, we were introduced to all the breaks by alternate breaks and breaks.

00:39:36	Oliver	Host	Right.
00:39:37	Jeff	Guest	Those were all the breaks that those folks were using during that particular period, so there's two different schools that were happening. The other part of it, too, that was happening at that time was, the 90s were a period where there was a lot of focus on live shows still, because the freestyle movement was still very, very live, and people would go out on tour, and there was pride that people took in terms of doing shows and what their craft was all about. Those folks were all listening to, and you can hear this in De La Soul's records, especially the B-sides, they were all going back to the old tapes and reviving old routines. "Come on everybody, we can all get down," like, Tribe Called Quest, a lot of the chants and those kinds of things were lifted directly from a lot of these old tapes.
00:40:30	Oliver	Host	We often times talk with our guests about their favorite moments off the album they pick. Jeff, I mean, this is an album I think is filled with potential ones. Do you have one?
00:40:38	Morgan	Host	Oh yeah. Oh yeah.
00:40:39	Jeff	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:40:40	Oliver	Host	If you had to kill your darlings and just reduce it to one, what would be yours?
00:40:42	Jeff	Guest	God, I love them all. <i>[Laughs.]</i> But yeah, I think Double Trouble live at the Amphitheatre continues to grow in my imagination. The thing I love about it, if you hear the Double Trouble live at the Amphitheatre now, it's based around these different parts where they're rhyming in unison, and there's really three parts to it that are really critical. The first part is this piece that's called "listen to us", that I call "listen to us". They're basically, what they're doing in that is they're teaching the audience how to listen to them.
00:41:15	Music	Music	"Double Trouble at the Amphitheatre" off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Double Trouble. Fast-paced rap. <i>So listen to us (Listen to us!) Everybody just listen to us Listen to us, one time</i>

*'Cause we got routines that are fresh and new
We practiced so hard so we could do it for you
So listen party people when we tell you what to do
When you come to a party bring a friend with you
And just listen to us, listen to us
Everybody just listen to us*

[Music fades, then continues quietly as Jeff speaks]

00:41:31 Jeff Guest So, in a really weird, subliminal kind of way, when we saw them doing that on stage on the film in this theater in Honolulu, they're teaching us how to become hip-hoppers. This is how you become a hip-hop audience.

Then the second major story of that is the "here's a little story that must be told."

00:41:49 Music Music

[Music grows loud again]

*Here's a little story that must be told
About two cool brothers that were put on hold
They tried to hold us back, from fortune and fame
They destroyed the crew and it killed our name
They tried to step on our ego and walk on our pride
But true blue brothers stand side by side
Through thick and thin from beginning to end
This battle we lost but the war we'll win
'Cause Double Trouble is in the house
I'm KK Rock, Rodney C, we'll turn it out*

[Music grows quiet as Jeff speaks]

00:42:07 Jeff Guest Then the last one is "we're going to overcome", and that's how they end that part.

00:42:11 Music Music

[Music increases volume again]

*In the Yellow Pages or a Crack-a-Jack box
Rockin' in phases until I reach the top
And when I reach the top, my name will be grand
I'll be the best MC throughout the land
But when I reach the top I won't take all the credit
I'm down with Double Trouble and I'll never forget it*

[Music fades out]

00:42:24 Jeff Guest Then in between, threaded through all of that, are their solo rhymes, where they get to showcase just exactly why they're bad. So what they've done is they've actually freaked the form. They have freaked the live form to be able to tell this epic tale of being the underdogs, being completely screwed, and yet you're not going to top us, really, at the end, and it's just brilliant.

00:42:48 Music Music

[Music fades back in]

*They accused, misused and they tried to abuse
The battles we fought we were bound to lose*

*So to be young men we had to take the loss
'Cause you got to pay the cost to be the boss
But now we're back and we're on the double
Don't mess with us unless you're lookin' for trouble
Double Trouble (Double Trouble)
Double-double (Trouble Trouble)
Double (Trouble) Double (Trouble)
Double-dub (Double Trouble!)*

[Music fades out]

00:43:03	Oliver	Host	I think the one that I picked in terms of favorite moment—and this is also reflected in the soundtrack—is the basketball throwdown, between the Cold Crush Brothers and the Fantastic Freaks.
00:43:11	Morgan	Host	—and the Fantastic Freaks.
00:43:12	Jeff	Guest	Hell yeah.
00:43:13	Oliver	Host	And it's a combination of how it opens, with "I told you all", right, because, right—the people who are witnessing it, and obviously the throwdown itself is very staged, but I love the staging of it. Like they're facing off each other, they got the arms crossed, b-boy stances—
00:43:30	Morgan	Host	One at a time stepping up, the girls in the back.
00:43:32	Oliver	Host	It's so much fun.
00:43:33	Music	Music	"Basketball Throwdown" off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Cold Crush Brothers and Fantastic Freaks. A capella rap.

*SPEAKER 1:
I told y'all, here they come now, you see them?*

*SPEAKER 2:
Yep*

*SPEAKER 1:
Both of the crews, I told y'all*

*SPEAKER 2:
They look like they gonna fight too*

*SPEAKER 1:
They serious, see what I told y'all, see now?
Look at that dude right there*

*GRAND WIZARD THEODORE:
Well I'm the T
(Theodore!)
all dark my face
And when I get you on the court, I beat Charlie Chase*

00:43:49	Music	Music	<i>CHARLIE CHASE:</i>
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*(Cold Crush!)
Charlie Chase, as cute as can be
You sold your soul to the devil
to play like me*

*RUBIE DEE:
Well I'm the R (Rubie Dee!)
And you got a lotta nerve
When you play against me
You know you gonna get served*

*J.D.L.:
(Cold Crush!)
J.D.L., the lord to lords
And Rubie Dee, my man
Your shit is on the boards*

[Music fades out]

00:44:04	Morgan	Host	I want to know from y'all, if you had to say who won that battle, who did you think won the battle between Cold Crush and Fantastic. Like, just keep it real. Who do you think won that battle?
00:44:14	Jeff	Guest	<i>[Laughs]</i> Oh man, I'm gonna have to be a neutral in this one, because—
00:44:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Oliver: Oh, don't want to offend your political connects here. Jeff: <i>[Laughs.]</i> Morgan: I feel that. I feel that. Oliver: I see you, Jeff. Morgan: Yup. I feel that. Jeff: But y'all can't ball, y'all can't ball. Oliver: Yeah, that— Morgan: <i>[Laughs.]</i> Oliver: —that's a great line. Great line.
00:44:33	Jeff	Guest	But I feel like you could get a bunch of rappers together today and do the same thing, but referencing modern day rappers, like LeBron or Kuwa or whatever.
00:44:41	Morgan	Host	Exactly.
00:44:42	Jeff	Guest	You could pull off the same thing. It'd be really fresh.
00:44:44	Morgan	Host	That's a great moment.
00:44:46	Oliver	Host	We haven't actually— so, we're talking about the rhyming here. We haven't actually talked a ton about the actual musical tracks, besides a little bit about "Down By Law." You know, my fire track off

of here, not necessarily my favorite moment, my favorite musical track—and this is tough, because “Subway Theme” is pretty hot—it’s “Gangbusters.”

So, before we listen to it, it’s credited on here to Grand Wizzard Theodore, but is that who actually produced it, Jeff? Is it the band that you were mentioning that they got together for this?

00:45:18	Jeff	Guest	Yeah, it’s the band. I think it’s because, you know, Theodore’s scratching.
00:45:21	Oliver	Host	That makes sense, but it’s a combination of the drums are on point, they’re thick, but then when the bassline drops, <u>oh</u> .
00:45:30	Music	Music	“Gangbusters” off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Grand Wizzard Theodore. A funky hip-hop instrumental.
00:45:46	Oliver	Host	I don’t care if this is ‘83, ‘93, or 2023, that track still bumps.
00:45:51	Morgan	Host	Is flames, yeah.
00:45:54	Oliver	Host	How about y’all, what about musical moments, fire tracks for you, each of you.
00:45:58	Morgan	Host	You know what, I don’t see this on here, but in my notes I had put “South Bronx Subway Rap.”
00:46:04	Oliver	Host	Probably on one of the— this album has been reissued many times over, anniversary editions. There’s a lot of other bonus cuts that weren’t on the original, which is actually very short.
00:46:13	Morgan	Host	Okay. “South Bronx Subway Rap” is my favorite.
00:46:18	Music	Music	“South Bronx Subway Rap” off the album <i>Wild Style Original Soundtrack</i> by Grandmaster Caz. A groovy, funky, hip hop instrumental.
00:46:32	Morgan	Host	That’s my favorite moment in the film. It’s the moment when Zoro is alone on the train; and it was the first time I was like, well damn, this train is stripped down, he ain’t got nothing to hold onto, it’s just him and his thoughts, and it’s a great instrumental piece.
00:46:50	Oliver	Host	How about you, Jeff?
00:46:51	Jeff	Guest	I do still think it’s “Down By Law”, and probably it’s indelible because of all the rhymes that are going on over it and that kind of thing, but it’s also true to that particular period. Like, I just remember thinking, man, what would it be like to be down by law? You know? Like, what would it mean to be down? Then I love how he’s shouting out everybody, and he’s shouting out himself and Charlie, like in their real names. He’s not fade, Charlie’s not some director offscreen. So you have this really interesting moment of disconnection where the songs are playing and you can hear “Charlie A, Fab 5 Freddy”, you know, that kind of thing, and they’re rapping over that in this movie in which Fab 5 is playing somebody else.
00:47:43	Oliver	Host	Quick related tangent to that is, and let’s start by listening to the

very beginning of “Subway Theme”.

00:47:49 Morgan Host Yeah.

00:47:50 Clip Clip *[A subway is heard running in the background]*

Zoro: Being a graffiti writer is taking the chances and shit, taking the risk. Taking, like, all the arguments from the transit and the police and your own mom, you know, from your friends and shit. You know, you gotta take all that bullshit, “Ah, you’re vandalizing all those trains”.

[Beat.]

[Continues inaudibly, then stops.]

00:48:16 Oliver Host What strikes me from the dialogue of this is, again, this film, Jeff, as you had mentioned, they would have started doing principle shooting around ‘82, the film goes through production ‘83-’84, but I think you already hear within this dialogue, there is a nostalgia for, at least in this case, graffiti culture of some previous era.

I’ve always thought of, or been very curious about the ways in which—hip-hop, to me, felt like a genre that was born nostalgic for its own past. I feel like, even in something as formative and early and pioneering as this, people are still talking about back in the day. And that’s like ‘83. It’s kind of a—yeah. What do you think is about that impulse, about the backwards looking?

00:48:58 Jeff Guest Yeah, maybe this is Lee/Zoro, but I think this is more Lee talking than Zoro talking, right? Like, Lee’s hip-hop is dead argument.

00:49:06 Oliver Host Yeah, already.

00:49:07 Jeff Guest Yeah, yeah. And it’s interesting because he is referring to a particular period at the end of the ‘70s, when the MTA had buffed all the trains. So, what that did was, they thought, oh, this is great, if we do this, that’ll teach them a lesson, they’re never gonna wanna get up again, and blah blah blah. But everyone was like, oh, great, the trains are all clean again!

00:49:31 Morgan Host Right.

00:49:32 Jeff Guest Like, we have all of this stuff that we can run on, and you don’t have to worry about crossing people out and the politics of that. It was like a mad rush to get on the trains, and that’s when people really started getting up and doing these masterpiece whole cars. So this is the golden age of graffiti in the late ‘70s that he’s referring to.

Then the mom piece. I love that, because there’s also a scene in *Style Wars* that comes out in 1984, where Dez is in the kitchen with his mom—

00:49:59 Oliver Host Yes. Infamous scene.

00:50:00 Jeff Guest —and his mom is like, “why are you doing this stuff?” you know, like, come on, ma. That’s sort of a classic scene as well, but you can see too where there’s the generation gap that’s coming in here

as well, and I think every kid could relate to that particular thing at that particular time.

00:50:21	Oliver	Host	So, Jeff, if you had to describe the <i>Wild Style</i> soundtrack in— you know what’s coming, man. You listen to our show.
00:50:27	Jeff	Guest	I know what’s coming. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:50:28	Oliver	Host	You know what’s coming. If you had to describe three words, what three words.
00:50:30	Jeff	Guest	I’m still stumped. I’m still stumped.
00:50:31	Oliver	Host	What three words? No excuses, my friend.
00:50:32	Jeff	Guest	Wow. Okay. I used the word electromagnetic earlier.
00:50:37	Oliver	Host	Ooh. Does that count as one or two? I guess that’s one, I feel like. So you only get single credit for that one.
00:50:42	Morgan	Host	Unless he says boogie, then that’s three.
00:50:45	Jeff	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Um. It was just generative for me, man.
00:50:52	Oliver	Host	Generative. I like generative, that’s cool.
00:50:53	Jeff	Guest	And, uh, awesome. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:50:56	Oliver	Host	Yeah. There we go. That works.
00:51:00	Jeff	Guest	Such a nondescriptive descriptive word.
00:51:03	Music	Music	“Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:51:10	Oliver	Host	Well, that will do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest, Jeff Chang. Jeff, what are you working on these days?
00:51:16	Jeff	Guest	Uh, a lot of stuff. I’m actually working on a young adult version of <i>Can’t Stop Won’t Stop</i> , for the 15th anniversary.
00:51:23	Oliver	Host	Very cool.
00:51:24	Jeff	Guest	15th anniversary, yeah.
00:51:25	Morgan	Host	Nice.
00:51:26	Jeff	Guest	And um, might do some stuff with <i>Can’t Stop Won’t Stop</i> in other avenues and venues, and I’m still working on a Bruce Lee bio, so.
00:51:37	Oliver	Host	One of these days.
00:51:38	Jeff	Guest	One of these days, yes.
00:51:40	Oliver	Host	Alright. You’ve been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.
00:51:45	Morgan	Host	Our theme music is “Crown Ones” by Thes One of People Under The Stairs. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.
00:51:51	Oliver	Host	<i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Duenas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our

shows.

- 00:51:59 Morgan Host Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
- 00:51:02 Oliver Host We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, where we are always down by law.
- We want to thank all of our five star iTunes reviewers, and we have had a slew over the past couple of weeks. Thank you so much to all of you.
- D_stapes asks, "Do you like music? If so, there is no reason you shouldn't be listening to this podcast." We can't think of a reason, either!
- 00:52:29 Oliver Host CitizenHoffman describes our show as "so deep, so thoughtful, so fun" and we think that is so true.
- Black Bird Run called us "enlightening, informative, and sassy" and even recommended some albums for future episodes, including Living Color's *Time's Up*. I'm liking the listener recommendations, keep those coming.
- Boutté wrote that we offer "good talks about good tracks, and some of the dopest insight out there." Well, we do try.
- Last but not least, we have Aaron_Neville_Fan, who says that they have "recommended this podcast to all their fellow record store nerds", and as an admitted record store nerd myself, I deeply appreciate this.
- 00:53:09 Oliver Host If you, dear listener, have not had a chance yet, please consider leaving us a review on iTunes. It is a huge way that new listeners can find us, and we might read part of your review on the air.
- One last thing. Here is a teaser for next week's episode, which features music writer James Woodbury of Aquarium Drunkard, talking to us about Karen Dalton's cult classic album from the early 1970s, *In My Own Time*.
- 00:53:34 Morgan Host Tell us how you came to know this album, and if you remember purchasing this album at all, what form?
- 00:53:39 James Woodbury Guest It was definitely vinyl. When Light in the Attic reissued this in, I think, 2006, I had a friend and mentor named Chris Estie, who was doing publicity for Light in the Attic, and he sent me an email, "Hey, you're gonna want to check this record out. We're putting this lost classic out."
- And this is 2006, so the "we're putting this lost classic out" thing hadn't been said quite as frequently as it has since then, so I was like, okay, I'll definitely check this out. He had mentioned to me that Devendra Banhart and Nick Cave were in the liner notes, so that was all I needed to hear.

As a young music fan, I was working at a record store, Zia Records in Tempe, Arizona. Karen, to me, sounded absolutely as radical and strange and arcane and uncanny as any of the stuff that was coming out from that scene that was supposed to be psychedelic folk music, which, that stuff's great too, but Karen was like— she's the original. Stuff like Joanna Newsom, I would listen to that, and then I would listen to Karen Dalton, and I could hear the thread that was connecting these artists from across decades.

00:54:51

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