

New York Folklore Society
2002-03 Documentary Heritage Program Project
Documenting Hip Hop

Collection creator:

April Silver

Title:

Documentation for “Seizing the Cultural Initiative: Hip Hop at its Crossroads”

Dates:

1991-1993

Extent:

3 linear feet of files and memorabilia
12 audio cassette tapes

Organization and arrangement:

Collection is organized by medium.

Biographical/historical note:

April Silver was born in New York City, and is an arts advocate and artist representative. She was the co-founder and president of The Cultural Initiative, Inc., a student-based organization at Howard University, Washington, DC, that organized the first American Hip Hop conference, “Seizing the Cultural Initiative: Hip Hop at its Crossroads,” in 1991. The Cultural Initiative is no longer active. Silver is president and co-founder of Alike Worksongs, a multi-service arts and entertainment agency based in Brooklyn, New York, where she lives. Alike Worksongs provides services for lecture management, media and marketing, event planning and community arts programming for Hip Hop artists and other professionals.

Scope and content:

Consisting of conference notes, programs, internal files, promotional materials, photographs, lanyards, audio tapes of panel discussions, media clips, and other material, this collection documents a conference entitled “Seizing the Cultural Initiative: Hip Hop at its Crossroads,” held in 1991 at Howard University, the preeminent historically Black university. This was the first conference on Hip Hop culture held in the United States. Run by The Cultural Initiative, Inc., a student-based organization at Howard, this meeting was the first to integrate the music industry, students and the community and explore the various cultural, social, political and business components of Hip Hop. The four-day meeting consisted of panel discussion, new artist showcases, demonstration sessions, a fashion show, and after-parties. Topics covered during the conference included:

artist ownership; gender oppression; creative control; and the emerging Hip Hop fashion industry. The taped panel discussions feature such Hip Hop artists as Chuck D, Kool Moe D, MC Lyte, and Sister Souljah.

Finding aid note:

There is no finding aid for this material. Information on this collection was gathered by Yvonne Bynoe of Urban Think Tank in the Spring of 2003.

Location:

This collection is held by April Silver, Alika Worksongs, Brooklyn, NY.

Restrictions on Access:

Researchers interested in using this material should contact April Silver, Alika Worksongs, P.O. Box 250553, Brooklyn, New York. Telephone: 718-756-8501. Fax: 718-756-8502.

Other authors:

Chuck D
Kool Moe D
MC Lyte
Sister Souljah

Indexing terms:

Meeting name:

“Seizing the Cultural Initiative: Hip Hop at its Crossroads,” Howard University, Washington, DC, 1991

Corporate/organizational names:

The Cultural Initiative, Inc.
Howard University

Subject terms:

Clothing and dress – Social aspects
Hip Hop
Hip Hop Congresses
Rap (music)
Rap (music) – Economic aspects
Rap musicians -- Interviews
Sound recording industry

Form and genre/Form of material:

Audiotapes
Conference proceedings
Interviews

Photographs
Programs
Promotional materials

Date of interview and survey: Spring 2003

Interview and survey by: Yvonne Bynoe

This summary written by: Nancy Johnson with information provided by Yvonne Bynoe