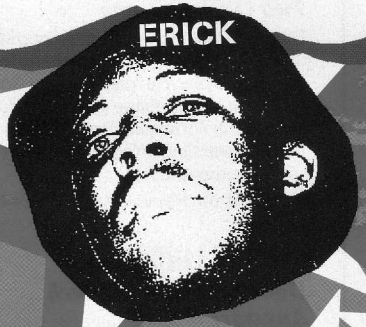


OLD SCHOOL



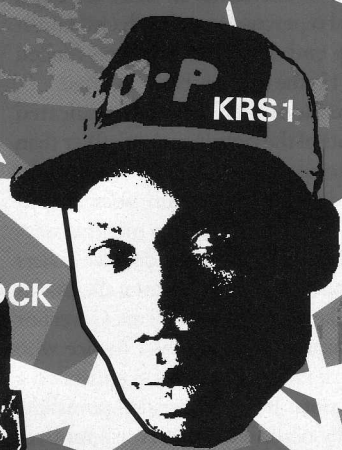
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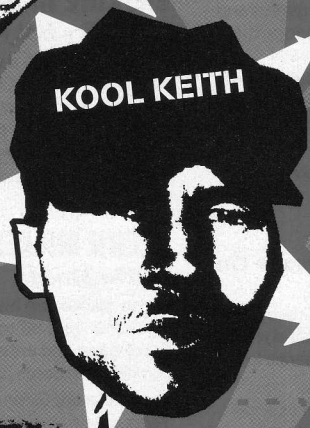
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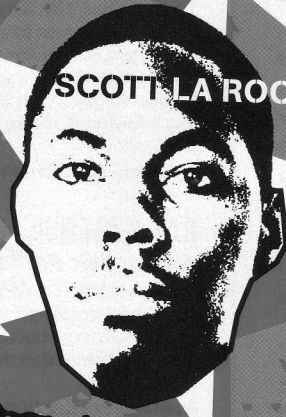
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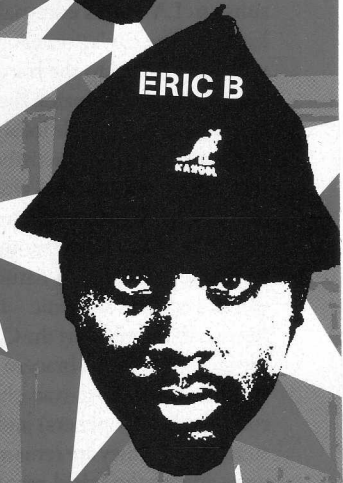
KRS-1



KOOL KEITH



SCOTT LA ROCK



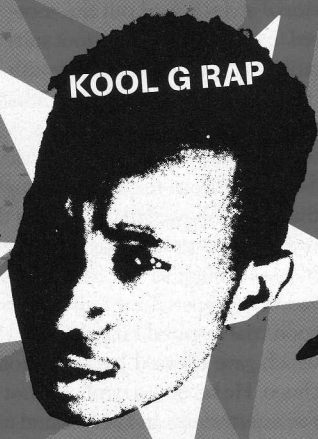
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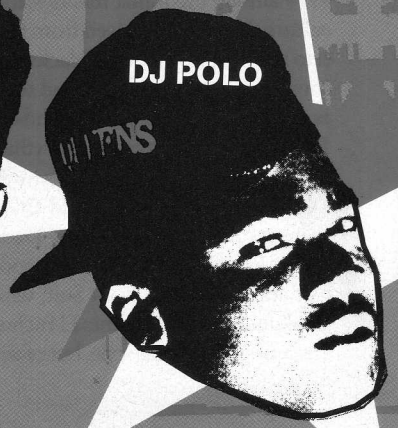
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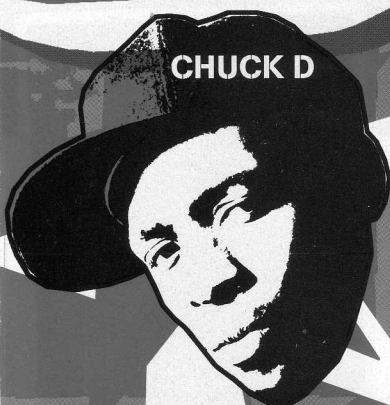
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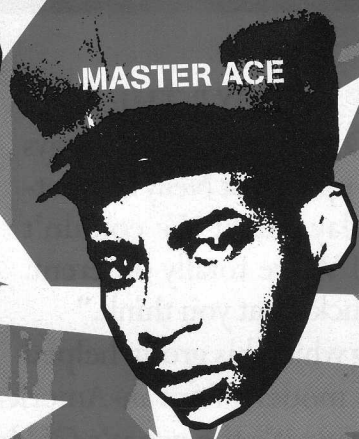
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DJ POLO

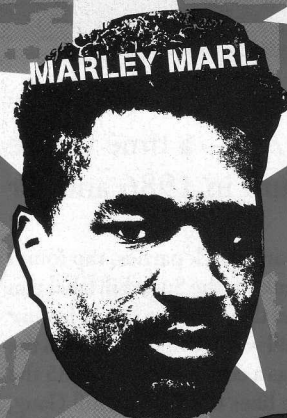


CHUCK D



MASTER ACE

Back in 1986 **hip hop** entered a golden age – lyrical revolution, sonic innovation, and individuality – that gave rise to such rap legends as **Public Enemy**, **Gang Starr** and **De La Soul**. **Angus Batey** speaks to the stars of a movement brought down by violence, litigation and Gilbert O’Sullivan.



MARLEY MARL



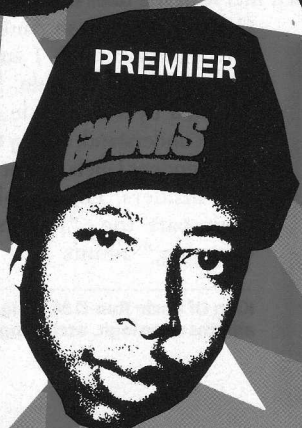
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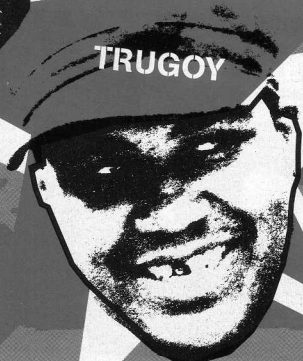
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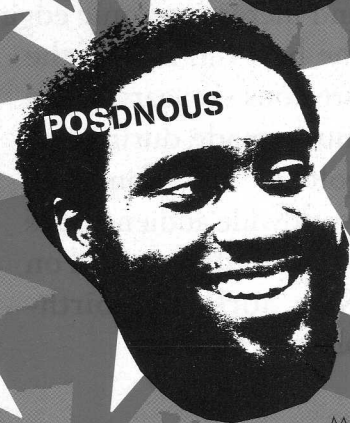
MACE



PREMIER



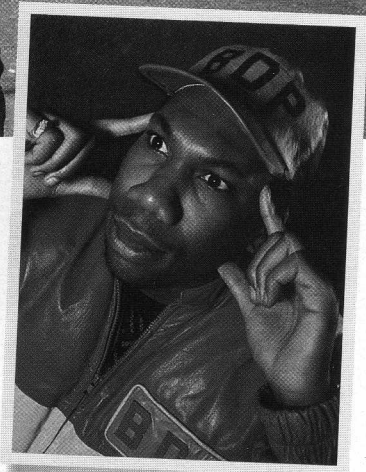
TRUGOY



POSDNUOS



The golden age's holy trinity: Eric B and Public Enemy main-man Chuck D (left and right top) in New York City, 1989, plus Boogie Down Productions' KRS-One (below).



“WHEN IT COMES TO PUBLIC ENEMY,” THE MILITANT rap group’s leader, Chuck D, begins, “people always try to figure out how we measure up against Nelly or whatever rapper is in the charts today. Fuck! We couldn’t measure up to pop groups *then!* We’re totally different.

We come from a time where really we don’t give a fuck what you think.”

The period Chuck’s referring to is the era during which his group helped lead a genuine hip hop revolution through which modern African-American music found a new voice, a sharper focus and a global audience. To many it’s the genre’s Golden Age – a time whose parameters are book-ended by the release of Run-D.M.C.’s *Raising Hell* album in 1986 and Dr

Dre’s *The Chronic* in 1992. The former was pivotal in bringing rap to a mass audience, while the latter’s nihilism effectively ended the parallel themes of activism, playful experimentation and increasing sonic edginess that ran through the best hip hop of the previous six years. If the music made during this golden age found a worldwide audience, the story itself is centred on New York, the birthplace of hip hop.

From its roots as the soundtrack to Bronx block parties, rap found its way onto to record in ’79 largely thanks to the Sugarhill label run by Sylvia Robinson, her husband Joe and their son Joe Jr (see feature in MOJO Collections 5). While Sugarhill was the first to harness the streetwise appeal of rap and market it as a commodity, by 1985 the label – that had spawned hits with the likes of the Sugarhill Gang, Grandmaster Flash And The Furious Five, Funky Four + 1 and West Street Mob – was in trouble. Sugarhill was derailed by a new style of hip hop it didn’t understand, and by the rise of rival independent labels run or staffed by hip hop insiders. Legal problems played their part too. “Rap music started changing,” admits Joey Robinson Jr.



King Of Rock: Run-D.M.C. signified that rap albums were legit, according to Mister D.

Normski, Eber/Roberts/Redferns, Lawrence Waston/Retna

