



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Fab 5 Freddy papers

1952-2014 [bulk 1990-2005]

Sc MG 961

Processed by Amelia Carlin in 2020.

Summary

Creator: Fab 5 Freddy, 1959-

Title: Fab 5 Freddy papers

Date: 1952-2014 [bulk 1990-2005]

Size: 53.88 linear feet (129 boxes, 1 oversize folder); 198 megabytes (253 computer files)

Source: Purchased from Boo-Hooray in 2019.

Abstract: Fab 5 Freddy is an African American director, TV host, graffiti artist, and a key personality in the history of hip-hop culture. The Fab 5 Freddy archive traces his multidisciplinary career from the 1980s to the early 2000s, and provides further insight into his public personality; business and recreational activities; and creative endeavors in the fields of writing and art. The collection contains, photographs, notebooks, correspondence, financial, legal, and administrative documents, screenplays, fliers and invitations, artwork, apparel, and magazines.

Preferred citation: [Item], Fab 5 Freddy papers, Sc MG 961, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Amelia Carlin in 2020. The collection underwent some arrangement and re-housing by the dealers prior to arriving at the library. Some files were grouped by type of material. The arrangement and folder titles have been maintained when present.

Separated Materials:

Audio and moving image materials were separated from the papers and transferred to The Schomburg Center's Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division.

The photographs were separated from the papers and transferred to The Schomburg Center's Photographs and Prints Division. They are not described in this finding aid.

The books and vinyl LPs were transferred to The Schomburg Center.

Creator History

Fab 5 Freddy is an African American director, TV host, graffiti artist, and a key personality in the history of hip-hop culture. He was born Frederick Leroy Brathwaite to Theresa Florence Brathwaite and Frederick Leroy Brathwaite in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, in 1956. His god-father was the jazz trumpeter and composer, Max Roach. Fab 5 Freddy was instrumental in connecting the New York uptown worlds of graffiti, rap, MC, and breakdance artists, with the downtown modern art scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1983, he worked on the seminal hip-hop film *Wild Style* and later gained widespread fame as a host on the MTV series *Yo! MTV Raps* (1988-1995). He has directed a number of music videos, including his debut work for Boogie Down Productions' release "My Philosophy" (1988), as well as clips for a number of other artists. He has worked in music and event production, on major motion pictures, and in television roles. He studied communications for a period around 1978 at Medgar Evers College, Brooklyn.

Fab 5 Freddy was one of the members of the graffiti crew "The Fabulous 5" alongside the noted graffiti artist Lee Quiñones. The group were key participants in the movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s that saw graffiti move into more established art spaces. Both Fab 5 Freddy and Quiñones were invited to exhibit their work in at the Galleria La Medusa in Rome, in 1979. Fab 5 Freddy's most well-known graffiti work is a series of soup cans painted on a New York City subway train circa 1979-1980, referencing pop artist Andy Warhol's "Campbell's Soup Cans."

Fab 5 Freddy exhibited works at various galleries including the Fun Gallery; in the *Times Square Show* (1980), which also featured Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat; in the *Beyond Words* show at the Mudd Club (1981) that Fab 5 Freddy co-curated with graffiti artist Futura; and in *New York/New Wave* at P.S. 1 (1981).

During this period, Fab 5 Freddy frequented the tapings of *TV Party*, Glenn O'Brien's cable access show, where he met Debbie Harry, and other members of the new wave band Blondie. He is famously referenced in Blondie's track "Rapture," in the phrase "Fab 5 Freddy told me everybody's fly," and appeared in the song's 1981 music video together with Quiñones and Basquiat.

At the *Times Square Show*, Fab 5 Freddy met director Charlie Ahearn. Together they developed the concept for the film *Wild Style* which depicted the burgeoning New York rap, break dancing, and graffiti scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Fab 5 Freddy created the original music for the film and played the role of "Phade," a nightclub owner.

In 1982, Fab 5 Freddy released the single "Change the Beat" on Celluloid Records. The B-side of the EP contained a French version of the song by the rapper Beside. At the end of this version of the song is the line "This stuff is really fresh," which has become one of the most sampled pieces of music of all time. This single, and five others were recorded to promote the "New York Rap City" tour. The tour brought Fab 5 Freddy, and a group of MCs, DJs, break dancers, graffiti writers, and the Fantastic Four Double Dutch team to France and the United Kingdom in November of 1982.

Fab 5 Freddy is best known as the host of the MTV series *Yo! MTV Raps*. This was the first television series to present hip-hop and rap music videos, and is often credited with disseminating the genre throughout the United States and other parts of the world. The concept was developed by Ted Demme and first aired in 1988 with Fab 5 Freddy as the host, broadcasting every Saturday night. Owing to its popularity, MTV developed a daily format of the show that was filmed in-studio, with Ed Lover and Doctor Dre as the weekday hosts. The program featured interviews and performances with many of the most popular, widely regarded rap, hip-hop, and R&B acts of the time. The show was broadcast until 1995.

In the same year the first episode of *Yo! MTV Raps* aired, Fab 5 Freddy made his music video directorial debut with the Boogie Down Productions' track "My Philosophy" (1988). He directed Queen Latifah's "Ladies First"; Snoop Dogg's "Who Am I (What's My Name)?" ; "One Love" by Nas; several Shabba Ranks songs; and videos for artists such as Sharissa, and Ziggy Marley and The Wailers. During his career, he has directed more than 70 music videos.

Through the 1990s and early 2000s, Fab 5 Freddy and business associate Roy Cormier headed several ventures in the music industry, including F&R Records, and In the Middle Entertainment. Cormier, an American recording executive, was an early promoter of hip-hop and rap events in the 1980s, moving on to become a talent manager, and record producer. Together, they were co-presidents of Pallas Records, a label distributed by Universal Records, the biggest record label in the industry at the time. At Pallas they were responsible for launching the Chicago hip-hop/rap group Crucial Conflict's first full-length album, *The Final Tic* (1996). After leaving Pallas, Fab 5 Freddy and Cormier ran F&R Records for a short period around 1997-1998, where they worked with the artists 45 King and Boogie Shoes. Following this venture, they co-founded the independent urban record label In the Middle Entertainment. By 1999, they had signed four acts; one group and three soloists: Ill Street, Tikki, Gee Pierce and Mike Ransom.

Fab 5 Freddy's media projects have included acting parts in the feature films *New Jack City* (1991), and *American Gangster* (2007), on which he also worked as a production consultant. In 2001, Fab 5 Freddy hosted a web based hip-hop lifestyle series *The Fab 5 Freddy Show* on GetMusic.com. He has been involved with the VH1 Hip Hop Honors awards since its inception in 2004, working as co-producer and host on a number of the shows. He regularly participates as a speaker and panelist in programs at galleries, schools, and conferences.

His writings include a dictionary of contemporary hip-hop terminology entitled *Fresh Fly Flavor: Words and Phrases of the Hip Hop Generation*, published by Longmeadow in 1992, and several articles in commercial magazines. From the 1990s, he has collaborated with other writers on several film projects with themes of rap and hip-hop culture. He continues to create art works, and direct, produce, and appear in television and film productions.

Scope and Content Note

The Fab 5 Freddy papers date from 1952 to 2014, with the bulk of material being from the late 1980s to the mid 2000s. The papers trace his multidisciplinary career beginning with his early activities as a rap and hip-hop performer; work as a director of music videos; host of the influential *Yo! MTV Raps* show; production roles with the Pallas Records music label; film and television work; and as a speaker and panelist at events exploring hip-hop, graffiti art, and rap history and culture. The material provides an insight into his public personality and activities; business aspirations; and creative endeavors in the fields of writing and art, and includes some personal and family material. The collection illuminates aspects of Fab 5 Freddy's career and interests, rather than providing a complete record of his life and activities.

The material is arranged into ten series: Series I: Business Files; Series II: Media Projects; Series III: Notebooks and Day Planners; Series IV: Personal and Creative Files; Series V: Screenplays, Treatments, and Manuscripts; Series VI: Fliers, Invitations, and Passes; Series VII: Research Files; Series VIII: Printed Matter; and Series IX: Apparel.

The Business Files in Series I represent aspects of Fab 5 Freddy's career in the music industry as a

producer at various record labels, including the label he co-founded. They also trace other business and creative enterprises mostly from 1995 to the 2000s, and include a run of files from his business partner, Roy Cormier.

Series II reflects Fab 5 Freddy's work as a music video director and his creative endeavors in film, television and other media as a director, producer, and in concept development. A portion of the music videos Fab 5 Freddy directed are represented in Subseries II.A. by production packets, story summaries, and administrative material. His work on other media projects is traced in correspondence, financial and administrative documents, and notes.

Subseries II.B. details some of Fab 5 Freddy's roles in film, television, and media events through production documents, correspondence, and administrative material. His work as a host on *Yo! MTV Raps* is reflected in a production binder and financial documents, while the fan mail demonstrates how influential and important the show was to viewers around the world. This Subseries also contains some financial and legal documents.

Series III and IV reveal Fab 5 Freddy's day-to-day movements and social interactions while providing an overview of the variety of concepts and ideas he was exploring at any given time. His writings and artwork demonstrate the creative aspects of his career. There are some personal and family financial and legal documents.

The Screenplays, Treatments, and Manuscripts in Series V are divided into two Subseries: projects that Freddy was developing, and screenplays by others. The Fab 5 Freddy Projects, contain multiple drafts, edits, and some correspondence. Works By Others make up the bulk of this material and include some scripts for acting parts Fab 5 Freddy played in film and on television.

The Fliers, Invitations, and Passes in Series VI provide an insight into club nights, parties, festivals, and other events happening in New York from the 1980s to 2014. Some of these include Fab 5 Freddy as performer or organizer.

Series VII contain Research Files made up of clippings and articles that reflect areas of interest and background material for writing projects Fab 5 Freddy was working on.

Magazines comprise the bulk of the Printed Material in Series VII, with both large runs of some titles that span several years, and a number of single issues of various publications. The Printed Matter also houses art exhibition catalogs, booklets, pamphlets and other printed ephemera.

Several of Fab 5 Freddy's signature wardrobe items are present in Series IX. These include t-shirts, jewelry, sweatpants, sweaters, sunglasses, and four pairs of Reebok Afili'Art Collection Jean-Michel Basquiat sneakers.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American business enterprises
African American sound recording executives and producers
African Americans in television broadcasting
Masters of ceremonies
Music videos
Music videos -- Production and direction

Rap (Music) -- New York (State) -- New York
Rap musicians -- United States
Sneakers
Sound recording industry -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Digital photographs
Fliers (Ephemera)
Hip-hop (Music)
Notebooks
screenplays
T-shirts

Occupations

Television directors.
Television personalities.

Names

Cormier, Roy
Demme, Ted, 1963-2002
Fab 5 Freddy, 1959-
Hamilton, Tanya
Crucial Conflict (Musical group)
MTV Networks
Wild style (Motion picture)

Container List

Series I: Business Files 1980-2014 (20 boxes 8.75 linear feet 17 computer files 195 kilobytes)

This Series presents an overview of Fab 5 Freddy's solo and partnered ventures from the 1990s to the early 2000s, the majority of which were undertaken with business partner Roy Cormier. They include administrative documents, casting files, correspondence, legal and financial records, production materials, fliers, and publicity packets. The overlap in Fab 5 Freddy's business operations has led to mixing of files for different enterprises. There is some blending of personal and professional spheres evident in the intermingled nature of the material. The files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Almost all of the Correspondence is incoming. It is a blend of professional and personal correspondence and includes letters, pro forma mail outs, business proposals, and some administrative records. The Financial files include details on royalties, other payments, and invoices. The emphasis of the Legal files is on contracts and agreements for media work, and are also concerned with ownership of the Fab 5 Freddy trademark.

Several of Fab 5 Freddy's and Cormier's enterprises are represented in the Music Industry Ventures files, including F&R Records, In the Middle Entertainment, and Pallas Records. These files were originally grouped together, and the file names and groupings have been preserved where they existed, and arranged alphabetically.

In the Middle Entertainment was an independent urban music record label founded by Fab 5 Freddy and Roy Cormier in 1999. They initially signed four acts; one group and three soloists: Ill Street, Tikki (Tawana Easley), Gee Pierce, and Mike Ransom. The files contain mostly administrative and financial documents generated in the production and promotion of the groups and their albums.

The Pallas Records files consist of an abundance of material relating to the Chicago rap group Crucial Conflict, specifically the release of their hit single "Hay" from the album *The Final Tic*, which Fab 5 Freddy and Cormier executive produced in 1996. There is some correspondence from Fab 5 Freddy to his contacts where he promotes the group and their single, and seeks support for the album launch.

The Roy Cormier files were generated by Cormier and his staff during a period he was managing tours for several musical artists, under the umbrella of a company called "The Concert Organization" (formerly known as "Da Joint"). They largely consist of financial records and correspondence related to travel itineraries and scheduling for major concert tours in European and American cities. The touring artists include Puff Daddy, Keith Sweat, and TQ. The files do not seem to have a connection with work that Fab 5 Freddy was involved in.

The Subject Files are composed of general office records. They hold business cards, administrative material, press and promotional packets, proposals for various endeavors, and travel records.

Correspondence

- b. 1 f. 1-10 1984, 1990-1997
- b. 2 f. 1-9 1997-2005
- b. 3 f. 1-3 2000-2013
- b. 3 f. 4 Astor, Patti 1980s, 2005
- b. 3 f. 3-5 Jenkins, Larry (Kool) 2006
Contains a nine page letter written by Fab 5 Freddy to Larry Jenkins (Kool), where he recalls their acquaintance, and recounts memories from the late 1970s and 1980s. It goes on to describe his career and various projects.

Financial

- b. 3 f. 6-8 1986-2005
- b. 3 f. 9-10 Royalties and Payments 1991-2014
Includes *Yo! MTV Raps* Paystubs.

Legal

Series I: Business Files (cont.)

Legal (cont.)

b. 3 f. 11-12 1985-1991

b. 4 f. 1-5 1991-2013

Music Industry Ventures

b. 4 f. 6-7 F&R Records 1996-1999

In The Middle Entertainment

b. 4 f. 8-10 Administrative 1998-1999

b. 5 f. 1-3 Includes contracts.

b. 5 f. 4 Artwork 1999

b. 5 f. 5 Biographies and Headshots 1999

b. 5 f. 6-7 Business Plan 1999

b. 5 f. 8 Calendar 1999

b. 5 f. 9-12 Contacts 1996

b. 5 f. 13-15 Correspondence 1999-2000

b. 6 f. 1-3 Fab 5 Freddy Publicity and Press 1998-2000

Contain clippings of articles and other press items that mention Fab 5 Freddy.

Ill Street

b. 6 f. 4-5 1999-2000

b. 6 f. 6 Impact Convention 1999

b. 6 f. 7 Letterhead circa 1999

b. 6 f. 8er. 1 Lyrics 1998-2000
 (17 computer files 195 kilobytes)

b. 7 f. 1-4 Mailings 1999-2001

b. 7 f. 5 Manufacturing 1999-2000

b. 7 f. 6-7 Media Duplicators 1999-2000

b. 8 f. 1-5 Phone Message Books 1999-2000

b. 9 f. 1-6 Promotions 1998-1999

b. 10 f. 1

b. 10 f. 2-4 Public Relations 1999

b. 10 f. 5-6 Work for Hire 1999-2000

Pallas Records

b. 11 f. 1-4 1995-1999

b. 11 f. 5-10 Crucial Conflict 1996-1999

b. 12 f. 1-4

b. 101 f. 1

b. 12 f. 5 E-Rule 1994-1995

b. 12 f. 6 Ruby Blonde 1998

Roy Cormier Files

b. 12 f. 7-9 1997-1999

b. 13 f. 1-3

b. 13 f. 4-6 The Concert Organization 1999-2000

Subject Files

b. 14 f. 1-5 1989-2005

b. 14 f. 6 Biographies -- Fab 5 Freddy and Others 1990s

b. 14 f. 7 Business Cards 1980s-2000s

b. 100

Series I: Business Files (cont.)
 Subject Files (cont.)

- b. 14 f. 8 **Casting** 1980s-2000s
- b. 15 f. 1-2
- b. 15 f. 3 **Fab 5 Freddy Press Packets** 1990-1995
- b. 15 f. 4-6 **Parking Violations** 1997-2001
- b. 15 f. 7-8 **Promotional Packets** 1985-2000
- b. 16 f. 1-8 Media kits for various music groups, companies, business ventures, and other projects. The packets do not pertain to artists or enterprises managed by Fab 5 Freddy.
- b. 17 f. 1-2
- b. 17 f. 3-7 **Proposals** 1989-2005
 Business plans, summaries and story treatments for print, film, and TV ventures, including some seeking Fab 5 Freddy's participation or support.
- b. 17 f. 8 **Resumes** 1990-2003
- b. 17 f. 9 **Travel** 1989-2005
- b. 18 f. 1-3
- b. 18 f. 4-9 **Treatments and Screenplays** 1991-2007

Series II: Media Projects 1982-2010 (12 boxes 4.67 linear feet 30 computer files 19.13 megabytes)

The files in this Series reflect Fab 5 Freddy's work as a music video director; his creative endeavors in film, television and other media as producer, actor, and host; and his work developing concepts for screen projects. A portion of the music videos Fab 5 Freddy directed are represented in Subseries III.A. by production packets, story summaries, and administrative material. His work on other media projects is traced in correspondence, financial and administrative documents, and notes. Subseries II.B. details some of Fab 5 Freddy's roles in film, television, and media events through production documents, correspondence, and administrative material. His work as a host on *Yo! MTV Raps* is reflected in a production binder, financial documents, and fan mail. This Subseries also contains some financial and legal documents. The files are arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the project.

Subseries II. A. Directing, Producing, and Concept Development 1988-2008

Fab 5 Freddy's career as a director and producer, and his work in concept development are reflected in the story treatments and proposals, production documents, contracts, correspondence, and writings in this Subseries. The material is divided into Music Videos, and Other Projects.

The Music Videos files illustrate the creative and administrative work that went into the development of concepts for music videos that Fab 5 Freddy worked on. The material include production packets describing the concept and storyline for the video, principal cast, and other planning documents. The chronological files are mostly one-sheet summaries of various clips he directed. This Subseries includes a small amount of financial and other administrative documents.

Other Media Projects cover miscellaneous creative ventures that include television shows, movies, and web-based entertainment. Included are files for "Change the Beat," a story set around the Brazilian rap scene; a documentary film proposal entitled "To the Beat," and the concept for a hip-hop dance and exercise video with Fab 5 Freddy as the host, entitled "Gettin' Busy." The chronological files contain some mixing of material from his other professional activities - such as a request from *Source* magazine to co-host the first annual Source Awards in 1994, and interview transcripts from *Spin* magazine (box 20, folder 2).

Music Videos

- b. 19 f. 1 **1988-2002**
- b. 19 f. 2 **Blackstreet -- "Booty Call"** 1994
- b. 19 f. 3 **Boogie Down Productions -- "Jack of Spades"** 1988
- b. 19 f. 4 **Brand Nubian -- "Slow Down"** 1990
- b. 19 f. 5 **Cam'ron and Jay-Z -- "Welcome to New York City"** 2002
- b. 19 f. 6 **Crucial Conflict -- "Hay"** 1995
 Single page of notes for shots.
- b. 19 f. 7 **Doctor Dre & Ed Lover -- "Back Up Off Me"** 1994

Series II: Media Projects (cont.)

Subseries II. A. Directing, Producing, and Concept Development (cont.)

Music Videos (cont.)

- b. 19 f. 8 Gang Starr -- "Just to Get a Rep" 1990
- b. 19 f. 9 Groove Theory -- "Baby Love" 1994
- b. 19 f. 10 Nas -- "One Love" and "We Will Survive" 1994, 1999
- b. 19 f. 11 Petey Pablo -- "Blow Your Whistle" 2002
- b. 19 f. 12 Queen Latifah -- "Ladies First" and "Dance For Me" 1989
- b. 19 f. 13 Rhythm and Bass -- "Roses" 1992
- b. 19 f. 14 Shabba Ranks -- Various 1991-1994
 "Let's Get it On," "Ram Dancehall & Original Woman," "Slow and Sexy," "Trailer Load of
 Girls," and "Muscle Grip."
- b. 19 f. 15 Sharissa -- "No Half Steppin'" and "Any Other Night" 2002
- b. 19 f. 16 Snoop Dogg -- "Who Am I? (What's My Name?)" 1993-1994
- b. 19 f. 17 Stetsasonic -- "Talkin' All That Jazz" 1988
- b. 19 f. 18 Today -- "Him or Me" 1988
- b. 19 f. 19 Ziggy Marley and The Melody Makers -- "All Love" 1990

Other Media Projects

- b. 19 f. 20 1991-2000s
- b. 20 f. 1-5
- b. 20 f. 6 "52 Blocks in Brooklyn" 2006
- b. 20 f. 7-9 Brazil and Hip-Hop / "Change the Beat" 2001-2005
 Screenplays for this project can be found in Series V: Screenplays, Treatments, and
 Manuscripts.
- b. 20 f. 10 "Fabulous Stories" 1995
- b. 20 f. 11 "Gettin' Busy" 1993
- b. 20 f. 12 Jay-Z Basketball Footage 2003
 Time coded scene descriptions of footage of Jay-Z and others at basketball games.
- Limited Edition Volume 1 2004
- er. 2 Sound Editing Screenshots
 (16 computer files 17.33 megabytes)
- er. 3 Video Editing Screenshots
 (14 computer files 1.8 megabytes)
- b. 21 f. 1 Pepsi Advertisement 1991-1992
- b. 21 f. 2 Place2b Website 2008
- b. 21 f. 3 "To The Beat" 2004-2005

Series II: Media Projects (cont.)

Subseries II. B. Film, Television, and Appearances 1982-2010

This Subseries details Fab 5 Freddy's professional activities on screen as actor or host, and at public events. The various television shows, motion pictures, and other projects that Fab 5 Freddy worked on are represented in scripts, schedules, production packets, call sheets, and correspondence. For some of these productions he appeared on screen or stage while also contributing as a consultant or co-producer.

The material has been grouped into the following files: Assorted Projects, MTV, the VH1 Hip Hop Honors Awards, and *Wild Style* and are arranged alphabetically by project.

The range of Fab 5 Freddy's career activities are reflected in the Assorted Projects files. These contain material from his acting and consulting roles in feature films such as *American Gangster* and *New Jack City*; television work; event production; and hosting. They also trace his contributions to panels, conferences, and other media events concerned with the development and history of rap, hip-hop, and graffiti culture.

The MTV files contain material from Fab 5 Freddy's MTV work, with an emphasis on *Yo! MTV Raps*. These files contain a production binder, fan mail, royalty details, notes, and memorabilia from the show. The production binder spans from 1990 to 1991 and includes details of shoots, notes, MTV Networks memoranda, show lists (detailing broadcast dates, names of the artists performing, budgets, and show summaries.) The fan mail is addressed to Fab 5 Freddy and is from *Yo! MTV Raps* viewers in the United States and overseas. The letters were written by fans of all ages, and include several letters from inmates at correctional facilities. They are from general viewers who enjoyed the show, hopeful rappers and hip-hop artists, as well as people seeking autographs or merchandise. There is one outgoing letter by Fab 5 Freddy in response to a fan letter from 1989 (box 23, folder 5). The bulk of the fan mail is from 1995, and a majority is from viewers in European countries where the show was available on cable television. The letters are arranged chronologically.

The film *Wild Style* is represented in a small amount of material that includes a copy of Fab 5 Freddy's contract, a breakdown of a set of scenes, a personnel list for the 1982 European promotional tour, Christmas themed rap lyrics, and a summary of production receipts and expenses from 1984.

Fab 5 Freddy's work on the VH1 Hip Hop Honors awards is reflected in production materials, agreements, interview questions, and notes. It includes two tickets to the inaugural awards, 2004.

Assorted Projects

- b. 21 f. 4-5 1992-2007
- b. 21 f. 6-8 *American Gangster* 2006
 - b. 21 f. 9 Art Director's Club -- "Brand Black" 2001
- b. 21 f. 10 Brooklyn Museum 2004-2005
- b. 21 f. 11 Colt 45 Advertisement 1990-1992
- b. 22 f. 1 *Fab 5 Freddy Show* 2001
Online entertainment venture.
- b. 22 f. 2 *Good to Go* 1986
Cast list only.
- b. 22 f. 3 "Hip Hop Bommi Bop" 1991
Legal document and clippings from a 1983 song collaboration with the German band Die Toten Hosen on which Fab 5 Freddy rapped, under the name "Freddy Love."
- b. 22 f. 4 Interview Transcript 1997
- b. 22 f. 5 *Law and Order* 2007
- b. 22 f. 6 *Manchurian Candidate* 2003
- b. 22 f. 7 *New Jack City* 1990-1991
- b. 22 f. 8 Powermove Conference 1998
- b. 22 f. 9 Russell Simmons' "Phat Jam Live!!" 1993

Series II: Media Projects (cont.)

Subseries II. B. Film, Television, and Appearances (cont.)

Assorted Projects (cont.)

- b. 22 f. 10 Sundance Film Festival 2004
- b. 22 f. 11 Teach for America 1998
- b. 22 f. 12 Vibe TV 1994
- MTV
- b. 103 f. 1 1990
 Music Video Music Awards printed program.
- b. 22 f. 13-15 1997-2008
 Yo! MTV Raps
- b. 22 f. 16 Contracts, Agreements, and Pay Stubs 1988-1992
 b. 23 f. 1 File also contains list of royalties per show.
- b. 23 f. 2 Correspondence 1992-1993
- b. 23 f. 3 Production Binder 1990
 Fan Mail
- b. 23 f. 5-9 1989-1993
- b. 23 f. 10 1994-1995
- b. 24 f. 1-7
- b. 25 f. 1-8 1995
- Memorabilia
- b. 102 f. 1-4 CDs 1989-2003
 The CD (1989), *Yo! MTV Raps: Volume 2* (1991), and *A Journey Back in Rhyme* (2003).
- b. 123 T-shirt
- b. 25 f. 9 Trading Cards and Clothing Patch 1990s
- b. 26 f. 1-9 VH1 Hip Hop Honors Awards 2004-2010
- b. 26 f. 10-11 *Wild Style* 1982-1998
- b. 27 f. 1-3

Series III: Notebooks and Day Planners 1978-2000s (5 boxes 2.08 linear feet)

The notebooks date from 1978 to the 2000s, with the bulk being from the 1990s. They contain prose fragments, project notes and ideas, contact details for acquaintances, and lists. Much of this content is similar to that in the Notes in Series IV - but with the addition of longer, more developed ideas for creative and business endeavors. There is a notebook with details of showings of *Wild Style* in 1983 (box 27, folder 5), and a college notebook from his period of study at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, 1978. There are two day planners. They are arranged chronologically.

- b. 27 f. 4-9 1978-1990s
- b. 28 f. 1-5 1990-1994
- b. 29 f. 1-6 1990-2000s
- b. 30 f. 1-6 1995-2000
- b. 31 f. 1-5 1996-2000s

Series IV: Personal and Creative Files 1980-2003 (9 boxes 4.17 linear feet 206 computer files 142.2 megabytes)

These files house personal Administrative and Financial material, creative output in the form of Artwork and Writings, incoming Letters, an expansive collection of loose Notes, and press clippings. They have been arranged alphabetically by subject.

The Administrative and Financial files contain a small amount of legal material from property ownership and leasing, vehicle registration and financing, and Fab 5 Freddy's birth certificate and passport. Included in the Real Estate files is legal, financial, and planning material from the renting, purchase, and renovation of property. Also present are architectural and design plans, city notices, and correspondence with construction and legal firms. There is a small amount of correspondence and other documents unrelated to real estate interspersed in these files.

The sketches, drawings, and paintings that comprise the Artwork represent a range of styles and appear to be mostly by Fab 5 Freddy, they date from 1980 to the 1990s. A number of works from 1984 to 1987 are signed and dated. Some of these pieces also have dedications. Recurring themes include disco balls and fruit bowls, and are reminiscent of the work shown at the Fun Gallery in the early 1980s. These pieces are mostly pen and pencil drawings, and paintings in gouache and watercolor. The files contain some works by other artists including a drawing by Francesco Clemente, two portraits of Fab 5 Freddy by B. Guillo, and a small plaster model of a torso.

The Family and Friends files contain administrative and legal documents relating to Fab 5 Freddy's private life, family members, and friends. There is a small amount of incoming correspondence, and some photographs. The Jean-Michel Basquiat file contains the order of speakers from Basquiat's memorial service, and the contract of sale of a portrait by him of Fab 5 Freddy. The Subseries also includes candid photographs of family, a polaroid of Freddy on a film set under the Brooklyn Bridge, some slides, and photographs of unidentified individuals. There are a set of travel photographs that do not appear to include Fab 5 Freddy.

The Letters, Postcards, and Greeting Cards are all incoming. They include documents from Fashion Moda's benefit exhibition art sale at the Ronald Feldman Gallery, 1985. There is a set of personal letters from the early 1980s that do not appear to be written from or to Fab 5 Freddy.

The Notes are a group of loose, unstructured notes and memos with names and phone numbers, lists, appointments, ideas, and casual jottings. There are fragments of prose writing, and ideas and concepts for films and music videos. They were created and collected over a span of decades, reflecting Fab 5 Freddy's day-to-day life, activities, and myriad interactions. The notes are frequently on small scraps of paper composed of receipts, wrappers, menus, envelopes, and other similar items. There are notes in handwriting other than Fab 5 Freddy's. The files are interspersed with letters, invitations, and other ephemera, including the invitation to P. Diddy's birthday party in Morocco, 2002 (the accompanying CD is not present). Approximate dates have been assigned for this material, and it has been arranged chronologically.

The Press files contain clippings with newspaper and magazine mentions of Fab 5 Freddy from the 1980s.

Examples of Fab 5 Freddy's creative writing pieces are grouped in the Writings Subseries by subject or type of composition.

Administrative and Financial

- b. 32 f. 1-5 1984-2002
- Real Estate
- b. 32 f. 6-8 1990-2007
- b. 33 f. 1-3 1998-2004
- b. 33 f. 4-8 Artwork 1980-1990s
- b. 101 f. 2-7
- b. 114

Family and Friends

- b. 33 f. 9 1996-2000s
- b. 33 f. 10 Astor, Patti 2003
- Contains a letter from Astor to Freddy and her book proposal for *Fun Gallery... The True Story*.

Series IV: Personal and Creative Files (cont.)
Family and Friends (cont.)

- b. 34 f. 1 Basquiat, Jean-Michel 1988, 2007
- b. 34 f. 2 Haring, Keith 1990-1992
- Photographs
- b. 34 f. 3 1980-1990s
- er. 4 2004
(76 computer files 24.1 megabytes)
- er. 5 2005
(130 computer files 118.1 megabytes)
- Letters
- b. 34 f. 4-12 1980-1994
- b. 35 f. 1-4 1994-2010
- Postcards and Greeting Cards
- b. 35 f. 5-9 1980s-2000s
- b. 36 f. 1-2 1990-2000s
- Notes
- b. 36 f. 3-8 1984-1990s
- b. 36 f. 9-10 1990s-2000s
- b. 37 f. 1-4
- b. 37 f. 5-10 2001-2004
- b. 38 f. 1-2 Press 1980s
- Writings
- b. 38 f. 3-4 1990-2003
- b. 38 f. 5 Black Strip Clubs 2001
- b. 38 f. 6 Lyrics 1980s
- b. 38 f. 7 Shabba Ranks Introduction 1990
- b. 38 f. 8 "Urban Voyage" 1984

Series V: Screenplays, Treatments, and Manuscripts 1989-2008 (26 boxes 10.67 linear feet)

The Screenplays, Treatments, and Manuscripts are divided into two groups: Subseries V.A., written, co-written, or conceived of by Fab 5 Freddy; and Subseries VI.B., those written by others. The majority of this material falls into the second category, mostly consisting of screenplays for motion pictures. A small proportion of the screenplays in this series are for projects that were ultimately completed.

The Fab 5 Freddy Projects files contain multiple drafts of a script for a production that he was developing called "Change the Beat." These drafts show the evolution of the project's concept over a number of years. This Subseries also includes the contract, a royalty statement, typescripts, proofs, and final published copies of Fab 5 Freddy's dictionary of terms *Fresh Fly Favor: Words & Phrases of the Hip-Hop Generation*. Some of the scripts include notes and edits, and are interleaved with a small amount of correspondence with co-collaborators.

The Works by Others Subseries holds screenplays, treatments, and scripts, and also a small number of typescripts of published and unpublished book projects. These include a manuscript for the book *YES YES Y'ALL: The Experience Music Project Oral History of Hip-Hop: The First Decade* by Nelson George. The bulk of the material is from the 1990s.

Subseries V. A. Fab 5 Freddy Projects

The material is arranged by the title of the project.

- b. 38 f. 9-10 "Change the Beat" 2005-2006
- b. 39 f. 1-6 By Fred Brathwaite, Katia Lund, and David Allan Blanks.
- b. 40 f. 1-2

Series V: Screenplays, Treatments, and Manuscripts (cont.)

Subseries V. A. Fab 5 Freddy Projects (cont.)

- b. 40 f. 3-6 *Fresh Fly Flavor: Words & Phrases of the Hip-Hop Generation* 1992
- b. 41 f. 1-7 "One Must Die" 1993-1995
- b. 42 f. 1-6 Story by Fred Brathwaite, Screenplay by Tanya Hamilton.
- b. 42 f. 7 "The Rio Real" 2000
 Story by Fred Brathwaite.
- b. 42 f. 8-9 "Step this Way" 2005
 By Danielle Gardner and co-produced by Fab 5 Freddy.
- b. 43 f. 1 Various Scripts and Proposals 1995-1998

Subseries V. B. Works by Others 1989-2008

These files are arranged by author.

- b. 43 f. 2-6 Aggarat to Az
- b. 44 f. 1-7 Bake to Beck
- b. 45 f. 1-6 Blackwell to Bond
- b. 46 f. 1-5 Caruso to Coker
- b. 47 f. 1-6 Coker to Cooper
- b. 48 f. 1-6 Cooper to Doherty
- b. 49 f. 1-6 Doughrity to Fishman
- b. 103 f. 2 *Fricke, Jim and Ahearn, Charlie Yes Yes Y'all: The Experience Music
 Project Oral History Of Hip-Hop's First Decade*
- b. 50 f. 1-7 Frye to Gardner
- b. 51 f. 1-6 Gardner to Greene
- b. 52 f. 1-7 Hamilton to Jones
- b. 53 f. 1-7 Jones to Lanier
- b. 54 f. 1-7 Lanier to Lee
- b. 55 f. 1-7 Lumet to Moore
- b. 56 f. 1-5 Moore to Parker
- b. 57 f. 1-8 Parker to Prince
- b. 58 f. 1-8 Prince to Schatzing
- b. 59 f. 1-6 Schnabel to Starr
- b. 60 f. 1-6 Stewart to Zaillian
- b. 61 f. 1-4
- b. 61 f. 5-6 Unidentified Authors
- b. 62 f. 1-8 Screenplay fragments.

Series VI: Fliers, Invitations, and Passes 1980-2014 (4 boxes 1.67 linear feet)

The fliers, invitations, and handbills in this Series advertise club nights, art exhibitions, concerts, album launches, and other happenings, mostly in New York City from 1980 to the 2010s. The early fliers, from the 1980s, publicize hip-hop, breakdancing and graffiti events at various venues both uptown and downtown, such as The Mudd Club, Club 57, and The Kitchen. Several of these line-ups feature Fab 5 Freddy alongside various DJs, MCs, break dance crews, and graffiti artists.

Of note are fliers for a "Hip Hip Hip Hop" event, featuring Fab 5 Freddy at the Mudd club (1980); a detailed flier for "Graffiti Rock," an event at The Kitchen which Freddy co-organized in 1981, featuring the Rock Steady Crew, artists Dondi, Duro, and Lee Quiñones, and photographs by Henry Chalfant and Martha Cooper; the "International Rap Night" event at Club 57, 1981; and a flier for an exhibition opening of works by Frederick Brathwaite at The Fun Gallery, 1981. A sheet of rap lyrics and photographs found with these fliers have been kept together in box 63, folder 1.

There are several fliers for various notable New York weekly party nights, such as for a Funkmaster Flex party at the Palladium (circa 1992-1997); for "Cafe Con Leche" Sundays at Club Expo (circa 1993-1999); and "Club Life" (1990s).

The backstage and all-areas Passes are from film and music festivals, and concerts. They are laminated and have lanyards attached. The material is arranged chronologically.

- b. 63 f. 1-5 1980-1995
- b. 63 f. 6-9 1985-1991
- b. 63 f. 10-12 1992-1995
- b. 64 f. 1-7 1996-1999
- b. 64 f. 8 2000-2014
- b. 65 f. 1-9
- b. 65 f. 10-11 Fab 5 Freddy 1983-2011
 Events Fab 5 Freddy coordinated, or participated in. Includes a small format poster for *Wild Style*.
- b. 102 f. 5-7 Passes 1990-2005

Series VII: Research Files 1985-2012 (2 boxes 0.67 linear feet)

These articles and clippings comprise research materials for articles written by Fab 5 Freddy, illuminating several of his enduring interests, such as the development of rap culture in Brazil; the dancehall scene; and the history of hip-hop. They have been arranged by subject matter.

- b. 66 f. 1-2 Brazil 1994-2001
- b. 66 f. 3-6 Clippings 1985-2012
- b. 66 f. 7 Dancehall 1992
- b. 103 f. 3 Files include photographs and fliers for dance hall parties.
- b. 66 f. 8 France 1990s
- b. 66 f. 9 Hip Hop 2000s

Series VIII: Printed Material 1953-2010 (36 boxes, 1 oversize folder 14.34 linear feet 1 computer file 36.66 megabytes)

This bulk of this Series is composed of magazine issues, alongside Art and Art Exhibition Catalogs, Ephemera, and Newspapers. The bulk of the material is from the late 1980s to the early 2000s.

The Art Catalogs include an exhibition catalog signed by Jean-Michel Basquiat and dedicated to Fab 5 Freddy. It is for Basquiat's 1984 show "Paintings 1981-1984" at the Fruitmarket Gallery.

Booklets, calendars, and other memorabilia make up the Ephemera. The Booklets include several treatises on subjects related to Black history and culture, and includes a self-printed booklet of poetry by Jack Walls dedicated to Fab 5 Freddy.

The magazines are issues of commercial publications. Many have cover stories or special coverage of rap and hip-hop artists, music and culture; Black personalities, artists, and business people; or contain a mention of Fab 5 Freddy. There are a large number of issues of *Source* magazine, *The Fader*, *XXL*, *Interview*, and *Vanity Fair*. The magazines have been arranged by title, and then chronologically within each title.

There are two themed groups of newspapers; Jamaica and dancehall related publications; and issues of the *New York Times* and the *Daily Post* from the period of the 2008 Obama election. The chronological files include clippings, photocopies and full issues of papers.

Art and Art Exhibition Catalogs

- b. 67 f. 1 Basquiat, Jean-Michel -- Paintings 1981-1984 1984
- b. 67 f. 2 Bertoglio, Edo -- "Dated" 1994
Dedicated by Bertoglio to Fab 5 Freddy.
- b. 67 f. 3 Haring, Keith -- "Bronzes" 1990
- b. 67 f. 4 LaChapelle, David -- "Exhibition" 1999
- b. 67 f. 5 Picasso -- Retrospective 1980
- b. 67 f. 6 Scharf, Kenny 1983
- b. 67 f. 7 The Wild Style Exhibit (151 Wooster "Wild Style" Wall) 2007

Ephemera

- b. 67 f. 8-9 Booklets 1965, 1985-1990s
- b. 67 f. 10 Calendars 1993, 1994
- b. 67 f. 11 Catalogs 1990-2000s
- b. 106 f. 1er. 6 (1 computer file 36.66 megabytes)
- b. 67 f. 12 Comic Books 1970, 1980-1981, 1989
- b. 67 f. 13 Memorabilia 1953, 1956
Issue of *Jet*, and *Photo* magazine.
- o. 1 Poster -- Digital Underground "Return of the Crazy One" 1993
- b. 68 f. 1 Tourist Pamphlets 1990s

Magazines 1980-2010 [bulk 1995-2005]

- b. 68 f. 2-6 *Absolute to Arise*
- b. 69 f. 1-6 *Art to Black Enterprise*
- b. 70 f. 1-6 *Black Issues to Details*
- b. 104 f. 1
- b. 71 f. 1-4 *Details to Elle*
- b. 72 f. 1-4 *Essence to The Fader*
- b. 73 f. 1-5 *The Fader to F.E.D.S.*
- b. 74 f. 1-5 *F.E.D.S. to Giant*

Series VIII: Printed Material (cont.)

Magazines (cont.)

- b. 75 f. 1-7 *Gran Turismo to The Inside Collector*
 b. 104 f. 2
- b. 76 f. 1-2 *Interview*
 b. 104 f. 3-6
- b. 76 f. 3-5 *Jammyn to Manifest*
- b. 77 f. 1-5 *Mass Appeal to New York*
- b. 78 f. 1-5 *New York Times Magazine*
 b. 79 f. 1
- b. 79 f. 2-6 *New Yorker to Paper*
- b. 80 f. 1-5 *Photo to Right On*
- b. 81 f. 1-5 *Rocktober to Soul Underground*
- b. 82 f. 1-5 *The Source*
 b. 83 f. 1-5
 b. 84 f. 1-5
- b. 85 f. 1-6 *Stress to Swiss Magazine*
- b. 86 f. 1-6 *Talk to Twilight*
- b. 87 f. 1-5 *Unleashed to Uptown*
- b. 88 f. 1-2 *Uptown to V Man*
- b. 88 f. 3-5 *Vanity Fair*
 b. 89 f. 1-5
 b. 90 f. 1-2
- b. 90 f. 3 *The Vapors to Vegas*
- b. 90 f. 4-6 *Vibe*
 b. 91 f. 1-7
 b. 92 f. 1-6
 b. 93 f. 1-5
- b. 94 f. 1-6 *Vice to Wired*
- b. 95 f. 1 *Wyn*
- b. 95 f. 2-6 *XXL*
 b. 96 f. 1-6
 b. 97 f. 1-6
 b. 98 f. 1
- b. 98 f. 2 *Zoetrope*

Newspapers

- b. 105 f. 1-3 1981-2000s
- b. 106 f. 2-3 Jamaican and Dancehall 1996-2001
- b. 107 f. 1-3 President Obama Election 2008

Series IX: Apparel 1980-2013 (23 boxes 10.13 linear feet)

Fab 5 Freddy crafted a visual persona by wearing signature apparel throughout his career. He frequently appeared in a pair of sunglasses and a hat, including while hosting *Yo! MTV Raps*. The clothing and jewelry in this Series document his image and is composed of t-shirts, jewelry, sweatpants, sweaters, sunglasses, and sneakers. Most of the items, except for the sneakers and some of the t-shirts exhibit signs of wear.

The jewelry includes beaded necklaces, pendants with African iconography, and bangles. Some of these pieces are referenced in the 1991 *New Yorker* profile of Fab 5 Freddy.

The t-shirts date from the 1980s to the 2010s. They include one *Yo! MTV Raps* branded shirt from approximately 1989, and two other MTV shirts from the same year. The collection includes rap and hip-hop artist shirts such as De La Soul, 2 Live Crew, and the Wu-Tang Clan; New York-based fashion labels such as Rocawear, and Acapulco Gold; and other streetwear creators such as PNB Nation, and Soul II Soul. There is a *She's Gotta Have It* movie t-shirt, signed and dedicated by Spike Lee. The t-shirts have been arranged alphabetically by the text printed on the t-shirt, or its graphic subject.

There are four pairs of unworn limited edition Reebok Afili'Art Collection Jean-Michel Basquiat sneakers in their original boxes. Each pair has a different design.

There are two pairs of Rocawear black and red sweat pants, and two Ecko brand knit sweaters.

There is a small assortment of artifacts that include a Playboy necklace souvenir, packaged shoelaces, a Sean "P. Diddy" Combs "Choose or Lose Vote or Die" Pin (2004), and a clothing patch [1980s].

- b. 108-109 Jewelry
- b. 110-113 Sneakers 2009-2013
 - b. 114 Sunglasses 1990s
 - b. 115 Sweaters 2000s
 - b. 116 Sweatpants 2000s
 - T-shirts 1985-2000s
 - b. 117 105 FM
 - b. 117 2 Live Crew -- *Banned in the USA* 1990
 - b. 117 Africa Bambaata -- Soul Sonic Force Reproduction
 - b. 117 *American Gangster* 2007
 - b. 118 Big City Hustlas -- Crooked Ink
 - b. 118 Bloodline Records -- Who We Be 2000s
 - b. 118 Branson the Legend -- Vega Benetton Presents
 - b. 119 *Bulletproof Love -- Compilation Album* 2001
 - b. 119 Cobham -- Another Fat Concept Brought to You by GFS 2000s
 - b. 119 *Crucial Conflict -- The Final Tic* 1996
 - b. 120 D12 2001
 - b. 120 *De La Soul -- Questions from 3 Feet High and Rising* 1989
 - b. 121 Fab 5 Freddy
 - b. 120 F.E.D.S
 - b. 122 George F. Grant -- Inventor of the Golf Tee (Two identical shirts.)
 - b. 122 Joker Brand LA
 - MTV 1989-1990
 - b. 123 Spring Break '89
 - b. 123 *Yo! MTV Raps*

Series IX: Apparel (cont.)

T-shirts (cont.)

MTV (cont.)

- b. 123 You and Me and MTV
- b. 124 Max Roach
- b. 124 Nubian -- All African
- b. 125 PNB Nation -- I [crown] New York
- b. 125 Phat Farm -- All City 5 Boroughs
- b. 125-126 Photograph Prints
Three t-shirts custom printed with photographs. They are a polaroid photograph of Fab 5 Freddy and Andy Warhol; a group shot of Fab 5 Freddy, Ice-T, Russell Simmons and others; and an unidentified photograph.
- b. 126 Rafting on the Martha Brae
- b. 126 Riddim Driven Heritage
- b. 127 Rio, Brazil 1980s
- b. 127 Rocawear -- Flavor Unit 2000
- b. 127 SW High 149
- b. 128 *She's Gotta Have It*
Signed by Spike Lee.
- b. 128 Soul II Soul (Two shirts.)
- b. 129 *Wildstyle Movie Quote -- Acapulco Gold* 2006
- b. 129 Wu-Tang Clan -- American Cream Team 2000
- b. 129 YZ -- "Return of the Holy One" 1992
- b. 99 f. 1-3 Assorted Artifacts 1985-2000s