

~~Vidiot's box~~

While not quite as stuffed with cool extras as the now out-of-print 2003 DVD release from Plexifilm, MVD Visual's repackaging of *Style Wars* deserves a prime spot on the shelf of any graffiti fan who failed to snag the previous version. The 1983 documentary by Tony Silver and Henry Chalfant was a genuine groundbreaker, not only in the insightful, thorough and affectionate fashion in which it investigated its subject—the early New York graffiti and, tangentially, b-boy subcultures that constituted two of the four pillars of the then-nascent hip hop nation—but in that it bypassed countless rungs on the ladder of cultural visibility and went straight to broadcast on PBS, about as respectable a spot as could be found. Fast-forward to the early double-Os, and jump to the West Coast, and you've got Danny Lee's well-constructed graf doc *Rock Fresh*, also out from MVD. Lee gets in close with five Californian kids as they strive to transform their teenage transgressions into a stable, satisfactory fiscal/artistic balance. Its character studies, and spotlighting of the same legal and social obstacles dogging the kids in *Style Wars*, are poignant and informative. —[Rupert Bottenberg](#)

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