

## CEY ADAMS

*“Cey has been around since the beginning.” —Russell Simmons*

**Cey Adams is a pioneer in the world of hip-hop graphic design. As the legendary Creative Director of Def Jam Recordings, he created album artwork, logos, as well as advertising campaigns for the likes of Jay-Z, Run DMC, Beastie Boys, Notorious B.I.G., Maroon 5, and many others.**

Cey launched his career as a graffiti artist in the streets of New York in the late ‘70s and early ‘80s. Around this time, he began a long-time professional relationship with Russell Simmons, cofounder of Def Jam Records. Later, he began designing marketing material for the Beastie Boys, and due to their friendship, Cey was dubbed the ‘Unofficial 4th Beastie Boy.’ He designed logos and products for The Chapelle Show, NYC’s Hot 97 radio station, Nike, Coca-Cola, and more.

In 2016, The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington commissioned Cey to create a large-scale mural entitled *One Nation, during Freedom Sounds: A Community Celebration*. He designed the spectacular *Def Jam Recordings: The First 25 Years of the Last Great Record Label* and co-authored *DEFinition: The Art and Design of Hip-Hop* – the first comprehensive anthology written in the name of the genre. Bill Adler, formerly of the Boston Herald, says, “Cey’s career is a microcosm of the history of hip hop.” Cey recently co-authored a book that features recreated iconic hip-hop photos by graffiti artists called, *The Mash Up*.

Cey’s vision pushes the boundaries of art and design as it intertwines with Hip-Hop culture and society at large. His artistic practice focuses on themes including pop culture, race and gender relations, and cultural and community issues. He exhibits, lectures, and teaches art workshops at many established institutions including the MoMA, Pratt Institute, and universities nationwide. Cey lives in Brooklyn, New York where he is always creating mind-altering masterpieces.