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Street Play



STREET PLAY

MARTHA COOPER

INTRODUCTION BY CARLOS (MARE 139) RODRIGUEZ



Synopsis

Martha Cooper's photos take us through the Alphabet City of the late 70s as the area was about to undergo extensive urban renewal a process that is still continuing today. At the time, the neighborhood had more than its share of drug dealers and petty criminals, and the landscape seemed ugly and forbidding. But to the children who grew up there, the abandoned buildings and rubble-strewn lots made perfect playgrounds, providing raw materials and open space for unsupervised play. A crumbling tenement housed a secret clubhouse, rooftops became private aviaries, and a pile of trash might be a source for treasure.

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Customer Reviews

I love this book so much, it brought back many memories, I lived through those times and believe it or not, it was fun; I grew up in the South Bronx. When you're a kid you don't pay attention too much to a lot of the negative things around you like the poverty, junk yards, burnt buildings and cars, garbage and danger, you just learn, survive, and live to see another day. As a kid you accept what you have and make the best of it; the main focus is on having fun and being free. Getting and staying outside was the main goal so we could spend time with our friends running around the neighborhood on crazy adventures till we heard our mothers calling us from the kitchen windows. This book, through the art of photography, lets everyone into an unfortunate era for innercity kids lives in New York City but at the same time some of their most memorable and fun times. I could still remember the fire hydrant in the summer times where we used cans as a pressurized spinkler

systems and the junk yard club houses made from everything we could find, one house we made had red leather car seats. Then there was the jumping off of abandoned mac truck's onto a stack of mattresses and the climbing of fences; we used everything we could find and made it useful and fun, it was all in the imagination. I remmber going treasure hunting in the surrounding junk yard for used toys and any precious metals, once I found a bag of old coins from different countires. I wouldn't trade those days for nothing, could things have been better? Ofcourse. But thats the way it was, at the time we had no choice but to make the best of it and we did; we adapted to our environment. It's part of what made many of us who we are today.

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