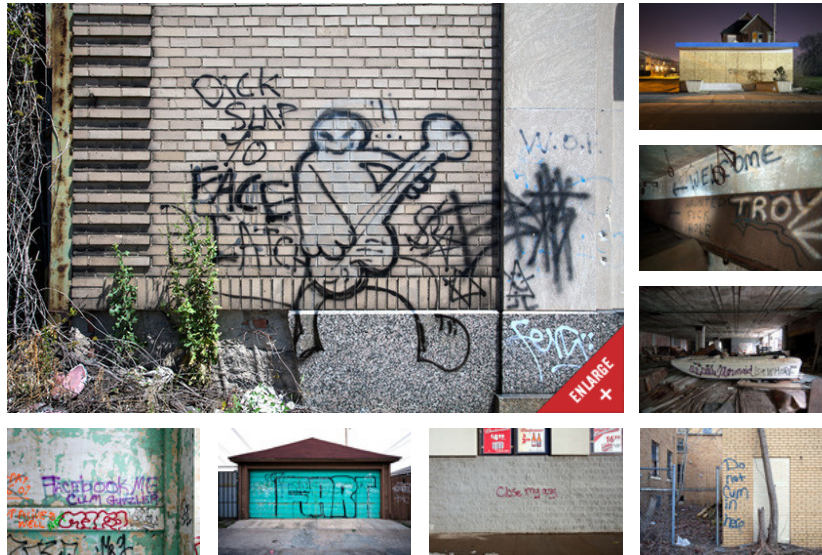


SCOTT HOCKING PHOTOGRAPHS DETROIT'S WORST GRAFFITI

By Pat O'Malley

[Share](#) 183
 [Like](#) 835
 [Tweet](#) 117
 [+1](#)
[tumblr.](#) +
 [0 points on reddit](#)



[View full slideshow >>](#)

Scott Hocking is a photographer and artist from Detroit, and from the looks of his website, he is pretty prolific at documenting the forgotten and decaying in a poignant and poetic manner. That's why when I was scrolling through his work, I found it odd to find that amidst the conceptual sculptures and photographs, there was a collection of images of a different kind of art—the kind with a lot more dicks and boobs and swears. Scott's series, "Bad Graffiti" documents just that, though "bad" is a subjective term. He knows and has traversed every corner of the city of Detroit, usually with a camera, and has snapped hundreds of shots of funny, odd, and crude spray paint scrawlings he found. His new book, also titled **Bad Graffiti**, recently came out on Black Dog Publishing, and the collection of images as a whole paints a picture of the true essence of graffiti—not some master craftsman creating a massive mural, but a dude with a spray can who just wants his voice to be heard by writing his thoughts on a wall. Even if that message is "I Like Boobs."

We caught up with Scott to talk about his love for dirty words written large in public.

VICE: How did this project start for you?

Scott Hocking: I do all kinds of different stuff as an artist and for a while the bad graffiti thing was just a side interest, but then around 2010 I got really excited about it and wanted to document the shit out of it before certain things I liked disappeared. Sometimes you have ideas and you like them, but you don't think of them as projects somehow and then it dawns on you that this could be something in itself.

How did that change for you? Did anything happen that made you feel that way?

One day I was working with a friend. I was telling her, I think it dawned on me that I should compile these photographs of bad graffiti. I got excited about it, I told her about it, she seemed excited about it and that exact day is when I found the one that says "close my ass." That's why it's the first image in the book, because it really was one of those light bulb moments. I really felt like I had this idea and then I found this unbelievably, enigmatic, awesome piece of graffiti. I still don't know if it's a person who was like, "Man, my ass needs to be closed," or I think they might've been talking about the building, like they want the store to close.



Have you noticed many bad graffiti patterns or artists?

I had these really ambiguous rules I set up for myself, so I was very finicky. Like most things I do, I get very particular about it. So, there were all these things I would decide whether or not they'd qualify and one of the rules I made, was if something appeared more than once and it became clear that it was basically somebody's tag and they were doing it over and over again throughout the city then it disqualified it for me. For me it had to be closer to one offs, or things that were really standing on their own. I tried to stick to things that seemed more like drunken moments or an error that happened or something like that.

Over the course of the project, did you ever want to include cities other than Detroit?

I definitely still take photos of things I like in other cities. But I decided I had to have some parameter, otherwise it just gets too damn big. Even just deciding to stay in the city proper boundaries I still had the next level of questions. The majority of the photos are outdoors. I wanted to keep it like that, not too many indoors. What if I decide to take photos of bathroom graffiti? Holy crap, that's a whole other level, so I stayed away from that.

The book is out now, but you're still working on the project?

Yeah, I think that's kind of the same with every project. It's hard to end a project when you keep finding awesome photos. So, the book is out and the idea according to the publisher was they print 4,000 copies and if it sells out, then they decide if they want to do a second printing or not. I would think that if things go well, then maybe there is a chance that I'd maybe do a second edition someday and perhaps include newer photos or ones that were rejected from the first one... *Even More Bad Graffiti Part Deux*.

See all of Scott's work [here](#).

More photography:

[Atlanta's Drag Queens Don't Have Time for Your Drama](#)

[Sam Wong Takes Photos When the Party's Over](#)

[Frosted Dic Cakes](#)

By Pat O'Malley | Sep 17 2013

Tags: [photography](#), [Scott Hocking](#), [Detroit](#), [Bad Graffiti](#), [close my ass](#)

[f](#) Share 183 [f](#) Like 835 [t](#) Tweet 117 [g+](#) [tumblr.](#) + [r](#) 0 points on reddit

COMMENTS

20 comments ▾

[Add a comment](#)



Nick Marcelo Marasciulo · Floral Park Memorial High School

dick slap your face biatch is dope

Reply · 4 · Like · September 18 at 5:07pm



Alex Kushington

lmao this is dope and funny

Reply · Like · September 18 at 6:32pm



Francisco Lemus · Recording Engineer/Mastering Engineer at Audio engineering

They probably had to take a long walk to the store when someone said it was real close. Like as in "close, my ass!"

Reply · 2 · Like · September 19 at 1:51pm



Jody Kristina

I like "fart" the most.

Reply · Like · September 19 at 2:53pm



Francisco Lemus · Recording Engineer/Mastering Engineer at Audio engineering

Jody Kristina theres actually a guy in cali that write "fart barf"

Reply · Like · September 19 at 3:32pm



Nathan Hester

I should probably be ashamed by how much I enjoyed this.

Reply · 2 · Like · September 18 at 8:56pm



Clay Proctor

I wonder what Ricky did?

Reply · 2 · Like · September 17 at 6:08pm



Ted Shumaker · Brooklyn, New York

Looks like Stephen Tanner strikes again.

Reply · 1 · Like · September 17 at 9:37pm



Diligent Mars · York University

i know where some of these pics are lol

Reply · 1 · Like · September 17 at 1:40pm



Lisa Hill · Top Commenter

I can't help but think that the "Troy" graffiti is related to a Cliff Notes Theatre 'commercial' radio broadcast put on by Drew & Mike, formerly of WRIF and who were HUGE in Michigan, not to mention a massive asset to Detroit. It was a skit mocking the greatness of Troy Aikman with his own cologne and very breathlessly, the audience was asked, "You're tackled by a pile of hot sweaty men, you pretend to be hurt, but when they get off of you, you're lonely," followed by an orgasmic moan of "Trooooooooooooooy..."

Reply · Like · September 22 at 6:16am



Stephen Tomlin · Piece of shit Assembler at Phillips Plastic

Well I'm a human fly

It's spelt F-L-Y

I say buzz ,buzz, buzz, and it's just because..

I'm a human fly and I don't know why

I got ninety six tears in my ninety six eyes.

I got a garbage brain, it's drivin' me insane
And I don't like your ride, so push that pesticide
And baby I won't care, 'cause baby I don't scare
'Cause I'm a reborn maggot using germ warfare. Rockin'
Zzzzz...

Reply · Like · September 19 at 8:59am



Kelly Guillory · Top Commenter · Wayne State University

Once I worked in New Center (Detroit neighborhood), there was an old house next to an office building... had "ORAL RODEO" spraypainted on it with huge white letters. Every time we had to drive in some top brass administration into the building, we were forced to drive by the graffiti. It was kind of funny.

Reply · Like · September 18 at 5:42pm



John Ralphio · Top Commenter · The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

"regular niggas do regular shit" is putting a nice poetic touch on some really good social commentary...new SAMO anyone?

Reply · Like · September 18 at 5:19pm



Paul James · Top Commenter

"Stoves and Frigerators" was my fave. A brilliant series. When's the show? I want to steal a print or three.

Reply · Like · September 18 at 5:56pm



Johnny Truant · Top Commenter · Works at Being happy

yeah i think you mean, Detroit's best graffiti.... it's for sure a step or two above kid rock and eminem

Reply · Like · September 18 at 6:21pm



Paul James · Top Commenter

"Stoves and Frigerators" was my fave. When's the show? I want to steal a print or three.

Reply · Like · September 18 at 5:56pm

 [Reply](#) · [Like](#) · September 18 at 5:56pm



Christopher Tedeschi · Ramapo High School

First art i ever drew was on my middle school right in the front and wrote "this school sucks my grandma"

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · September 17 at 9:00pm



Dan Curran ·  Top Commenter · Los Angeles, California

"Fck You" on the bathroom wall, always a classic

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · September 18 at 5:19pm



Matt Sakaguchi · American River

What became of larry and his cat fucking?


[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · September 18 at 5:25pm



Pansy Esquire ·  Top Commenter

Magnificent.

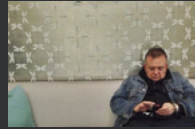
[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · September 17 at 2:55pm

 Facebook social plugin

MORE FROM VICE



Terminal Insecurity



**Photos of Sad Guys
Being Forced to Shop**



**Epicly Later'd: Sean
Malto - Part 1**



**The 'Star Wars Holiday
Special' Was the Worst
Thing Ever on Television**