

# City of Newburgh

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## Press Release

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*For immediate release*  
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### **DOWNING PARK PLANNING COMMITTEE, INC. HOSTS PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT AT THE DOWNING PARK VISITOR CENTER**

The Downing Park Planning Committee, Inc. is pleased to announce a very special photography exhibit by Benjamin Lambert, entitled American Graffiti. Benjamin is a New Yorker currently residing in Newburgh. He is an amateur photographer and a member of the Park West Camera Club (PWCC) in New York City. Benjamin has always been intrigued by graffiti and about three years ago began to photograph graffiti in various places in New York City.

Graffiti by definition is writing or drawing scribbled, scratched or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place. Some people believe that graffiti represents man's desire to communicate. Graffiti became a prominent force in urban settings in the late 20th century. It conjures up many different images in people's minds and often raises the question is it art, is it vandalism, or is it a cause of urban decay. Although graffiti is an ancient form of communication, the phenomenon of writing graffiti actually took hold in a big way when a seventeen-year-old Greek boy named Demetrius, who lived on 183rd Street in Washington Heights in New York City, wrote "Taki 183" (short for Demetaki) all over the City and especially on subway cars. In 1971, a New York Times reporter found and interviewed Taki 183 and wrote an article entitled "Taki 183 spawns pen pals". Within a year of the publication of the Times article, hundreds of young people began expressing themselves by writing graffiti on subway cars and buildings all over the City.

The genre of graffiti on display emerged in the late 1960's/ early 1970's in New York City and belongs to the phenomenon known as hip-hop graffiti, which is a highly formulated way of leaving one's imprint on the urban landscape. The photographs on display were on exhibit in the window of the Ritz Camera Shop on Broadway in Manhattan in 2008.

The exhibit will run from March 3rd to April 7<sup>th</sup> at the City of Newburgh Visitor Center, 123 Carpenter Avenue Newburgh, NY 12550. Winter hours for the Visitor Center are Monday to Friday 10 am to 4pm. For further information please call 845.565.5559.