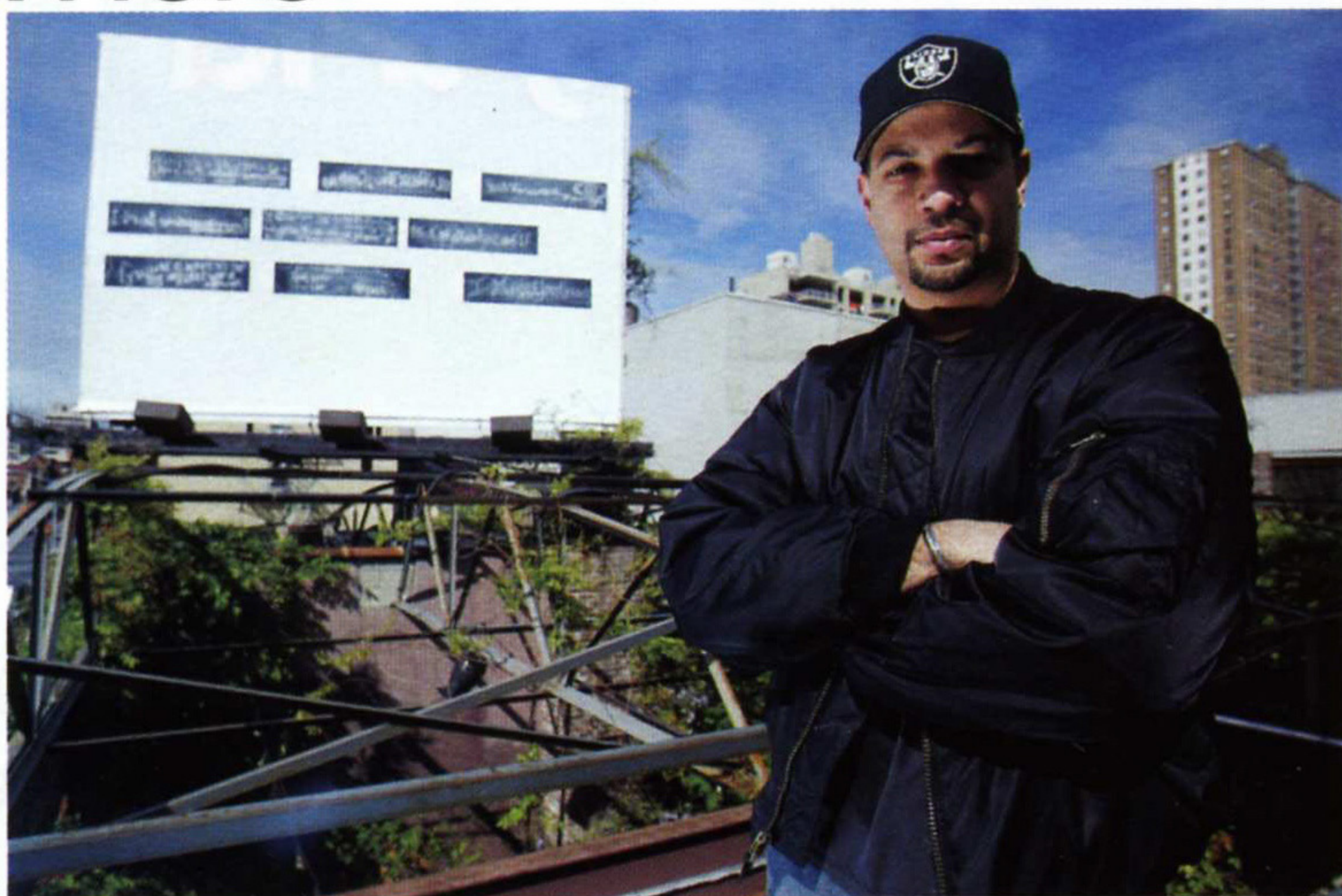


OutThere



A child's view of Chelsea

More Art lets kids meet their friendly neighborhood artists

Spend a Saturday afternoon strolling the westernmost streets of Chelsea and you can feel the energy of its thriving art scene. But Micaela Martegani, an art historian, curator and Chelsea resident who has witnessed the neighborhood's evolution, felt there was something vital missing: community involvement. So last year, as part of her More Art initiative, Martegani launched "Art Creates Communities: Project in Chelsea," which brings well-known artists to the Clinton School for Writers and Artists, a local public middle school. "Here are kids just two blocks from the galleries, and they have never been taken on a field trip there," says Martegani.

The artists guide the classes through each phase of the creative process, from theory and planning to execution and installation. Last session, legendary educator and artist Tim Rollins had his class create hauntingly beautiful watercolor versions of Oberon's magical flower after watching a 1960s film of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Gary Simmons, who shows with Metro Pictures, worked with each student to make written self-portraits on painted chalkboards. The boards were then arranged to form a sentence, photographed and turned into a temporary billboard over Park Restaurant on Tenth Avenue at 18th Street. This year's artists include Slater Bradley whose multimedia work is shown worldwide; and project advisor Rollins, who plans to have the kids paint on the music score "Ode to Joy," from Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. "What impresses me most about More Art," he says, "is the enthusiasm of the girls, a wonderful fearlessness in their expressions." Oh, joy! PAMELA KELLY