

BEAU

MAGAZINE

NIGO'S **MINI-MARKET** OF THE FUTURE •
THROUGH **YVON LAMBERT'S** EYES •
PZTODAY AND THE POWER OF **DREAMS**
• **ERIN BROCKOVICH** VS BIG TECH
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PORTFOLIO BY **MERYL MEISLER**
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4 YEARS ON, **ANNIVERSARY** ISSUE

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BEAUTY OF THE ERA - BEAUTY OF THE ERA - BEAUTY OF THE ERA

THROUGH MERYL MEISLER'S EYES



SELF-PORTRAIT OUTSIDE
UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE
New York, NY, June 1979

*After my photography
job ended, I claimed
unemployment benefits.
Seeking stability, purpose,
and a steady income, I
decided to become a teacher*

Long before the 1980s became a nostalgic fantasy, they were a decade of reinvention. A time when images, bodies and lifestyles became expressions of a new freedom. For BEAU Magazine, photographer Meryl Meisler opens her archives, revealing her view of an America caught between New York's electric nightlife and a society undergoing profound change. From New York's dance floors to the classrooms where she taught, she captured the faces, gestures and places where a new era was taking shape



EXHIBITIONS
ROUND TOWN

87

20TH NEW YORK CITY MARATHON

Sponsored by
Manufacturers Hanover • Mercedes-Benz
John Hancock • ASICS • Perrier
The Budin Family • Sunnys World

Over 50,000 runners took part in the world's longest race on the Avenue in New York City.
It's the 20th running in the 100-year-old race.

Conducted by The New York Road Runners Club
with the cooperation of the City of New York
Schwartz • Kohn • Meyer • The City of New York
Mayor's Office • Mayor's Office • Mayor's Office • Mayor's Office

SUNDAY NOV. 5, 1989

Use on ARC Sports 10-30 run, E&T

No more school

New York State United Teachers

STAPLING PHOTOGRAPHS
ON THE CEILING, IS 291,
Bushwick, Brooklyn,
NY 1989

*I taught photography using
mixed media. Students made
darkroom prints and stapled
their test prints onto the ceiling
of our classroom*



PAINTING SNEAKERS
IN ART CLASS, IS 291,
Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY,
December 1983

*Young people are often
style-conscious. In my art
class this boy made use of
the time and materials to
touch up his sneakers*



BUNNIES
CLASSROOM KISS, IS 291,
Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY,
June 1984

*During a home-room party, these
two started flirting. I snapped
a photo and said, "Break it
up - this isn't appropriate
classroom behaviour!"*

Multiplication Chart

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132
12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144

Math Can Be Lots of Fun



PLAY FIGHTING IN FRONT OF
MULTIPLICATION CHART,
IS 291,
Bushwick, Brooklyn,
NY, January 1985

*There's real fighting and there's
play fighting. These kids were
clearly just play fighting in the
hallway, but I still told them,
"Knock it off"*



BOY WEARING
A GLOBE HAT, IS 291
Bushwick, Brooklyn,
December 1985

*Adolescents can be so funny.
It was impossible not to smile when
one of my students transformed
a broken globe into a hat*

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR
GITELLE KAPLAN RESTING
HER LEG, IS 291,
Bushwick, NY April 1990

*Being a student monitor is a
privilege. This monitor helped
my friend and colleague, Ms
Kaplan, cope with her broken leg*

“Today,

Bushwick is a hot, trendy Brooklyn neighbourhood, but when I arrived in December 1981 to interview for a job at Roland Hayes Intermediate School 291 (IS 291), it was burnt out – scarred by poverty, arson, and neglect. Walking past demolished buildings on my way to the school, I wondered why a full-time teaching position with benefits was available just before Christmas. I half-joked to myself that the previous art teacher must have been killed. I needed a job and accepted the position.

Working at IS 291 often felt like a chaotic comedy of errors. Classroom management was not my strength, and more experienced colleagues helped me learn how to maintain order. The students taught me even more. They were an unforgiving audience who saw through pretence, knew when you were genuine, and challenged me every day. I cried often during those first years and seriously considered quitting. Being an artist was my greatest asset, and a sense of humour helped keep me going.

My students had tremendous style, resilience and pride. They introduced me to new fashions, music and popular culture, keeping me connected to their world. As an art teacher, I benefited from unusual autonomy, developing curriculum with Artists Teachers Concerned, a consortium focused on social justice and contemporary issues affecting students. Eventually, I taught photography through a dropout prevention programme. Students documented their lives and explored Bushwick’s history, creating and exhibiting work collaboratively as Meryl Meisler and the Drop-Ins. Their artwork went beyond the bulletin board to venues including the Whitney Museum and the New Museum.

Over fourteen years of teaching in Bushwick, the job was never easy, but I grew more confident and came to value its challenges. My students knew I wasn’t a quitter. They knew I believed they mattered and deserved the chance to pursue their own American dream. Students and teachers help each other along life’s road, and that remains true today.” ●



YVETTE ON
GRADUATION DAY,
Bushwick, Brooklyn,
NY, June 1983

*Graduation is always emotional.
Yvette O'Dell beamed with pride
in front of the bodega across
from our school*