

GRAFFITI DAZE



Story Bible, TV series, ten 1 hour episodes
(renewable), © 2018.

SUMMARY

Graffiti Daze is the Odyssean drama of young, struggling artist JP Duvalier who arrives in early 80's Manhattan to try and make it in the high end New York art world. Ambition, drugs, sex, graffiti and hip hop history surround JP's meteoric ascent and tragic fall. Complex themes of multicultural and gender identity are explored through an evocative character-driven drama and the frenetic energy of the incredible NY cultural scene.

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Graffiti Daze

(TV Drama, ten 1 hour episodes, renewable)

Welcome to the early 80's New York art world! Big hair is in, the Yuppies have arrived, and being an artist is a competitive sport which requires business savvy, genius and sometimes causes drug addiction or insanity. Dealers strive to make it in galleries and in Manhattan's mean streets and guess who's just jumped off the Brooklyn train in an explosive palette of color?



JP Duvalier

Struggling young artist, Brooklyn dreamer, graffiti tagger, hip hop lover and, sometime homeless Washington square druggie. *Graffiti Daze* traces the meteoric rise and fall of JP Duvalier who is about to be thrust to the top of the New York art world. But don't think JP can't handle velocity. This boy is meant for the 'up elevator'. Even though he is a high-school drop-out, JP can rap in four, languages, depending how you count them. His father, Bernhard, is Haitian and has raised his children speaking French and Creole. His mother Mathilde is a Puerto Rican Mamacita, so JP *habla Español* and understands *por favor*. This black boy is also born and bred in the tough streets of Brooklyn, US of A - shout out to Flatbush!

Through JP's eyes, we will see into the dark soul of the 80's New York art world and its complex downtown denizens: buyers, dealers, sinners and saints, artists and dreamers, groupies and lovers, and close family members surrounding the art world's newest darling, JP Duvalier.



In a Hip-Hop inflected rhyme, JP speaks his mind. Complex rap on race, why he paints labyrinthine coded graffiti on New York trains and jive-inflected canvases of sunlight and shade. *Graffiti Daze*'s themes range from New York ambition and what is important in life to Haitian Voodoo and the longstanding effects of Jean's father Bernhard's abusive and philandering ways. New York Yuppie Wall Street cocaine culture and interracial romance in the East Village will be plentiful. All set against the musical backdrop of the new emerging aural forms - Hip Hop and New Wave.

Graffiti Daze also throws Jean's developing style emerging out of New York's graffiti movement against his frenetically meteoric rise and fall. New York is home base. JP's studio is his crib and the downtown Danceteria Club is where JP's personal entanglements get *mucho calientes*. As Jean keeps his eyes on the prize, he also continues to indulge his aesthetic passions in the greatest art museum city in the world. Each episode of *Graffiti Daze* thematically explores an art historical masterpiece and painter through JP's incredible remixes. *Graffiti Daze*'s pilot 'Night Birds' uses Picasso's *Demoiselles D'Avignon*, Leonardo's *Notebooks* with JP's incredible remixes woven into the story. In this New York art world crucible, JP will transform into the radiant child destroyed, renewed, loving, painting and producing an art empire inspired by genius. By the end of the first season, JP will confronts a new challenge - what it means to be the most important living artist in the world, all before 27 years old.



Main Character List

JP Duvalier (early 20's) – Visionary Neo-Expressionist graffiti artist, dreamer, lover, drug addict, hip hop poet, African American philosopher and art world darling. JP is the soul of this series and the genius of the hour - complex, mercurial, likeable, but also a tangled yarn of mercurial contradictions. Young women see a troubled genius living with reckless abandon and their ideal lover. Dealers see his multi-racial heritage, disarming charm and graffiti tagger ID. His friends wonder, especially when it comes to the sources for his mercurial creativity. What JP wants is external fame and acceptance. What he needs is internal understanding of himself and others.



Girlfriends and Mothers

Miata Milou (early 20's). Miata is an aspiring NY dancer and JP'S first serious girlfriend, a troubled, complex young woman. The pair meet as lost runaways in the East Village with her escaping from an abusive father and Duvalier straight out of Brooklyn with similar secrets. Miata is Duvalier's olive-skinned 'Venus' de Milou. Behind her stunning beauty are also fragments and secrets of abuse, difficult questions of race and identity and her half Palestinian/half British-Canadian origins. Their bond is as sensitive, masked individuals tormented by questions and needing to figure things out.

Mathilde Duvalier (late 30's) – A voluptuous dark-skinned Puerto Rican princess and JP's mother whose passion for art takes little Jean around New York's finest art museums. Mathilde's egg-shell mind does not hold things together well and she has been institutionalized early. There is something we would like to protect in Mathilde and many close artistic similarities between mother and son including painting. JP treads the line of genius adeptly while Mathilde has crossed over a psychological border of sanity.



Amina Carravaglia (mid 30's) – One of the first gallery owners to take JP seriously giving him a studio and a place to live. Carravaglia is a young single mother, an 80's feminist, recent Ph.D. and not-quite-established gallery dealer who takes a chance on JP. Born in Rome to a family of scholars, she has an eye for JP's multilingual references and decides to invent him for the art world. She does not trumpet her pedigree and is emotionally driven to enable genius. She is interested in the expression of ideas, culture and politics, struggling not to judge Jean's drug abuse, but also becoming a voice of dissent as his demons overreach.



Cherry Red (late 20's) – Visionary female musical artists, like Cherry Red, are attracted to JP. Cherry crosses musical lines of race through her mix of Rap and New Wave, finding affinities with Jean. She is an exotic China-Latina and purchases Jean's first painting. JP appears in an early Cherry video "Rapunzel" as a turn-table DJ. They are kindred spirits, prescient in recognizing the beginnings of rap, capitalizing on image and very much realizing that they both have the possibility to be unique bridges across cultures.



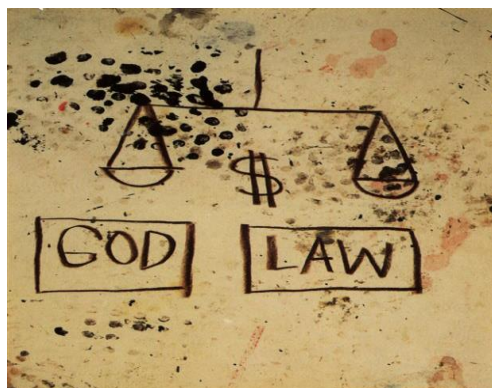
Ave Maria (early 20's). JP also dates Ave Maria before he and she are famous. Milou and Ave will be immortalized in one of JP's paintings, 'Cat Skirmish', and this girl fight kicks off a later episode. Later, Ave lives briefly with Jean in LA as he continues his downward spiral. When she asks he stop doing heroin and get clean, Duvalier demands she return his paintings which he paints over black. Ave Maria feels Jean's pain but is blind to the extent of his disintegration.

Gallery Owners and Hustlers



Karl Schoenberg (late 40's) – A European gallery owner and the white global European elite. 80's greed is key to Schoenberg's motivations. JP will travel to Italy and be used by the 'in-crowd' and European old money set. Schoenberg is interested primarily in selling as many paintings as Duvalier can crank out and as much money as he can make. Psychologically, Schoenberg has obsessive-compulsive qualities and is a hoarder possessing a large family, warehouses in Zurich, and libraries of books. He is driven to provide for his family with deals for his artists.

Lou Gazzarian (early 40's) – JP's West Coast LA connection. Gazzarian is a California boy, born in Los Angeles and working for Hollywood before becoming an art dealer. Larry knows how to make stars and is not known for subtlety. He is interested in lavish houses and is a powerbroker with a great eye. He understands artists' needs for creation and solitude. To decompress from New York, JP winds up in LA and Gazzarian offers his studio on Venice beach. This does little for Jean's art but sends his drug use into the stratosphere. Gazzarian also has more pragmatic motivations and these involve appropriating Duvalier's 'brand' - exploiting 'JP' as a highly saleable Hollywood commodity.



Graffiti Artists, Home Boys and Haitian Fathers



Stellar Sawyer Six (mid 20's) – The voice of the Hip Hop scene, and an early friend of JP, Sawyer Six is one of the originators of Hip Hop and graffiti art and, through him, we witness the birth of the genre. Sawyer Six will act as Greek chorus. He is around JP from the beginning and is trusted when reality is needed. Stellar Six is a street-smart bridge for JP understanding similarities among graffiti, the high art world, and the potential for money. He paints soup cans on subway cars with JP and is also an early example of *Gangsta* culture and thug life. He has no problem with drugs, but is a voice of dissent when Jean's problems takes him to heroin.

Bernhard Duvalier (early 50's) – Jean's Haitian accountant father. Duvalier has provided JP with a brownstone in Brooklyn, discipline for him to become something, and beatings so severe that Jean's schoolmates cringe at his black and blue marks. Duvalier is an accountant with a taste for exotic women, tennis and predilections of the Haitian bourgeoisie. Bernhard is a huge influence on Jean's art from his paintings of boxers, Hank Aaron and jazz to Jean's drive. Despite their falling out, Duvalier is proud when Jean makes it. Jean needs to show his father he has made something of himself.



Daniel Diego, Double D (early 20's) – An early tagging artist and Puerto Rican NY homeboy with whom JP starts inscribing messages in lower Manhattan's walls, subways and trains. Double D also acts as a ghetto commentator as Duvalier's star rises. Double D is smart, cocky, a drug user, like Duvalier but also poet of the masses. Diego's working-class background prevents him from taking a step forward when Duvalier rises. Diego cannot emotionally cross the bridge to the white, male elite art world and Jean and D's friendship disintegrates. Double D bears witness as Jean continues his path towards fame and self-destruction.



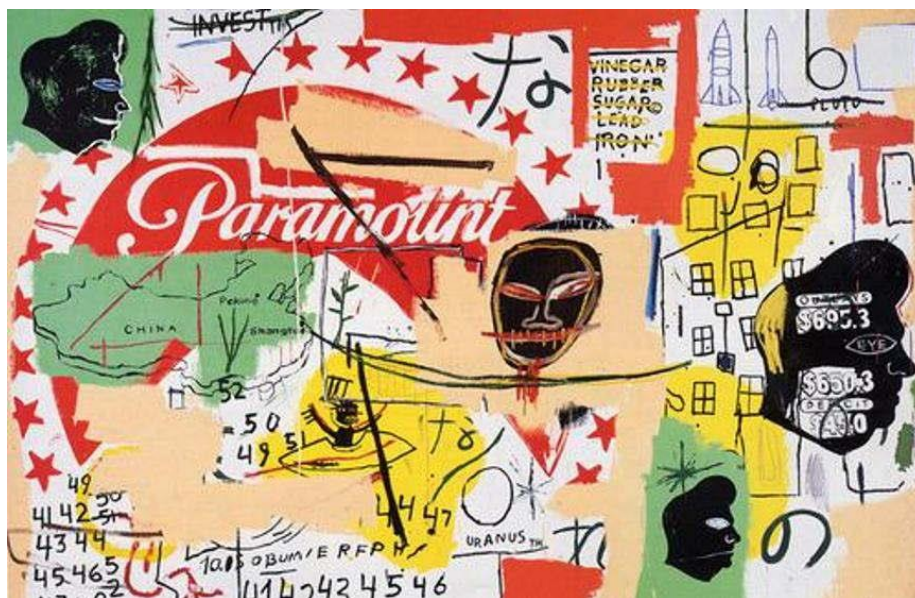
Abel J. Kane (early 30's) - Abel is another artist on the scene, more of a savvy political player than possessed by artistic genius. He is the Salieri to Duvalier's Mozart. While Duvalier possesses a natural creativity, Kane is a second tier political mover with a huge ego. As Duvalier's star rises, so too Abel's envy. As much as JP is an outsider, Abel is an insider with connections and predilections.



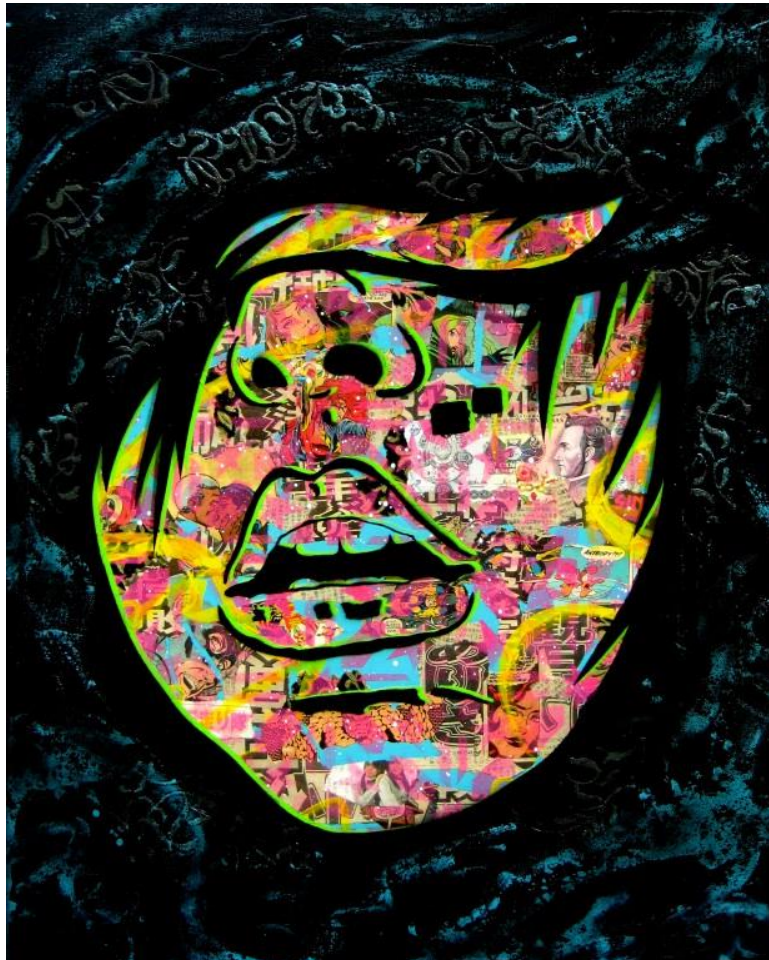
Sergeant Forrester (early 30's) - Sergeant Forrester is the quintessential early 80's cop, a combination of the Village People's handlebar mustache policeman and cop from Rumblefish. He is an archetypal mercurial figure and through the series will police graffiti vandals, the crack cocaine epidemic and AIDS marches - a symbol of police brutality but also saving victims and picking up the pieces when JP's drug taking goes too far. Like the Village People's cop, there is a theatricality but also mercurial transgender component that will be explored.



Drella Carpathian (mid 50's) – Over the show's trajectory, the enigmatic Carpathian becomes one of Duvalier's best friends as JP's star rises. Gay, hyper-intelligent, a closeted Catholic and combination of Vampire and Cinderella, Carpathian is a genius like JP. Questions arise from their later collaboration together: Who is using who? Carpathian's character goes through a large evolution in his relationship to JP: from a model for JP, to a wary skeptic of Jean's artistic ability to a trusted mentor confidant to an alienated friend.



Episodes Graffiti Daze (Season One)



The Pilot Episode Night Birds begins with JP Duvalier, a young struggling visual artist, kicked out of home and walking East Village galleries. It is 1981, Reagan has just become President, and the cute troubled girl who wins a dance contest with will become the great, tragic love of his life. At the moment, though, Miata has a boyfriend and JP has few prospects. The ensemble cast is introduced through conflict and magic possibility: art dealers, hustlers, voodoo practitioners, hip hop taggers and family. The episode ends with toddlers saved, gunfights averted and a romantic night at the Met where sparks ignite and doors for a career and romance slightly open.

Episode 2: Brooklyn Voodoo Refugees. Gallery owners will still not give JP the time of day but romance blossoms. Milou and JP dream in New York's museums. JP is half Puerto Rican/half Haitian and Milou half Palestinian/half British-Canadian - mirrors. "Strangely, your past and mine have similarities", Milou mentions. Ancestral history flashback (1960 Haiti): JP's father, Duvalier, flees the dictatorship of Papa Doc Duvalier to New York City and meets JP's mother, a Puerto Rican beauty, Mathilde. Interracial Romance - NYC 1960. Miata Milou's mother, a British civil servant finds herself in post-war Palestine, romanced by an exotic dark-skinned refugee.



Episode 3: A Boy's Education: *Gray's Anatomy*. With little success with the galleries, JP manages to sell a couple of painted cards to his hero, Drella Carpathian, who pays to get rid of him. Struggling, but happy Milou and Duvalier start to learn from the masters at Manhattan's great museums. They also get kicked out of gallery openings trying to meet Twombly, Kline and Dubuffet. Milou: "For a kid from the ghetto, you sure know a helluva lot about art". Violent tendencies of Duvalier appear in fights with Miata and Amina paralleled with his mother's further emotional and mental breakdown in Bellevue's mental hospital.

Episode 4: White Like Me. Jean paints prolifically but still with no larger success. He paints his own version of the Mona Lisa and pours over Leonardo's notebooks. He pursues graffiti with Double D, Hip Hop ventures with Stellar Sawyer Six, but also takes advantage of Miata big time. Both JP and Milou have crazy artistic creative tendencies that cross over into mood swings and illicit drugs. As they struggle to regain control, they begin to explore their family histories. Flashback: JP and his two sisters witness complications of his parents; marriage and Miata bears witness as a child to her parents' abusive relationship.



Episode 5: Happiness is an Apartment in New York. Duvalier's initial artist deal with Amina Carravagio and Danceteria meeting with Milou are revisited from other angles. "Is this *Deja vu*?" The backroom dealings of the young gallery owner are shown as Amina's underlying motivations are revealed. Miata couldn't be happier as JP's show is a hit, but several larger orchestrated plans are revealed including background women. Has JP been cheating on Miata? At Duvalier's opening, jealousy raises its head during a hot Tango.



Episode 6: Danceteria Girl fight. JP continues to taste success at Danceteria watching as his exotic half Palestinian girlfriend and another rising star, Ave Maria, fight over him. Later that evening, Milou and JP make their way back to their East Village loft passing a derelict house and new type of drug, crack cocaine. Flashbacks: Miata talks about the violent tendencies of her Palestinian father and mother's British problems with cultural differences. JP remembers similarities with the violent sensibilities of his father Bernhard and Mathilde's subsequent mental institutionalization.

Episode 7: The Radiant Child. Jean-Paul's art star continues to rise but drug use is now destroying the pair. Gallery owners, who previously would not give JP the time of day, compete over him. A European gallery tour is arranged by Schoenberg. The artist Drella Carpathian also wants a piece of JP's current rising star status and violence breaks out with Miata in Europe. She returns early. Double D is almost beaten to death by police while tagging. Miata and Duvalier are both affected.



Episode 8: The Enigma of Carpathian. Drella Carpathian now corrals JP, arrogantly pushing out Milou and previous friends. A series of new profound collaborations appear. Carpathian is a combination of Cinderella and Dracula and is called Drella by JP's friends. He is sucking Duvalier's artistic blood, but also is a Cinderella-like fairy Godmother. Strangely too, both JP and Carpathian are losing friends in the art community to a new disease, AIDS. Unexpectedly, Carpathian dies and JP plunges steeply downwards in a drug-induced spiral.



Episode 9: City of Angels. Duvalier travels to LA to decompress in Venice Beach and Lou Gazzarian's studio. His drug use escalates. Prices for his work rise through the stratosphere. Ave Maria confronts his drug abuse. Jean forces himself back to New York to enter rehab but relapses to a higher level of abuse. Stellar Six sees him on the street but distances himself. JP paints "Riding with Death". Will he cross the overdose border? Riding by Duvalier's studio, Miata Milou watches as a sheet is pulled tight over a body by paramedics near Duvalier's loft.



Episode 10: West Coast Resurrection. Miata rushes over to the covered sheet to find out who it is. It is not JP! He has been rushed to the hospital in critical condition in a coma. JP's father and Mathilde arrive at the hospital, Mathilde placing his first sketchbook beside him. Miata arrives: "Jean if you get through this we're both going into rehab". Cliffhanger for Season II: Will JP's eyes blink open? Will he live, get clean and seize opportunities of the emerging Hip Hop scene or will his demons and out of control lifestyle destroy this now emergent rising star.

