

# Midnight visions

Jana Marcus captures New York's rebels

## Artbeat



Julia Chiapella

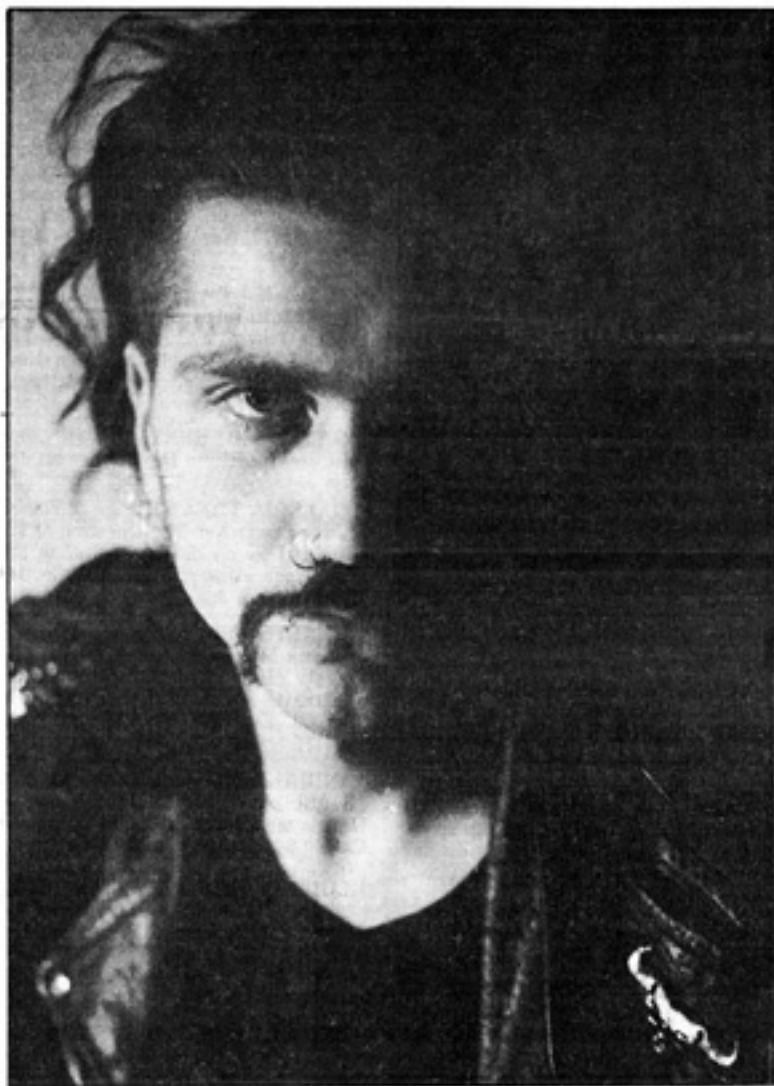
**J**ANA MARCUS' PHOTOS of New York's subculture in the '80s may not look too different from what many of us in Santa Cruz are accustomed to seeing in our very own downtown.

The difference is that these photographs, "Midnight in Manhattan," which won a UC Berkeley international photojournalism contest for Marcus, capture the recklessness and anarchy of the subculture as it blasted its way through New York from 1981 through 1992.

It's not an unusual story: the ills that plague society become the foundation for anarchy and rebellion. It's just that, in the 1980s, things like the HIV virus, diminishing natural resources and the elitist beauty of Reaganomics provided a backdrop that left some youth with little recourse and lots of anger.

All these elements are captured flawlessly in Marcus' photos. She became familiar with many of the nightclubs in the East Village and took her camera along with her, capturing the always reckless, sometimes lurid details that pulsed through New York's Punk Rock scene.

Places like the Pyramid Club, the Roxy, the Limelight and the Peppermint Lounge are all represented in these 35 works on display at Casa Nova Cafe through Dec. 31. They are full of leather and chains,



A photo from 'Jana Marcus' 'Midnight in Manhattan.'

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spiked hair and pierced lips and nostrils.

They are also full of life.

Despite the insouciant grit and hopelessness inherent in these works there is also a decidedly brilliant flare of spirit. In every nightclub, in all the faces, Marcus

finds the will to survive at their core, whether it be out of spite or a kind of Bacchanalian delight.

Emblematic of this subtext is the photo "Bleeding Slam-Dancer" taken at the A7 Club. With rivulets of

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## At local museums

**ART MUSEUM OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY** — In the Solari Gallery is "Stars III: A Celebration of the Creative Spirit," an exhibit that features over 60 community artists. It runs through Dec. 9. In the Octagon Gallery running through Jan. 15 is the exhibit "Teatro y Vida," a display of Mexican masks, dance and village theater.

The Solari Gallery is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Thursdays until 8 p.m. Admission is \$2.50 general and \$2 students and seniors. 705 Front St.,

Santa Cruz. 429-1964. The Octagon Gallery is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and admission is \$1. 118 Cooper St., Santa Cruz. 425-7278.

**HISTORY MUSEUM OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY** — The people of Santa Cruz County and their history are the subject of an ongoing exhibit, "Santa Cruz County: a People ... A Place ... A Vision." Museum hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. 705 Front St., Santa Cruz. 425-7278. 705 Front St., Santa Cruz. 425-7278.

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blood streaming down a man's face and out his ears, his profile smiles benignly into the darkness.

Men in drag, women in platform, thigh-high boots and fishnet stockings, bartenders in dread locks and Panama hats all provide a cast of characters that is both desperate and playful. Marcus appears to carry out this contrast in several of her photographs including "Fear," taken at the Peppermint Lounge, and "Magenta," taken at the World.

In "Fear" a melee of slam dancing has broken out on the dance floor. Men take on the aspects of stampeding bulls, some faces torn into grimaces while others silently look on.

In "Magenta" a young black woman, though it could be a guy in drag, is lighted so one half of her face is dark, the other light. Even her eyes appear to contrast each other as the hint of her smile betrays a serene kind of madness.

Right at home in Santa Cruz, Marcus' black and white photos are a simple chronicle of a well-known subculture. Reception for the artist and benefit for the Santa Cruz AIDS Project will take place from 7-9 p.m. Saturday at Casanova Cafe, 927 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz.