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## Breakdancing pioneer, Frosty Freeze, passes away

By **DEMETRIA IRWIN**

*Amsterdam News Staff*

Wayne "Frosty Freeze" Frost, a member of the legendary Rock Steady Crew, passed away on April 3 of an undisclosed illness at the age of 44. Frost is credited with helping to bring breakdancing to the mainstream with appear-

ances in popular movies such as "Style Wars," "Wild Style," "Beat Street" and even "Flashdance." Known for his encyclopedic knowledge of hip hop culture, Frost also invented a daredevil dance move called the "suicide," which requires a b-boy/girl to flip in the air and land on his or her back.

The Rock Steady Crew came out of the Bronx in the late 1970s as a brash, energetic, athletic dance crew that bat-

tled other b-boys and b-girls for bragging rights. The group is still active today, doing outreach and donating time and money to various organizations. Newer, young members of the group still perform. Dancers on popular television shows such as "So You Think You Can Dance" and "America's Best Dance Crew" often pay homage to the Rock Steady Crew.

Fab 5 Freddy, a hip hop pio-

neer himself and longtime friend of Frosty Freeze, shared with The Amsterdam News the details of Frosty Freeze's last performance.

"Freeze was a legend, a friend of mine and a true hip hop pioneer. The last time I saw Frosty was this past summer at the Wild Style 25th anniversary celebration in Central Park. Everybody could see that Frosty was extremely gaunt and obviously not well, but he

wanted to perform in spite of his condition. I went to the mic and introduced Rock Steady Crew and gave Frosty a specially big intro and he came on the stage, and did his classic move where he jumps up and falls flat on his back from a height of at least four feet. I was simultaneously shocked, happy, sad and proud of Frosty, his last time doing what he loved in front of people who loved him. That was the realest moment in hip hop I've ever seen," said the original host of "Yo! MTV Raps."

Frost, who passed away at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, is survived by a brother and two sisters.