

NEW YORK



ASK A SHOP CLERK: STEPHEN POWERS

Interview by Alexis Swerdloff

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Do you sell anything other than signs?

Yes. Keith Haring's Pop Shop was at the front of my mind when I opened this place, so I sell ephemera, art, calendars, and raincoats.

Raincoats?

Yeah. Marc Ecko gave me 150 yellow raincoats, which I made vinyl graphics for: pigeons, 8-balls, maple leaves. The only people confident enough to wear them are rock stars: I think David Byrne and Bob

Pollard of Guided by Voices have them. If you're trying to blend in, this is not the look.

Many people in the art world know you as "ESPO." Do you ever miss doing graffiti?

Do you miss being an awkward teenager? Doing graffiti was like being in high school for fifteen years—I was ready to learn a new trade. When I went to Coney Island and saw how beautiful the signs were, and that they were being replaced by crummy vinyl ones, I offered my services.