

Hip-Hop Theater Festival

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HIP-HOP THEATER FESTIVAL: TEN YEARS OF CULTURE IN ACTION **-Three Weeks Of Entertaining Theater, Dance, and Art For Everyone -**

New York, NY (July 2010) – Hip-Hop Theater Festival (HHTF) will be kicking off its tenth year of invigorating culture in action from **September 29th – October 16th**, presenting live, professionally executed theater written by and about the Hip-Hop generation. HHTF will present works in the festival “hub” at the **Westbeth Arts Complex** in the **West Village** as well as off-site performances in **Central Harlem, East Harlem** and **Downtown Manhattan** venues.

In addition to fully produced main stage works, Hip-Hop Theater Festival will curate a host of youth performances, staged readings, open rehearsals, excerpted theater works, master classes, panel discussions and workshops. Dedicated to igniting dialogue and social change throughout the performing arts, HHTF serves young, urban communities through outreach and education that celebrates contemporary culture.

The Hip-Hop Theater Festival **honors its 10th Anniversary** with its first art commission, Carlos Mare139 Rodriguez, and collaborations with some of New York’s leading arts venues including Dance Theater Workshop and Harlem Stage. HHTF hopes to elevate Hip-Hop theatre into a widely recognizable genre by empowering artists to develop new works, and build coalitions with artists and institutions around the world. While remaining firmly rooted in the discipline of theater and performing arts, HHTF will create a lasting, positive impact on urban and underprivileged communities through the powerful contemporary voice of Hip-Hop culture.

“At this, our 10th anniversary, the Hip-Hop Theater Festival has come to represent much more than the words ‘theater’ and ‘festival’ can connote,” says **Clyde Valentin**, producer and executive director of the Hip-Hop Theater Festival, “we are very excited for this years festival and celebrating a decade of culture in action.”

Hip-Hop Theater Festival kicks off with **Swift Solos** on **September 29th**, an evening-length performance by contemporary dance company **olive Dance Theater** in collaboration with legendary hip-hop dance pioneer, **Ken Swift**. Notably, the work has already received support from the **National Endowment for the Art’s American Masterpieces program**, in recognition of Ken Swift’s status as an American Master in his unique form of dance. HHTF is partnering with one of New York City’s premiere dance venues, Dance Theater Workshop, to premiere this work.

The Hip-Hop Theater Festival will also present the New York Premiere of **Don’t Hit Mama’s Dance Party, October 14th through 16th** at the Harlem Stage Gatehouse. The Amsterdam-based dance company, led by choreographer **Nita Liem**, has developed a unique community engagement technique that incorporates local dancers to create a site-specific work in a given community. HHTF is honored to co-present this work with Harlem Stage, as part of the series *Uptown Nights at Harlem Stage*.

Another anticipated event is **SEED** written by **Radha Blank**, a **Public Theater Emerging Playwright Fellow**. **SEED** explores themes of abandonment, poverty, class differences, distrust and byproducts of the crack epidemic that swept through Harlem in the 1980’s and 90’s. It tells the story in a vibrant and exciting style, using rhythms and verse that are an integral part of Hip-Hop culture. HHTF first presented Radha Blank’s work as part of the 2003 NYC Festival. It will be showing **October 8th through 10th** at Cherry Pit, and is yet another unique collaboration with the award winning Theater Company, Classical Theater of Harlem.

As part of their first art commission, Hip Hop Theater Festival presents **Freestyle Archityper 2**, a site-specific work installed at the Red Bull Space by New York native **Carlos Mare139 Rodriguez**. The innovative new exhibit features sculptures made of stainless steel installed throughout the Red Bull Space. On Tuesday, **October 5th**, HHTF will present the opening of the finished installation at Red Bull.

For more information regarding the Hip-Hop Theater Festival, please visit - www.hhtf.org

About Hip-Hop Theater Festival:

Beginning in the summer of 2000, the annual Hip-Hop Theater Festival brings together the Hip-Hop generation and those interested in learning more about it in a celebration of the Hip-Hop culture. The non-profit festival has presented over 100 world-renown artists in festivals reaching major metropolitan audiences in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. Since its inception, The Hip-Hop Theater Festival has grown into one of the most influential outlets showcasing Hip-Hop performing arts in the country and has become an important contributor to the cultural life of participating Festival cities. This influence has been extended through live, professionally executed theater performances written by and about the Hip-Hop generation. Often using the elements of Hip-Hop culture (including MCing, DJing, Hip-Hop dance, graffiti and Spoken Word), Hip-Hop Theater tells urgent stories seldom represented on stage, and through language that embraces Hip-Hop’s multi-literate and poly-lingual vitality. Always imbued with an undercurrent of activism, Hip-Hop Theater ignites dialogue and social change through exciting, provocative and celebratory performance. For more information, go to www.hiphoptheaterfest.com.

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Upcoming Dates, Venues and Slated Performers:

DATE	TITLE	LOCATION NAME Address	CREDITS
Oct 2 nd -3 rd (9:00 am)	<i>Urban World Preemptive Education Teacher Training</i>	NYU - Steinhardt School of Education 82 Washington Sq. East	
September 29 th - October 2 nd (7:30 pm)	<i>Swift Solos Performance</i>	Dance Theater Workshop 219 West 19th St.	Performed by olive Dance Theater featuring Ken Swift
October 5 th	<i>Opening of Mare139's Freestyle Archityper 2</i>	Red Bull Space 40 Thompson St.	
October 6 th -7 th (7:00 pm)	<i>Young, Gifted & Hyped</i>	Cherry Pit 155 Bank St.	Youth Performances
October 8 th - 10 th (7:00 pm)	<i>SEED</i>	Cherry Pit 155 Bank St.	Written by Radha Blank Directed Niegel Smiith
October 14 th (10:30 am)	<i>Nita Liem DANCE PARTY</i>	Harlem Stage The Gatehouse 150 Convent Ave. at W. 135th St.	School Performance
October 14 th - 16 th (7:30 pm)	<i>Don't Hit Mama DANCE PARTY</i>	Harlem Stage The Gatehouse 150 Convent Ave. at W. 135th St.	Choreographed by Nita Liem
October 16 th	<i>UPTOWN NIGHTS: Don't Hit Mama/HHTF Closing Night Party</i>	Harlem Stage The Gatehouse 150 Convent Ave. at W. 135th St.	

To learn more about The Hip-Hop Theatre Festival, to speak to a representative or any of the HHTF artists involved, please contact Sarah Cirkiel (scirkiel@pitchcontrolpr.com) or Ashton Stronks (astronks@pitchcontrolpr.com), Pitch Control Public Relations, 212.475.4919.

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