

Trinity International Hip Hop Festival Back For a 3rd Time

Written by Robert ID4202

Monday, 03 March 2008 02:25 -

Artists Gather From Around the World to Make a Difference Through Hip-Hop.

Hip Hop garnered a lion's share of negative publicity in 2007 – DJ Drama was arrested for selling mixtapes, Don Imus pointed a finger at hip hop's misogyny and T.I. was arrested on gun charges – spawning a nationwide dialogue over the future of the culture. But one bright spot was the Trinity International Hip Hop Festival, now poised for its third annual event on April 4, 5 and 6, 2008, sponsored and hosted by Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. The Trinity Festival is a coming together of artists, activists, pioneers, filmmakers, DJs, graffiti writers, and fans with one thing in common – to make a difference in the world through hip hop.

The first and largest international hip hop festival in the United States, the Trinity International Hip Hop Festival blends the wisdom of old school pioneers with the passions of hip hop musicians from the far points of the globe.

Co-organizer and Trinity College student Zee Santiago said, "This is the first event of its kind that demonstrates how hip hop has become an international culture as well as an accepted academic area of study."

In past years, Trinity College has played host to hip hop luminaries such as Fab 5 Freddy, Jeff Chang (author of *Can't Stop Won't Stop*), Byron Hurt (director of *Hip Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes*) and Charlie Ahern (director of *Wildstyle*).

The 2008 festival will kick off Friday afternoon with a hip hop theatre performance led by Baba Israel and opening remarks from Trinity College President James F. Jones, Jr., and Dr. Xiangming Chen, the Dean of the Center for Urban and Global Studies. This will be followed by a keynote address from Bakari Kitwana (author of *The Hip Hop Generation* and *Why White Kids Love Hip Hop*) entitled "Can Hip Hop Make the Transition from Cultural Movement to Political Power?"

Artists scheduled to perform Friday night include Baba Israel (Australia/USA), La Bruja (Puerto Rico), Shokanti with Chachi and crew (Cape Verde), Abyssinian Creole (Seattle), Self-Suffice (Hartford), and a Senegalese "Super Crew" featuring several top Senegalese MCs backed by

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Nomadic Wax's African Underground live band. The performances will be hosted by Canadian lyricist Eternia and Blitz the Ambassador (Ghana) backed by DJ Boo (of the Juggaknots).

Saturday's activities will kick off with a panel discussion about the early years of hip hop with old school pioneers Grandmaster Caz and Tony Tone from the Cold Crush Brothers, Grand Wizard Theodore and DJ Disco Wiz. Pop Master Fabel of the legendary Rock Steady Crew will host a 2-on-2 b-boy battle Saturday afternoon with music provided by DJ Disco Wiz and a \$500 prize on the line. West coast crew and Trinity-alums Trust Your Struggle will present a Graffiti Workshop and collaborate with other invited artists to create an all new mural in the center of campus. The Beat Making Workshop will give budding producers tips on how to make hip hop beats led by Connecticut production team Kemistree and Zaquan.

Saturday night's performance schedule includes Zimbabwe Legit (Zimbabwe/USA), The Perceptionists (Mr. Lif & Akrobatik – USA), Sam the Kid (Portugal), Jewish emcee Y-Love (presented by Trinity College's Hillel House), female super-group Anomolies, spoken word collective iLL-Literacy and Rebel Diaz (Chile/Puerto Rico). Performances will again be hosted by Eternia and Blitz with DJ Boo.

On Sunday, Hip Hop educator Melissa Noel Green will present "The Art of Rhyme" Workshop. Global hip hop DJs will spin at the "Chill Out Lounge" during the course of all three days culminating with an open mic session for MCs on Sunday afternoon.

The event has elicited an enormous response and has been called "the best of the wave of springtime Hip Hop conferences" by highly esteemed journalist Jeff Chang. Trinity College has been described as "a point of renaissance for Hartford" by the Trinity Tripod and the BBC reported that the students and artists involved "truly believe they can change the world through Hip-Hop." The Trinity Tripod declared it "up to events like the [International Hip-Hop] Festival to pierce through the negative, capitalist-driven image now tagged to the Hip Hop genre." XXL magazine wrote of "an event that everyone could relate to, regardless of what country they came from or language they spoke."

Festival Sponsors include Trinity College, Nomadic Wax, The Temple of Hip Hop Kulture and World Hip Hop Market. The festival will be free and open to the public.

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Details and schedule information: <http://trinityhiphop.org>

The Trinity International Hip Hop Festival is April 4 - 6, 2008 in Hartford, Connecticut! Check out www.trinityhiphop.org for more details!