

Year of The Hip Hop Women Officially Begins March 2008

Written by Hip-Hop Association ID4197
Friday, 29 February 2008 07:30 -

NO MORE! ENOUGH OF BEING CALLED B*tches and H**s! Powerful, intelligent, self-respecting women in Hip-Hop do exist. They're on the microphone, off-camera, and behind the scenes. They hold significant positions at the top echelons of the industry's professional food chain. They are anonymous shining stars. Why don't we know about them? Because they are silently tucked away due to a lack of media exposure, male-centric programming, and adverse images that present a one-sided perspective of women in Hip-Hop.

THE WOMANHOOD LEARNING PROJECT (WLP) is a wake-up call. It is a sound out to all the B-Girls and Hip Hop Queens—women who have transformed music and culture. The WLP is a project of the Hip-Hop Association [H2A], in collaboration with Social Services of Hip-Hop, We B*Girlz, Where My Ladies at? Interactive Film, and We Got Issues! The mission is to restore and revive the Hip-Hop Woman through the Womanhood Learning Project by exploring the role of women in leadership and other sectors within Hip-Hop culture and the community. WLP will examine the negative media and power struggles that hinder the growth and awareness of women in the hip hop generation. It will focus strong attention on how these factors impact the youth, especially young girls. The WLP is intended to unify women in Hip-Hop by creating a space for them to learn, build, and bring about concrete change. This will occur through a yearlong campaign that includes a resource book, lecture series, workshops, an online community and a case study.

Hip-Hop girls and women deserve acknowledgement. And the world deserves to know about how these women have become successful by negotiating the sexist system of Hip-Hop. The H2A and its partners, through the Womanhood Learning Project, will study and promote these invisible, yet talented women, and provide tools and resource to empower educators, social workers, parents, youth and most of all, women and girls.

The H2A has convened an Advisory Committee of progressive and accomplished women in Hip-Hop and education and culture for the Womanhood Learning Project. It includes luminaries such as Dr. Roxanne Shante, Martha Cooper, DJ Beverly Bonds, Maria "Toofly" Castillo, Raquel Cepeda, Suhier Hammad, Toni Blackman, Raqiyah Mays, Michaela Angela Davis, and Dr. Irma McClaurin. H2A, the WLP Advisory Committee, and our partners—the Social Services of Hip-Hop, We B*Girlz, Where My Ladies at? Interactive Film, and We Got Issues! are all committed to making the WLP a success and celebrating the Year of the Hip-Hop Woman.

The Womanhood Learning Project's primary resource will be an encyclopedia of pioneering and trend-setting women entitled, *Fresh, Bold, and So Def: Women in Hip-Hop Changing The*

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Game, edited by Martha Diaz and Felicia Pride. The volume contains 300 profiles of international artists, industry professionals, and social activists. It is groundbreaking and informative focusing on how they have persevered and broken down barriers to make a difference in Hip-Hop culture and society at large. *Fresh, Bold, and So Def: Women In Hip-Hop Changing The Game* is written to serve as an inspiration for educating girls and women, boys and men, young and old, and everyone else on the historical legacy of women in Hip-Hop.

The Year of the Hip-Hop Woman is about change. It is not a blame, shame or game campaign. It is about appreciation and respect; it is about acknowledgment and positive depictions of women. It pays homage to women who help create Hip-Hop, but whose stories have not been told in their entirety.

Womanhood Learning Project H2A Team

Martha Diaz, President of the Hip-Hop Association

Mona Ibrahim, Director of Community Building and Program Development

Nakia Alston, H2A Communications and Development Coordinator

Beth Sachnoff, Head Researcher, H2Ed Communications and Development Coordinator

Kompalya Thunderbird, Director of Media Acquisition and Communications

Deanne Ziadie-Nemitz - Preservation Coordinator

Amanda Cumbow, Researcher

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Ebonie Smith, Researcher

Womanhood Learning Project Partners

Jineea Butler-Graham – Hip-Hop Analyst, Social Services of Hip-Hop

J-Love – Activist, Author – White Girl, We Got Issues!

Leba Haber – Director of the interactive film, Where My Ladies At?

Nika Kramer – Writer, Translator, Activist - We B*Girlz (Germany)

Womanhood Learning Project Advisory Committee

Toni Blackman – Freestyle Union and US State Dept. Ambassador

Beverly Bond – DJ, Activist - Black Girls Rock Foundation

Maria “Toofly” Castillo – Graffiti Artist, Activist –Younity

Raquel Cepeda – Filmmaker, Author, Journalist

Rosa Clemente – Cultural Critic, Activist - Know Thyself

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Martha Cooper – Pioneer Photographer, Author – We B*Girlz

Michaela Angela Davis – Fashionista, Cultural Anthropologist

Tamara Dawit – Activist - What's the 411? (Canada)

Caridad “La Bruja” De La Luz – MC, Poet, Activist – Latinas 4 Life

Dowoti Desir – Director, Malcolm x & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial & Educational Center

Delphine Diallo – Photographer, Filmmaker, Visual Artist (France)

Johanna Guevara - 7one8Designs

Suheir Hammad – Poet, Author, Activist

Indy Hunjan - Kala Phool, Rising Styles (England)

Maori Karmael Holmes – President of the Black Lily Film and Music Festival

Raqiyah Mays – Managing Editor, The Ave and Radio Host for Hot 97/98.7

Dr. Irma McClaurin – Scholar, Poet, Writer, Author

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Elisha Miranda – Filmmaker, Author, Activist, Sister Outsider/Chica Luna

Felicia Pride – Journalist, Author, The Message

Rokafella – B-Girl, Activist - Full Circle Productions

Dr. Tricia Rose – Pioneer Scholar, Author, Black Noise, Brown University

Marcella Runell Hall - Author, Activist, Educator, NYU

Dr. Theda Palmer Saxon – Life coach, Pres. of Seasoned Woman, Inc., Author, Pace U.

Raquel Sanchez - Alphabet City Design

Dr. Roxanne Shante – Pioneer MC and Psychologist

Akiba Solomon – Journalist, Author - Naked: Black Women Bare All About Their Skin, Hair, Hips, Lips, and Other Parts

Noelle Theard – Photographer, Activist

The Womanhood Learning Project (WLP) Interactive Lecture Series

The WLP Interactive Lecture Series is a yearlong talking tour that serves as a space for women

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to discuss issues affecting women in Hip-Hop. The topics include Media, Politics, Gender Roles, Entrepreneurship, Education. This is a preliminary schedule based on existing events.

Part I – W.A.R. (Women Armed and Ready)!:Defining the Reel Images of Women in Hip-Hop

March 2, 2008 - 5th Annual NYC Grassroots Media Conference www.nycgrassrootsmedia.org

This is a 90-minute candid interactive workshop focusing on the role media plays in the portrayal of women in Hip-Hop, and the issues and effects that women have to deal with as a result. From Queens to whores, the roles of women have changed dramatically over the last 30 years. From misogyny to hypersexual behavior, a whole generation of young men and women have been desensitized and programmed through negative media images. It's time to confront the media outlets, and step up as media-makers and concerned citizens to take control of our images, redefine our selves and create a new perspective of women. Martha Diaz – President of the Hip-Hop Association; Maori Karmael Holmes – Producer/Director, Scene Not Heard; Melissa Ulto – Editor, The Art of Love and Struggle; and Toni Blackman – Hip-Hop Ambassador, Artist, Writer will discuss how their work addresses these issues, how their work is creating media justice, and they will share clips of their projects. Sponsored by the Hip-Hop Association

Part II – Uplifting, Empowering and Educating By Any Means Necessary!

March 26, 2008 - Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial & Education Center (NYC)

This event includes a press conference, benefit reception, and performance showcase. Sponsored by the Social Services of Hip-Hop

Part III– Herstory: The Power of Women Community Leaders and Entrepreneurs

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March 29, 2008 – Sponsored by Urban League of Alaska (Anchorage, Alaska)

Part IV– Conscious Women Rock The Page

April 18, 2008 – HHEAL Festival (Bronx, NY)

This workshop focuses on the collaboration among four women known in socially conscious Hip-Hop circles: Jennifer “JLOVE” Calderon, author of *That White Girl*; Elisha “E-Fierce” Miranda, author of *The Sista Hood*; Sofia “Black Artemis” Quintero, author of *Picture Me Rollin’*; and Marcella Runell Hall, co-editor of *The Hip Hop Education Guidebook*. They have enlisted a diverse team of activist educators to design lessons. The lessons and activities spark discussions on issues such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation and more. Sponsored by We Got Issues!

Part V – Surviving The Entertainment Industry

May 2008 – Black Lily Film and Music Festival (Philadelphia, PA)

Part VI – Fresh, Bold, and So Def: Who Are the Media Moguls?

June 25, 2008 – H2O International Film Festival (NYC)

Part VIII – Our Stories: Documenting and Preserving Our Legacy

August 2008 – We B*Girlz Festival (Berlin, Germany)

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This event is a one-month multimedia festival sponsored by Women for Women to celebrate the 4 elements of Hip Hop and more.

Part IX - Freedom Talk Tour Commences

December 2008 - Sponsored by We Got Issues!

About Hip-Hop Association:

The Hip-Hop Association [H2A] is a 501(c)(3) media, education, and arts community building organization. Our projects are designed to encourage critical thinking, education reform, cross-cultural unity and civic engagement. The H2A empowers the community through the use of media, technology, resources, social entrepreneurship, and leadership development. We are producers of the largest annual international Hip-Hop film festival, and Hip-Hop Education forums. www.hiphopassociation.org

About Social Services of Hip Hop:

The Social Services of Hip Hop is a psychology based service agency that identifies and remedies issues that affect the growth of the Hip Hop community by presenting revenue generating and community building activities. The company serves as a technical assistance intermediary that organizes and enhances programs that interact with the Hip Hop Community. Our mission is to empower Hip Hop citizens to their maximum level of functioning by providing effective tools, resources and services. www.ss-hiphop.com

About We Got Issues!:

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We Got Issues! mission is to awaken a new brand of feminine centered leadership and social/political activism in America. Through rigorous training and development we strengthen young women's internal resources and capacity to lead, through outreach and education we facilitate the creation of networks and collaborations that leverage young women's best knowledge, skills and resources and through advocacy and recognition we promote new models of bold courageous and empowered leadership by honoring the often overlooked contributions young women make to their respective communities and to society as a whole. www.wegotissues.org

About We B*Girlz Festival:

The We B*Girlz Festival – Berlin 2008 is a multimedia festival by women for women celebrating the 4 elements of Hip-Hop and more. We B*Girlz wants to present a strong role model for adolescent girls. We want to show that women master skills in all aspects of Hip-Hop and have earned a place in Hip-Hop history. We will celebrate their creativity with a one-month festival in August 2008 in Berlin, Germany with workshops, panels, exhibitions, screenings, battles, shows and concerts. The event series will close with a big two-day festival with battles, shows and concerts on August 29 and 30. www.bgirlz.com

About Where My Ladies At?:

Where My Ladies At? is an interactive film website that encourages dialogue about "pop culture porn" through blogs, video diaries, SMS forums, and conversations with female Hip Hop pioneers. Although Where My Ladies At? targets Hip Hop, the film tackles larger societal issues and can be used to discuss issues of pop culture, sexuality and media representation with young people. The film is both a critique and celebration of Hip Hop, and women's accomplishments are showcased in a timeline of artists and pioneers. www.wheremyladiesat.com