

Hip Hop Culture Centers 'Rapathon' May 3rd

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The Hip Hop Culture Center in Harlem, a fully integrated entertainment and educational complex that uses hip hop as a tool for teaching youth topics as varied as politics, history and economics, will present its second annual Rapathon on Saturday, May 3, beginning at 9 pm. The event will be hosted by WQHT (Hot 97) New York DJ Ralph McDaniels, aka Uncle Ralph, a revered member of the hip hop world for 25 years, since becoming one of its first VJs. The Rapathon will once again feature over 100 emcees rapping non-stop with no vulgarities. But instead of 24 hours, the artists will again try for a new record, passing the mike for 25 hours.

The best Rapathon emcee will win a Ralph McDaniels-produced and -directed video, which will premier on WNYC-TV's Video Music Box, widely recognized as the "original tastemaker to the streets." The festivities will kick off with an attempt to create New York's largest electric slide demonstration outside the Center, on 124th Street between Frederick Douglass Boulevard and St. Nicholas Avenue, from at 3pm. The "slide show" will be part of a day-long block party featuring live DJs, various local exhibitors and food vendors.

Conceived as a fundraiser for the Hip Hop Culture Center in Harlem and also a charity drive to help improve the lives of Haitians living well below the United Nations poverty line, anyone can participate in the electric slide demonstration by donating one can of food. Harlem's Soul Saving Station Church will deliver the donations to Mahotiere Boys Orphanage, located in Carrefour, one of Haiti's poorest districts, just outside of downtown Port-au-Prince. To attend the Rapathon, whose participants were pre-selected from a series of auditions, a \$25 donation is suggested.

"The Rapathon will once again provide an opportunity for hours of family fun and entertainment, while demonstrating in words and deeds the positive side of what rap music and hip hop culture can offer," said Curtis Sherrod, Executive Director of the Hip Hop Culture Center in Harlem. "In doing so, it will also bring hundreds of people Uptown and contribute greatly to the cultural revival and economic revitalization occurring in Harlem."

The Hip Hop Culture Center in Harlem is located at 2309 Frederick Douglass Blvd. on the second floor of the Magic Johnson Theater in the heart of Harlem, along the famed 125th Street shopping district. It is New York City's first official permanent Hip Hop exhibit and cultural arts center.