The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in Partnership with Hi-ARTS, announces details for the

2017 DC HIP HOP THEATER FESTIVAL

JULY 6–13, 2017
at multiple D.C. venues, including the Kennedy Center

(WASHINGTON)—In partnership with Hip Hop Curator in Residence Hi-ARTS, the Kennedy Center announces details for the 2017 DC Hip Hop Theater Festival (#HHTF2017) which will take place at multiple venues across Washington, D.C., July 6-13, 2017, and includes three Millennium Stage programs. The DC Festival is known worldwide as one of the most influential outlets showcasing Hip Hop performing arts, showcasing the stories, people, music, dance, and word of Hip Hop live and on stage. Now in its 17th year, the DC festival brings together some of the freshest work in theater and performance, reflecting the breadth of Hip Hop and urban culture. By bringing together local and national artists, activists, and organizations in D.C., the DC Festival remains one of the premier spaces to see work that blends and pushes the boundaries of theater, film, dance, and education.

The popular weeklong festival features a host of events throughout the D.C. community at various venues, including the Kennedy Center’s Millennium Stage, Dance Place, Gallaudet University (Penn & 6th Street Lot), Honfleur Gallery, and Busboys and Poets. The Kennedy Center contributes to HHTF with four distinct programs: three Millennium Stage programs including Truthworker: Boxed In & Blacked Out in America by Truthworker Theatre Company (July 6), Syncing Ink by NSangou Njikam (July 10), and The Bitter Game by Keith A. Wallace (July 11 and 12), and an ArtChangeUS@Kennedy Center National Conversation (July 13 at Gallaudet University’s D.C. Pavilion) led by Teddy Cruz, Ben Ashworth, and Alice Mizrachi addressing urbanism, placekeeping, and gentrification.
“We are excited to continue our longstanding partnership with Hi-Arts to present the DC Hip Hop Theater Festival,” commented Simone Eccleston, Kennedy Center Director of Hip Hop Culture and Contemporary Music. “It is an important programmatic platform showcasing vital voices in Hip Hop Culture on both a local and national level. The issues being addressed throughout the festival are powerful reflections on our times and essential catalysts for critical dialogue and community building.”

“Seventeen years ago, the DC Hip Hop Theater Festival brought Hip Hop to the Kennedy Center. We’re grateful to the festival and this community for contributing to the transformation of our national cultural center,” stated Garth Ross, Vice President of Community Engagement for the Kennedy Center. “We’re thrilled that the extraordinary artists and audiences of the festival continue to infuse and inform our programming.”

“Hip Hop remains one of the most expressive and poignant forms of cultural expression. Hi-Arts is thrilled to continue the DC Hip Hop Theater Festival in collaboration with the Kennedy Center and our community partners” remarks Raymond Codrington, Executive Director, Hi-Arts. “As in past years, the line-up continues the tradition of showcasing some of Hip Hop’s most cutting edge and timely work.”

About Hip Hop Culture at the Kennedy Center
With Hip Hop Culture serving as one of the nation’s greatest cultural assets and ambassadors, the burgeoning Hip Hop Culture program at the Kennedy Center recognizes the genre’s contribution’s to global culture and its power to build and transform communities through art and action. Through this programmatic platform, the Center aims to create a dynamic home for Hip Hop Culture and celebrate its role as a catalyst for innovation, exploration, and transformation with a mix of performances, humanities events, film screenings, workshops, and interactive experiences, both in-person and online. In March 2016, the Center announced the appointment of iconic MC/rapper and record producer Q-Tip as the institution’s first-ever Artistic Director for Hip Hop Culture.

About Hi-Arts
Hi-Arts has consistently broken new ground, advancing Hip Hop Culture, theater, and visual arts by empowering artists to develop bold new works, while creating a lasting and positive impact on communities. Hi-Arts has developed numerous groundbreaking works; created Hip Hop Theater festivals in San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York. The Hip Hop Theater Festival is known worldwide as one of the most influential outlets showcasing Hip Hop performing arts, showcasing the stories, people, music, dance, and word of Hip Hop live and on stage.
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Truthworker: Boxed In & Blacked Out in America**
Thursday, July 6, 2017, 6 p.m., FREE
Kennedy Center – Millennium Stage
Marking the time we are living in with poignant reflection, protest, and vision, Truthworker Theatre Company will perform excerpts from their provocative three-part body of work, *Truthworker: Boxed in & Blacked Out in America*, which depicts the prison industrial complex through the lens of a dozen youth directly impacted by mass incarceration. This trilogy, comprised of original Hip Hop theater productions, moves from the school-to-prison pipeline and youth criminalization, through the impacts and practices of solitary confinement, and into re-entry upon release.

Truthworker Theatre Company is a social justice-based Hip Hop theater company founded and directed by Samara Gae. Providing youth leadership programming, professional stipends, and rigorous artistic training, Truthworker raises awareness and catalyzes action for racial, gender, and economic justice.

Tickets are not required for this free performance. Seating is on a first come, first served basis. There is no free parking for free events. This performance will be broadcast live on the Kennedy Center website, YouTube, and Facebook page.

**Name Calling and Body of Work**
Friday, July 7–Saturday, July 8, 2017, 8 p.m., $15-$30
Dance Place, 3225 8th St NE, Washington, D.C.
*Name Calling* and *Body of Work* are two riveting, one-woman works at the forefront of performance. Goldie Patrick’s *Name Calling* (co-directed by Candis Jones), is exciting new Hip Hop theater that examines the trials of one woman to stay afloat in her world. Ebony Ingram’s *Body of Work* is a magnetic conversation through dance that examines notions of culture, passion, and revolution. Both works respond to the intersection of trauma and the celebration of the politics of womanism, sexism, and survival. For more information or for tickets, visit www.danceplace.org.

**The Freshest Of All Time B-Boy Jam**
Saturday, July 8, 2017, 2 p.m.–9 p.m., FREE, requires advance reservation
14th and Riggs Rd NW (parking lot of Whitman Walker Health Elizabeth Taylor Medical Center)
Words Beats & Life presents *Freshest of All Time*—the largest all-ages 2 on 2 B-Boy jam in the DMV. The jam features some of the area’s premier crews, judges, and artists.
For reservations, please visit http://www.hi-artsnyc.org/performances/

**Beat Competition**
Monday, July 10, 2017, 4 p.m.–7 p.m., FREE, requires advance reservation
Honfleur Gallery, 1241 Good Hope Rd SE, Washington, D.C.
Guerilla Arts Ink, in partnership with The Anacostia Arts Center, presents *A Beat Competition*. This all-ages beat competition allows producers at various stages of their career to present their work and receive insight and advice from industry producers. Featuring some of D.C.’s top beat-makers, producers, and emcees, the audience and participants will also get a firsthand opportunity to learn more about the process of making music.
For reservations, please visit http://www.hi-artsnyc.org/performances/
**Syncing Ink**  
*By NSangou Njikam*  
*Directed by Niegel Smith*  
**Monday, July 10, 2017, 6 p.m., FREE**  
*Kennedy Center – Millennium Stage*  

“Now what you hear is not a test/I’m rapping to the beat!” Gordon wants to learn how to rap, thinking it will gain him respect, admiration, and the attention of a beautiful woman. What he doesn’t know is that his journey to learn how to rhyme will take him not just deeper into Hip Hop, but deeper into his legacy and his purpose. Based on true events, NSangou Njikam leads us on a lyrical ride to discover what it really takes to freestyle. Directed by Niegel Smith, Artistic Director of New York’s Flea Theater.

Tickets are not required for this free performance. Seating is on a first come, first served basis. There is no free parking for free events. This performance will be broadcast live on the [Kennedy Center website](https://www.kennedycenter.org), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com).

**Whose Streets Screening and Community Dialogue**  
*Monday, July 10, 2017, 7 p.m., FREE, requires advance reservation*  
*Busboys and Poets, 2021 14th St NW, Washington, D.C.*  

Hi-ARTS, Maysles Cinema, and Magnolia Pictures present a screening of the documentary, *Whose Streets*. *Whose Streets* is an unflinching look at how the killing of 18-year-old Mike Brown inspired a community to fight back and sparked a global movement. After the film there will be a community dialogue about the intersection of art and activism. This is an unprecedented opportunity to screen and discuss the documentary before its national premiere on August 11th. For reservations, please visit [http://www.hi-artsnyc.org/performances/](http://www.hi-artsnyc.org/performances/)

**The Bitter Game**  
*Created, Written, & Performed by Keith A. Wallace*  
*Co-Created & Directed By Deborah Stein*  
**Tuesday, July 11–Wednesday, July 12, 2017, 6 p.m., FREE**  
*Kennedy Center – Family Theater, 2700 F St NW, Washington, D.C.*  

In five acts structured as the four quarters and overtime of a basketball game, *The Bitter Game* explores the experience of being Black in America as viewed through the relationship between a young man and his mother. Based on the playwright/actor Keith A. Wallace’s youth in Philadelphia, this multi-character performance tackles issues ranging from police violence, to coping with trauma, to the value of Black Lives.

Free general admission tickets for *The Bitter Game* will be distributed in the Hall of States at approximately 5 p.m. on the day of each performance. Free tickets are limited to two tickets per patron, and no advance reservation is required. There is no free parking for free events. This performance will be broadcast live on the [Kennedy Center website](https://www.kennedycenter.org), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com).

**ArtChangeUS@Kennedy Center National Conversation Series**  
*Urbanism & Placekeeping with Teddy Cruz, Ben Ashworth, and Alice Mizrachi*  
**Thursday, July 13, 2017, 6:30 p.m., FREE**  
*Gallaudet University’s D.C. Pavilion – Penn and 6th Street Lot, NE, Washington, D.C.*  

ArtChangeUS, The Kennedy Center, and Hi-ARTS present an interactive conversation led by noted architect and academic Teddy Cruz, artist, teacher and skateboarder Ben Ashworth, and muralist Alice Mizrachi addressing urbanism, placekeeping, and gentrification. This installment of the ArtChangeUS@Kennedy Center National Conversation Series includes an open skate session accompanied by a DJ and emcees. *The event will also be livestreamed on Okayplayer and The Kennedy Center’s Facebook Live. To RSVP, click here.*
**TICKET INFORMATION**
See ticket information for each event provided above.

**FUNDING CREDITS**
The Millennium Stage is brought to you by Target and The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation.

The Millennium Stage was created and underwritten by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs to make the performing arts accessible to everyone in fulfillment of the Kennedy Center’s mission to its community and the nation.

Additional funding for the Millennium Stage is provided by The Isadore and Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, Inc., The Meredith Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Dr. Deborah Rose and Dr. Jan A.J. Stolwijk, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Millennium Stage Endowment Fund.

The Millennium Stage Endowment Fund was made possible by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs, Fannie Mae Foundation, the Kimsey Endowment, Gilbert† and Jaylee† Mead, Mortgage Bankers Association of America and other anonymous gifts to secure the future of the Millennium Stage.

Education and related artistic programs are also made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts and the President’s Advisory Committee on the Arts.

The work of Hi-ARTS is made possible through generous support from: DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Lucille Lortel Foundation, New York Community Trust, New York City Council, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, National Endowment for the Arts, and individual supporters.

For more information about the Kennedy Center visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).

Discover the Kennedy Center on social media

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/kennedycenter/), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/kennedycenter), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/kennedycenter/), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/kennedycenter), [TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com/kennedycenter)

#KennedyCenter

###

**PRESS CONTACT**
Lauren Holland  
(202) 416-8441  
LEHolland@kennedy-center.org

**GENERAL INFORMATION**
(202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324