

FLASHPOINT

A CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PROJECT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2009

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The Gallery at Flashpoint presents

M3: MCs, Mics and Metaphors



Jati Lindsay, Jean Grae at The Knitting Factory, 2005, silver gelatin print, 20 x 24 inches.

July 23 – August 29, 2009

Opening Reception: Thursday, July 23, 6-8pm

Washington, DC - Curated by Tewodross Melchishua, *M3: MCs, Mics & Metaphors (M3)* explores the power of hip hop lyricism and poetry through visual art. The exhibition captures the force behind hip-hop's music movement, the phenomenon of the Master of Ceremonies, or MC. *M3* is on view at the Gallery at Flashpoint from July 23 – August 29, 2009. The opening reception will be held on Thursday, July 23, 2009 from 6 – 8pm and will be hosted by Asheru and feature music from Deejay Munch.

M3 assembles a nation-wide group of 16 emerging artists who are bringing light to the art of the MC, or the rapper, by responding to a favorite hip hop verse or song with a creative work. A range of disciplines, including fashion, video, animation, photography and painting, will be presented. *M3* emphasizes MCs who emerged during the 1980's and 1990's – hip hop's golden era – such as **Public Enemy**, **KRS-ONE** and **Guru**. Contemporary hip hop MCs such as **Mos Def**, **Jay-Z** and **Little Brother** as well as current popular and underground musical artists will also be featured.

Find out more about **M3** at the exhibition site, <http://soulsuite.com/www/m3/index.php>, and the Gallery at Flashpoint site, http://www.flashpointdc.org/venues/art_gallery.html.

FEATURED M3 artists

- Fashion Designer **Carmen Webber** of Sistahs of Harlem (SOH) was a fourth season contestant on Lifetime's *Project Runway*. Webber demonstrates her deconstruction design method by creating a khaki-colored blazer with a painted image of the highly influential MC **Big Daddy Kane**.

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- Adrian Loving & Ayo Okunseinde of multimedia design studio **Dissident Display** produce the video *Nigerian Gangsta*, an “Afro-hop” remix using the sounds of afrobeat pioneer **Fela Kuti** and **Jay-Z**. The video uses call-and-response to engage the audience.
- Mixed media artist **Ribqah**’s work was featured on the hit television sitcom, *The Parkers*. Ribqah’s piece, *The Amen Ra of Universal Hip Hop Culture: Afrika Bambaataa*, uses acrylic and pencil to illuminate the renowned break-beat deejay and godfather of hip hop **Afrika Bambaataa** while delving into the spiritual side of the music with references to ancient African and Egyptian cultures.

M3 will also feature the work of Benetez (Derrick Bryant), Reality (Damani K. Diop), Jabari Hall-Smith, Jeff Henriquez, Hasaan Kirkland, Jati Lindsay, Jeff McCauley, Tewodross Melchishua, Darian Robbins, Kamaria Selam (Crystal Graham), Sole Sister (Ann Johnson), Marcel Taylor and upfromsumdirt (Ron Davis).

An artist talk and performances from local MCs will take place on August 8, 2009 from 5 – 8pm at the Gallery at Flashpoint.

The opening reception is organized in collaboration Guerilla Arts Ink, Hip-Hop Educational Literacy Program (HELP) and Visual Jazz Media Group. This exhibition is generously funded through the Hip Hop Community Arts Initiative grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

ABOUT the curator

Tewodross Melchishua is an animator, filmmaker, designer, visual artist, educator and creative consultant working in the Washington, DC and Baltimore metropolitan areas. Melchishua has received numerous awards and recognition for video and animation projects. He is a recipient of the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Fellowship as well as artist grants from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities and The Maryland State Arts Council. Melchishua is the founder and Creative Director of Visual Jazz Media Group, LLC, a media arts, design and animation studio collective. He currently serves as an Associate Professor of Visual Communication & Digital Media Art in the Department of Fine & Performing Arts at Bowie State University.

ABOUT the Gallery at Flashpoint program

The Gallery at Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is dedicated to nurturing artists, expanding their visibility and encouraging dialogue between artists and arts patrons. As a nonprofit gallery, Flashpoint provides a special opportunity for artists and curators to present new media, site-specific installations, performance pieces and other experimental forms free from the constraints of commercial expectations. An advisory panel of noted artists and arts professionals oversees the programming for the gallery and provides mentorship and support to exhibiting artists.

The Gallery at Flashpoint is sponsored by Michael Abrams, the Abrams Family Foundation, the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities and Tim Hyde. Additional support is provided by the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, the MARPAT Foundation, the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Prince Charitable Trusts, the Summit Fund and many other sponsors. Hotel Helix is Flashpoint’s 2008-2009 Hotel Partner. Barefoot Wine is Flashpoint’s 2008-2009 Wine Partner.

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ABOUT Flashpoint

Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is a non-profit, multi-disciplinary arts space dedicated to nurturing emerging artists and cultural organizations in order to build their professional capacity. Flashpoint provides services and training for cultural organizations to help strengthen their management capacity and offers exhibit and performance spaces that enable arts groups to focus on their artistic goals and expand their visibility. Flashpoint includes a contemporary art gallery, the 75-seat Mead Theatre Lab, the Coors Dance Studio and shared office space for arts organizations.

M3: MCs, Mics and Metaphors

Opening Reception: Thursday, July 23: 6-8pm

Artist Talk & Performance: Saturday, August 8: 5-8pm

Exhibition: July 23 – August 29, 2009

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 12-6 pm or by appointment

For more information: Call 202.315.1310 or visit www.flashpointdc.org

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