

For immediate release

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**Presentation of the musical celebration:
RhyMex: Mexican Hip Hop Across Borders
part of the *Mexico Now Festival*
at the Teatro Heckscher at El Museo del Barrio.
Saturday, November 6, 2004, 8:30pm**



New York, NY, October 22, 2004. - The Center for Traditional Music & Dance and the Mano a Mano Organizing Committee, in collaboration with the International Hip Hop Exchange (IHX), present **RhyMex: Mexican Hip Hop Across Borders**, a multimedia explosion of sounds and images at El Museo del Barrio's Teatro Heckscher.

'RhyMex: Mexican Hip Hop Across Borders' is an exciting and innovative exchange of talent between Mexicans from both sides of the Border who share the stage - as they share our City - with creative artists from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Peru. Headlining will be the lyricists BocaFloja and J.R. from Mexico City, joined by New York's celebrated poet-MC Caridad "La Bruja" de la Luz. DJ Sloe Poke from Los Angeles will create a sound installation, with samplings from traditional and popular Mexican music, while dancers electrify the stage. As a very special highlight the artist Renzo Ortega will curate a stunning graffiti-infused visual installation which features works by airbrush Mexican master José Luis Arvizú and graffiti team DF Crew.

RhyMex is part of **Mexico Now** (www.mexiconowfestival.org), a landmark event: the first citywide, multi-venue arts festival focused entirely on contemporary Mexico, taking place during the month of November. RhyMex also takes place during International Hip Hop Month and is part of a busy calendar of special events in New York City to celebrate this innovative cultural movement.

The Center for Traditional Music and Dance (CTMD), one of the nation's premier traditional arts organizations, builds cross-cultural awareness by nurturing and preserving the performing arts traditions of New York City's immigrant and ethnic communities. The Center develops and presents research-based performance and education programs for general and community audiences, collaborates with cultural institutions, documents traditions, produces audio and visual publications, maintains an extensive archive, promotes performance opportunities and builds support for community-based cultural expression. Mano a Mano: Mexican Culture Without Borders is CTMD's initiative in the Mexican community of New York.

International Hip Hop Exchange (IHX) works to strengthen the capacity of artists, cultural workers, arts institutions and global youth communities to create and produce hip hop art and culture. IHX produces cross-cultural concerts, organizes educational and cultural tours, disseminates artist development and technical support opportunities, and promotes artist-to-artist contact and collaboration across international borders. While attentive to the explosion of hip hop culture in the U.S., Europe and Japan, IHX is particularly committed to bringing outstanding hip hop artists to and from communities in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa.

RhyMex is an event for all ages. General admission is \$10. Tickets will be available on the day of the event at the door from 7:30 pm. There are no advance sales for this concert.

About the artists

BocaFloja (Mexico City) is a lyricist/MC who has been contributing to the hip-hop scene in Mexico since 1997. He began his career with the band Lifestyle, after which he moved on to join the popular group, Microponk. His solo career began with his independent debut, *Pienso, Luego Existo*, widely acclaimed across Mexico, Cuba, and Europe. BocaFloja has performed in the US alongside Dead Prez, 2Mex, and underground legends, Freestyle Fellowship. In Cuba, he has

performed with Doble Filo and Obsesión, and has been a regular at the annual Cuban Hip-Hop Festival. In Mexico, he has shared the stage with Spaniards FrankT, SFDK and Payo Malo, and with Mexico's Magisterio, among others.

DJ Sloe Poke (Los Angeles) is "The Peoples DJ". Formally known as, Jorge Silva, he started his DJ career at age 10, playing records at house parties. During his performances, DJ Sloe-Poke mixes a wide collection of music ranging from Hip-Hop and Cumbia to Salsa and Reggae, Rare Grooves to Oldies, Classic Rock. Sloe-Poke has toured nationwide with the revolutionary Hip-Hop group La Paz and also is the resident DJ for the unofficial Apollo West, hosted by Steve Harvey. He is a Co-founder of the premier poetry spot, Soul Phonic, which has recently released the first live poetry album in the LA Underground. DJ Sloe-Poke has shared the stage with such renowned artists as Afrika Bambataa, Talib Kweli, Method Man and Redman, and Jay-Z among others.

Akil Ammar "J.R." (Mexico City). MC and spoken word performer who addressed topics such as social problems, daily struggles, and human experiences with a positive message, J.R. uses rap as a tool and a weapon to spread progress and resistance in the community. He discovered Hip Hop in 1993, has been a solo MC since 1996, although he performed with the Hip Hop group Lifestyle between '97 and '98. J.R. released an EP in 2002 called *Reflexión* and in 2003 released his first album, *Momentos*. He has shared the stage with artists such as Freestyle Fellowship from California, Frank T, Payo Malo, SFDK and others from Spain. He has toured the US with the International Hip Hop Exchange. Currently, he is working on a new album *Melokarma*, which will be released by the end of 2004.

Caridad de la Luz "La Bruja" (Bronx, New York) is a performing artist who has explored the fields of poetry, writing, music and acting. Since her auspicious spoken-word debut at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe in 1996, La Bruja has appeared on Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry for HBO, the "Women Like This" Hip Hop festival (Switzerland), and performed at dozens of respected venues including The American Museum of Natural History, Joe's Pub, SOB's, etc. She debuted on film as *Cuca* at Spike Lee's 2000 production Bamboozled. La Bruja is the author of the highly successful one-woman comedy show Boogie Rican Blvd. which depicts seven very different characters struggling to reconcile Puerto Rican traditions with the modern day values taught on the streets of the Boogie Down Bronx. Currently, she is writing an animated comedy series *Lugar Heights*.

Teatro Heckscher is located at el Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Avenue (@ 104th Street), in Manhattan.

Directions:

Bus: M1, M3, M4 northbound on Madison Avenue or southbound on Fifth Avenue to 104th Street.

Subway:

- #6 Lexington Avenue Line to 103rd St station, walk one block north to 104th Street. then two blocks west to Fifth Avenue - or-
- #2 or #3 train to 110th Street and Lenox Avenue, walk one block east to Fifth Avenue, then south to 104th Street.

Car:

- Triboro Bridge - Take FDR south, exit at 106th Street to Fifth Avenue.
- George Washington Bridge - Take Harlem River Drive to FDR south, exit at 106th Street to Fifth Avenue.
- Cross-Bronx Expressway - Take 87 south, exit at 138th Street Bridge, follow signs to Fifth Avenue.

Info available at: www.manoamano.us / 212-571-1555x35 / rhymex@manoamano.us.

To request a complete press dossier, images or to contact the producers and/or the artistic crew, please contact Mayra García at (917) 592-9764 / mgarcia@manoamano.us

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