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ArtNowNY and The City Firm Present  
***The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered***

**Opening Reception:** Thursday July 26, 2012 6-9 PM  
**Exhibition Dates:** July 26 – September 8, 2012

**ArtNowNY | 548 W 28<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor | New York, NY**  
**[www.ArtNowNY.com](http://www.ArtNowNY.com)**

NEW YORK, July 18, 2012 — ArtNowNY and The City Firm are pleased to present *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered*, an exhibition of work that traces the influence of Hip Hop on mainstream culture. Curated by Miz Metro, *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered* is the official exhibition inspired by the full-length feature documentary film directed by Ice-T entitled, “Something From Nothing: The Art of Rap”. The exhibition will feature rare and never before seen photographs by legendary New York graffiti artist and photographer Edwin Sacasa AKA “Shirt King Phade” and master documentary photographer, Jamel Shabazz. *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered* will also feature contemporary remixes of Phade’s work by New York artist Ryan Keeley, behind the scenes shots from the filming of “The Art of Rap” by associate producer “Hen Gee”, and a sound piece by Keith Shocklee of Bomb Squad featuring samples used for classic Public Enemy tracks. **The opening reception for *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered* will be held on Thursday, July 26, 2012 from 6 to 9pm.** Wine will be provided by DiSalvo & Sons.

The photographic work for *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered* unites the distinct creative visions of Phade and Shabazz who documented two sides of life at the center of Hip Hop’s cultural genesis in 1980s East New York: Brooklyn, Queens and The Bronx. Phade presents color photographs of the budding celebrities who would come to define the birth of Hip Hop, while Shabazz’ black-and-white images documented the culture of the era as it was being defined. Whether subtly or overtly, from within the culture or as an observer of it, the work for this show combines two separate yet tangential perspectives that document how Hip Hop emerged to become a dominant force on fashion, music, art and mainstream culture.

Shot from 1981-1989 with a Yashica camera and color film, Phade’s work captures the faces of Hip Hop’s nascence from the inside, just as the genre was emerging. Of this work, Phade says:

*“I caught these images by making everyone around me feel comfortable. The picture of Biz Markie and Fab Five Freddy is a slide I shot in 1989. It was a time that can never be visited again; a time when Hip Hop was young and defining the culture and the wardrobe was left to the graffiti artist searching for identity.”*

For his early work from 1980-1990, Jamel Shabazz shot with a Canon AE-1 camera with standard 50mm lens. His film of choice for his black and white images was Kodak Tri-x 400. A self-described “grass roots” photographer, Shabazz had this to say of his practice:

*“The photographs I have been blessed to create both in this body of work and in general, are all part of a visual diary spanning over half of my life time. Since having this wonderful gift of vision and purpose, I feel duty bound to creating images that provoke thought and inspire creativity. More importantly, I feel obligated to use this great gift of sight, to contribute to the preservation of world history and culture, like so many documentarians before me.”*



*Jamel Shabazz, Phone Sex, 1997, NYC*

Miz Metro, the curator of *The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered*, was interested in creating an exhibit that would express the innovative culture of hip-hop by allowing the viewer to explore different perspectives and participate in creating the narrative. Re-invention is a key theme in the history of hip-hop, seen in the sampling, remixing, street art, and fashion of the movement from its underground origins into the present. The work presented is accordingly multi-faceted. Phade created his work from within the subculture while Shabazz captures it from the outside. Ryan Keeley reinterprets Phade's photographs just like Keith Shocklee remixes a sample or a beat.

*“Grandmaster Caz said, 'Hip-hop didn't invent anything...hip-hop re-invented everything.' The Art of Rap: Remixed & Mastered is reinventing how art can be collected in a gallery setting, this exhibit invites the collector to sample from the different perspectives presented in the show. They are in the drivers seat, or in this case the DJ booth.” — Miz Metro, curator*



**Phade** is a legendary New York graffiti artist and photographer credited with creating the style that is popularly attributed to the early roots of the hip-hop movement. Along with his crew Shirt Kingz, he defined the aesthetic of early hip-hop culture, making custom clothing as part of the Shirt Kingz crew for pioneers like Big Daddy Kane, LL Cool J, and Jay-Z. For *The Art of Rap*, ArtNowNY presents a series of Phade's color photographs that preserve the iconic moments of the era. Phade founded and works closely with the arts education non-profit Unity Charity, and continues to write graffiti and produce murals to this day.

**Jamel Shabazz** is a fine art and fashion photographer and photojournalist who was born, raised, and currently live and works in Brooklyn, NY. Drawing from a 30 year career in fashion, fine art, and photojournalism, Shabazz' work is an extensive visual narrative that falls under the category of seconds of his life. His work has been featured in The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Kravets / Wehby Gallery, and The Powerhouse Gallery in New York,

The African American Museum in Philadelphia, and internationally at La Case Gallery in Milan and The Dadi Torjon Gallery in Buenos Aires. His group exhibitions in New York shows at MoCada, Prince Street Gallery, New York University, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Saatchi & Saatchi, as well as shows at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Detroit and the Russell Simmons Estate in East Hampton. Shabazz also has been a guest artist at The Bronx Museum Teen Council, The Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, The International Center for Photography, and The Studio Museum of Harlem.

**Henry "HEN GEE" Garcia** is the associate producer of *The Art of Rap* film, will present a series of images made during the production of the movie. These images bridge the gap between the history of hip-hop's beginnings and it's modern manifestations, and will include behind-the-scenes photos and footage, converting the back room of ArtNowNY into a VIP room for *The Art of Rap*. During the early-80s, Garcia put the West Coast rap scene on the map through his work with Ice-T, Kid Frost, and Evil E on the Electrobeat label. Still a dominant force in the entertainment industry, Garcia currently hosts "The New Show" in Los Angeles, interviewing celebrity guests that span the urban community.

**Ryan Keeley** is a New York based artist, designer and founder of The Keeley Gallery on the Bowery. For *The Art of Rap*, Keeley will utilize his printmaking skills to sample and "remix" selected photographs from the show. Keeley has developed an original printmaking technique by "hacking" large format printers to operate in uncommon ways, yielding a product that will bring a modern twist to these iconic photographs. Also each photograph will be brought to life by being printed on top of large "Street Distressed" canvas that Keeley took to the gritty avenues of NYC and used found natural elements and using the landscape to give them an urban decayed feel. Keeley's work has been shown in many galleries across the world as well as being featured in various commercial projects and marketing campaigns.

**Keith Shocklee** gained notoriety as an original member of Public Enemy and The Bomb Squad born, raised, and currently living in New York. As a pioneer of New York's hip-hop scene, *Rolling Stone* named Shocklee "one of the greatest producers in hip-hop". His numerous accomplishments as a producer include the groundbreaking albums *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* and *Fear of a Black Planet*, and co-producing Public Enemy's game-defining singles "Bring the Noise" and "Fight the Power". His sound piece for *The Art of Rap* uses samples of classic Public Enemy tracks, produced on his old sampling machine, along with newer creations from his work as a sonic artist and beat architect.

**Miz Metro**, aka Laura O'Reilly, is a native New Yorker, singer-sound-media artist, curator, and founder and CEO of creative consulting and management agency The City Firm. Under her alias "Miz Metro", Laura has curated and organized some of New York City's most prolific art exhibitions, music events & interactive parties. As the former director of downtown building developer Mike Namer's Gallery 151, Laura produced over 50 events and 20 art exhibits on the Bowery including signature shows such as *TRASHION*, *Fab 5 Freddy: New York, New Work* and the first ever WuTang brand art show. Laura also worked as the Associate Director of Kathy Grayson's The Hole.

**ArtNowNY** is an urban contemporary art gallery located in the Chelsea arts district of New York City. Founded by Joseph Gross in 2012, the gallery focuses on the representation of a diverse stable of emerging and established artists working in variant mediums and genres. With a curatorial program that highlights the contemporary experience of aggregate cultural influence, ArtNowNY speaks to the collector in everyone.

For Gallery Information Visit: [www.ArtNowNY.com](http://www.ArtNowNY.com)

### **About "Something From Nothing: The Art of Rap"**

Ice-T takes us on an intimate journey into the heart and soul of Hip-Hop with the legends of rap music. This performance documentary goes beyond the stardom and the bling, to explore what goes on inside the minds, and erupts from the lips, of the grandmasters of rap.

Recognized as the Godfather of Gangsta Rap, Ice-T is granted unparalleled access to the personal lives of the masters of this art form that he credits for saving his life. Interspersed with the performer's insightful, touching and often funny revelations are classic raps, freestyle rhymes and never before heard capellas straight from the mouths of the creators. What emerges is a better understanding of, and a tribute to, an original American art form that brought poetry to a new generation.

For more information on The Art of Rap film & to find out what theatres it's playing in, visit: [www.TheArtOfRap.com](http://www.TheArtOfRap.com)