

Press Release from Rush Communications

**HIP HOP SUMMIT TO BRING TOGETHER ARTISTS, POLITICIANS, MUSIC EXECUTIVES AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN UNITING THE HIP HOP COMMUNITY, TACKLING LYRICAL RESPONSIBILITY, HEALING INTERGROUP CONFLICTS AND MORE**

“My beloved brothers and sisters...through music we can work wonders. Music is the sound that controls the entire universe...much, much greater than any other power in the world...Through the sacred art of music let us find peace that will pervade all over the globe. The future of the whole world is in your hands. You can make it or break it. The entire world is going to be watching...and is going to know what the American youth can do for humanity.”

-- Swami Satchidananda at Woodstock 1969

“Just as music played an important role in the changing of our culture after the original Woodstock, we are again at a turning point where music—specifically hip hop-- will have a role in shaping our future. It’s time to take that responsibility seriously.”

Russell Simmons, Hip Hop Summit Organizer

May 24, 2001 NEW YORK, NY – Russell Simmons, organizer of the Hip-Hop Summit that will bring together the entertainment industry to address the serious issues abounding in hip hop, today announced the four major points to be addressed in the meetings that are being scheduled at the June 12-13th event in New York City. Simmons also named some of the key people who are involved in putting these meetings together.

The four major issues that will be addressed at the Hip-Hop Summit are:

- 1) To get hip-hop artists and the entertainment industry to take back responsibility in addressing the serious issues surrounding hip-hop as a culture—a culture that has grown into an international lifestyle promoting certain values and ethics. This industry is taking greater strides at being accountable for the social, political and economic impact the music has on the society at large.
- 2) To provide an opportunity for conflict resolution among some of the artists who have expressed differences of opinions.
- 3) To look internally, within the industry, to the function of A&R and marketing in elevating the art form.
- 4) To come together to hear inspiring messages from Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, Reverend Run, Original Gang Member/Mediator Michael Concepcion, NAACP CEO/President Kwesi Mfume, RIAA President Hilary Rosen, Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Minister Ben Chavis Muhammed, and Jewish leaders, who will challenge the industry to help transform society into a better place for all people. The agenda for the Hip-Hop Summit is inclusive and the outcome of the Summit will be inclusive. All people, from all communities, stand to benefit from a successful national Hip-Hop Summit.

To obtain these goals, chairpersons, sponsors and moderators such as NAACP's Kwesi Mfume, Sean "Puffy" Combs, The Source's Dave Mays, Interscope Records' Steve Stoute, Loud/SRC owner Steve Rifkind, and Dr. Dre will facilitate various discussions. "In its infancy, hip-hop was doubted, and ridiculed, but today hip hop is full grown, worldwide, the voice, lifestyle and leader of youth from New York to Toronto to Tokyo to Johannesburg," says Combs. "As a young man who has grown up inside of hip-hop, and helped shape it in many ways, I am open to the positive dialogue that will take place at the Hip-Hop Summit. I look forward to taking part and trying to make a difference."

Adds Mays: "It's been a long time coming I'm proud to be one of the organizers of the Summit."

The Hip-Hop Summit meetings will include A&R, radio and marketing; rap profiling; hip-hop artist security; and conflict resolution. The conflict resolution meeting will be moderated by Michael Concepcion, one of the original Crips, and the man who initiated a tentative peace between the Crips and the Bloods in 1990 when the gang members joined rappers such as Ice-T, NWA and Tone-Loc for the recording of the album, WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME GANG. Explains Concepcion: "I'm 44 years old, one of the guys that started this whole gang thing in LA. And I'm the only one that survived and made something of my life. It makes me sad, that others, more educated than me, didn't plan for their lives. I want to let young people know that if they're making money, then they should invest this money wisely so they take care of their own for the future and feel better about themselves. These hip-hop artists should want to communicate to the kids that they can live their dreams."

Also chairing the confliction resolution discussions at the Hip-Hop Summit will be the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan. In 1996, at his home in Chicago, Farrakhan hosted and moderated discussions between key rappers from the East and West Coast, including Ice Cube, Snoop Dogg, Chuck D, Too Short, Bone Thugz N Harmony, Fat Joe and others. At the time, he was the only one with enough power to get these feuding artists into the same room. Those meetings marked the end of the East Coast/West Coast rap war.

"The Hip-Hop Summit is being convened at a very important time in American history, a time when there's a focus on rap profiling, racial profiling and racial division," according to Minister Ben Chavis Muhammed, special assistant to the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan. "Right now, the hip-hop generation has impacted all racial and ethnic groups throughout the world. It is truly a transcendent cultural art form, and the Hip-Hop Summit in New York will bring together some of the diversity of the hip-hop generation, but they will transcend their divisions and provide an opportunity to have a unity of focus."

The goal of the Hip-Hop Summit is to initiate positive, proactive reforms from inside the music industry.

What is the future of Rap music? Give your opinion here.

About Poll

Is the Hip-hop Summit a Good Idea?

Most definitely.

Absolutely not.

I'm not sure...