



NEWS AND INFORMATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10/1/2002

Hip-Hop TV Spots Next Installment of Successful PSA Campaign

Americans for the Arts, The Ad Council, Chuck D., and Marc Herbert Productions Partner to Raise Awareness for Arts Education

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts, the Ad Council, Marc Herbert Productions, and Chuck D. joined to launch a series of hip-hop TV spots as the next installment of the successful public service advertisement (PSA) campaign—"Art. Ask for More."—originally launched by Americans for the Arts and the Ad Council in January 2002. Premiering in conjunction with National Arts and Humanities Month (October), the hip-hop television PSA spots will aim to increase public awareness and promote arts education among African-American and Latino audiences. Black Entertainment Television (BET) has already committed to air the PSA spots beginning October 1, and commitments from other broadcast and cable networks are expected soon.

"We are extremely pleased by how well the 'Art. Ask for More.' campaign has been received and utilized. From airings during peak viewing hours such as the Today show to several full-page ads in The New York Times, the campaign has been a hit. The success allows us to expand further by focusing on multicultural and multigenerational audiences with a new and diverse set of PSAs to convey the relevance of the arts in a child's educational life," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts.

"I am delighted with the success of this campaign to date and gratified that the media has so generously supported the PSAs. I'm confident that the new hip-hop spots will also receive significant support and raise awareness of the need for arts education among African-American and Latino audiences," said Peggy Conlon, President & CEO of the Ad Council.

The hip-hop television PSA series includes four 30-second spots featuring Chuck D. and his mother, Al Shearer (HITS), and Caridad De La Luz (La Bruja), all of whom donated their time to this project. Chuck D. serves as the voiceover for the tagline "Art. Ask for More." and Public Enemy performs the music track for the spots. Also, La Bruja recorded the PSA spot in both English and Spanish—making it the first national PSA arts education campaign to be available

completely in Spanish. All of the spots were produced by Lathan Hodge and directed by Jon Marc Sandifer.

"Black Entertainment Television is pleased to be partnering on the new hip-hop series for the 'Art. Ask for More.' public ad campaign. We hope to raise awareness about the critical importance of arts education to a child's development," said Matthew Barnhill, BET vice-president of marketing research and on-air planning.

Like the original "Art. Ask for More." campaign, these hip-hop spots will encourage public participation in championing arts education both in and out of schools. It will offer parents a wealth of practical information on how to involve the arts in their children's lives, directing them to the Americans for the Arts website: www.AmericansForTheArts.org, which provides parents with information on arts education including access to arts resources in their own communities.

About the Artists:

Chuck D.

As leader and co-founder of the legendary Rap group Public Enemy, Chuck D. redefined Rap music and hip-hop culture with the release in 1987 of PE's explosive debut album, Yo! Bum Rush the Show. Moreover, at the close of 1999, The New York Times, named Public Enemy's music to its list of the "25 Most Significant Albums of the Last Century."

La Bruja

Caridad De La Luz (aka La Bruja) is a multi-talented performance artist, known for her poetry, rhyming skills, and one-woman show Boogie Rican Boulevard. She was featured on HBO's ,Def Poetry Jam and in Spike Lee's Bamboozled. Her independent album The Bru, sold over 1,500 copies on her website www.labrujanyc.com. Her commitment to positive change and cultural awareness has touched people of all creeds and ages.

Al Shearer, "Hits"

Al Shearer, best known to BET viewers as "Hits," is the television host of the popular show Hits from the Street. Hits began his career at BET as the host of a show titled, Game Room. Later, he honed his skills in front of the camera as the DC correspondent for the award-winning teen show, Teen Summit. He then hosted a morning hip-hop show at WPGC-FM/AM (CBS Radio) in Washington, DC.

Jon Marc Sandifer, Director

Jon Marc Sandifer began his career at Spike Lee's motion picture company, 40 Acres and A Mule Filmworks. Since then, his work has grown to include numerous television specials and film projects. Sandifer's television credits include a series of music documentaries featuring Mariah Carey, Jennifer Lopez, Sean "Puffy" Combs, Mary J. Blige, and Whitney Houston. He currently produces BET's 106th and Park.

Marc Herbert Productions

Marc Herbert Productions was founded in 2001 by Lathan Hodge and Jon Marc Sandifer. Marc Herbert Productions is a television and film production company currently completing post-production on a documentary on Chuck D. Recently Marc Herbert Productions contributed its time to develop and film a public service ad for HIV/AIDS prevention featuring New York poet Tantra.

***The Advertising Council** is a private nonprofit organization, which has been the leading producer of public service communications programs in the United States since its founding as The War Advertising Council in 1942. The Ad Council marshals volunteer talents from the advertising and communications industries to create awareness, foster understanding, and motivate action. Ad Council campaigns, such as "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk," "Take A Bite Out of Crime," and "A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste," have helped save lives and educate the public about issues and concerns of the day, making America a healthier country in which to live. Last year, Ad Council campaigns received more than \$1.58 billion in donated media time and space. To learn more about the Ad Council and its campaigns, visit its website, www.adcouncil.org.*

***Americans for the Arts** is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.*

###