

Mobilization Against War and Occupation – MAWO

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News Item

For Immediate Release:

Vancouver: More than 1,200 people attend five day anti-war hip hop festival World's first ever Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation a great success! PLUS: Announcement for upcoming anti-war action – June 25th!

On Sunday June 12th, Mobilization Against War and Occupation's (MAWO) Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation held a closing forum, wrapping up a tremendously successful five days of anti-war hip hop festivities.

In five days, the Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation involved more than 37 local performers and more than 1,200 people of diverse cultures and ages who came to rap, watch, discuss, dance and unite against war and occupation.

At the press conference that kicked off the festival on Wednesday June 8th, festival organizer Ivan Drury said, *"MAWO's Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation is the first of its kind in the world. Such direct merging of hip hop as the protest music of the 21st Century and the anti-war movement as the most important social movement of the 21st Century has never been done before. This festival is serving many purposes all at once – it is diversifying and strengthening both the anti-war movement and the hip hop scene and it will also put Vancouver, as the host city of this important festival, on the map as a major metropolitan city."*

And the festival delivered on all these promises. From the opening show at the Sonar Nightclub, when more than 350 people filled the Sonar nightclub on June 8th, the *intimate night* at El Cocal restaurant with more than 250 people packed inside on the 9th, the *Students and Youth show* with more than 170 high school students at Edmonds Community Centre on June 10th, the outdoor festival show at Grandview Park with more than 600 people through the day of June 11th to the closing forum, *Hip Hop as a Weapon Against War and Occupation* with more than 50 participants on June 12th, the festival was a great success on all levels.

At the Hip Hop as a Weapon Against War and Occupation closing forum on June 12th, festival organizer and speaker Nicole Burton summed up the festival saying, *"We made a strong statement with this festival. Through the coming together of hip hop and the anti-war movement we brought together more than 1,200 people from all imaginable backgrounds. Not only was this a great demonstration of the unity of oppressed people, it showed the strength of this unity against the most destructive force in the world today; against war and occupation."*

MAWO's Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation received broad local and international media attention, massive support from 23 sponsors and donors and a number 2 listing in the Vancouver Sun's *"Top Summer Festivals of 2005"* calendar.

The festival concluded with two further promises from MAWO organizers. In the words of organizer Nicole Burton at the forum on the June 12th, *"MAWO will take the strengths of this festival to continue to build the anti-war movement in Vancouver. On Saturday June 25, 3pm at the Vancouver Art Gallery, we will see you all in the streets for a march and rally under the same slogans as this festival. BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW! SELF DETERMINATION FOR IRAQ NOW! And then next year, we look forward to building an even bigger festival – the International Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation 2006."*

To see more on the festival, view the program guide at <http://www.mawovancouver.org/hiphop>

To view video footage of the festival, go to <http://hotshotbands.com/rap.html>

MAWO Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation Mix-CDs are available to order for \$5 each (postage included) through info@mawovancouver.org or at any of the Festival events. Promotional CDs available for free to all media.

MAWO's Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation is endorsed by: City of Burnaby, Exclaim! Magazine, Capilano Students Union, Terminal City Newspaper, Fire This Time Newspaper, Republic Newspaper, CJSF Radio 90.1 FM (SFU Radio), CTR Radio 101.9 FM (UBC Radio), Youth Third World Alliance, Camobear Records, Boomtown Records, Beatstreet Records, Redcat Records, LiveMusicVancouver.com, Imagination-Treerunk, and Dreameyes Entertainment, FOCCED, Anti-Social Skateshop, Union clothing and skate

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