

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Lori Brooks, director of communications  
405 951 0000 | [lbrooks@okcontemp.org](mailto:lbrooks@okcontemp.org)



**All-day jam celebrates elements of hip hop**

Oklahoma Contemporary is kicking off Hip Hop History Month with an all-day party on Nov. 4. With the groundbreaking *Not For Sale* exhibition as the setting, we'll celebrate emceeing, DJing, breaking and graffiti during the Hip Hop Jam.

From noon to 7 p.m., the focus is on families, with workshops, kid showcases and performances. After 7 p.m., visitors over 21 can enjoy adult beverages as the mood changes to a more adult environment.

The Hip Hop Jam will include:

- Workshops on four elements of hip hop (graffiti, breaking, emceeing and DJing)
- Two-on-two b-boy/b-girl battle (\$400 prize), cypher battles with cash prizes. Judges include Chester Cox, Drew Looner, Quali-D and Pandora. Breaks by DJ D.L. and DJ Priest TD.
- Live graffiti showcases
- DJ showcase featuring DJ Nymasis, DJ Dee Rock and more
- Performances by Cypher Crew, Josh Sallee, L-Smooth, Culture Shock Camp, Original Flow, Groovemeant Community Kids and more
- Food trucks

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- Art projects
- And more to be announced

Oklahoma Contemporary is partnering with ONESoul (One Never Ending Soul), a nonprofit community action aimed at providing educational opportunities for disenfranchised youth. All proceeds from the Hip Hop Jam will go to Oklahoma Contemporary for arts education opportunities for kids who otherwise could not afford them.

“From the streets of the South Bronx to the shores of the South China Sea, hip hop has grown into a truly global artistic and cultural phenomenon over the past half century,” said Jeremiah Matthew Davis, artistic director for Oklahoma Contemporary. “With *Not For Sale*, we’re celebrating Oklahoma’s contribution to this rich creative movement. This show gives us the opportunity to explore the intersection of multiple art forms — music, poetry, dance, fashion and, of course, visual art. As KRS-One will tell you, ‘Yes, the other side of hip hop is representin’ the visual.’ Through classes, panel discussions and several live events with community partners, Oklahoma Contemporary will represent graffiti’s creative vibrancy to the fullest.”

The Hip Hop Jam is one piece of programming connected to *Not For Sale: Graffiti Culture in Oklahoma*. The exhibit, showcasing graffiti created by some of the state’s most talented artists, will run to Nov. 30. Nearly 400 people attended the opening reception on Oct. 5.

*Not For Sale* features 10 artists who have been an integral part of the Oklahoma graffiti scene. Artists painted directly on the walls of the gallery, transforming Oklahoma Contemporary into a vivid and exciting display of styles. These artists are part of a culture that promotes creative expression to individuals who have not always had access to the art world.

“Graffiti is often referred to as a form of rebellion, but I want to change that perception with this exhibition,” said Angel Little, guest curator for *Not For Sale* and producer of the Hip Hop Jam. “This is a chance for people who aren’t familiar with graffiti to see it in all forms. It’s a chance for people to understand that graffiti has changed and saved lives. Artists do it to connect with and improve their communities. The artists in this show — from Oklahoma City and Tulsa — are the driving force behind the change, and it’s inspiring to see them come together in a gallery environment and with this kind of influence to create something positive.”

The artwork in *Not For Sale* finds its roots in the graffiti movement that emerged in the early 1970s in Philadelphia. Graffiti art is mostly based on text – in particular, the writing of an assumed name that serves to promote the artist. Graffiti has flourished worldwide in large part because it operates outside of the art world’s elite institutions — it therefore is an art form open to anyone. The exhibition title, *Not For Sale*, makes reference to the fact that graffiti is primarily made for fame and not for money and can be seen by everyone, not just those with access to museums and galleries.

“In recent years, graffiti has become increasingly accepted by the art world as a legitimate, innovative art form requiring great skill,” said Jennifer Scanlan, exhibitions and curatorial director at Oklahoma Contemporary. “At Oklahoma Contemporary, we celebrate creativity in all forms. *Not For Sale* gives us the opportunity to showcase the artistic talent of graffiti writers here in our state. By putting the works in a gallery setting, we want visitors to really consider the ways in which these are similar to a painting that might be hung on the wall — the use of color, the composition and the ideas the artists are trying to convey.”

While graffiti’s often illegal placement on subways, trains and walls has added to its appeal as a form of rebellion, the artists in *Not For Sale* have used their skills in many legitimate fields, from mural commissions to graphic design to fine art that sells in galleries. Guest curators Chris SKER and Little have secured the talents of experienced graffiti artists with an Oklahoma connection, including SKER, JASPYR, CODAK, SADAT, HEK, SEAPO, GERM, ENTAKE, MANIK and RHAK. All are Oklahoma-born, with the majority living and working in the state.

“This is the place where my life’s journey began,” said muralist CODAK Smith. “As someone who was born in Oklahoma and is fortunate enough to travel extensively throughout the United States and overseas to showcase my art, it is a great honor to bring my work back home and contribute to the growing mural arts scene in Oklahoma.”

For more information, visit [oklahomacontemporary.org](http://oklahomacontemporary.org).



Image: Ten Oklahoma artists made their mark, literally, on Oklahoma Contemporary’s gallery walls.

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A media kit, including this release and high-resolution images, is at <http://bit.ly/OCNotForSaleKit>. Past press releases and additional information are archived at [oklahomacontemporary.org/about/media](http://oklahomacontemporary.org/about/media). Interviews can be organized through Director of Communications Lori Brooks ([lbrooks@okcontemp.org](mailto:lbrooks@okcontemp.org)).

### **About Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center**

Currently located at State Fair Park, Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center aims to encourage artistic expression in all its forms through education and exhibitions. We endeavor to instill in the public a lifetime appreciation of the arts and enthusiasm for creative practice through a broad range of educational programs, exhibitions and cultural offerings, including:

- Youth art camps that help students begin a lifetime relationship with art and creativity.
- Art classes and workshops where students of all ages find the chance to learn and grow.
- Exhibitions that feature the work of emerging and mid-career artists.
- Free public lectures, artist talks and events that enrich Oklahoma City’s cultural offerings.

Oklahoma Contemporary is in the midst of a capital campaign to create a new arts education and cultural resource on a 4.6-acre site at NW 11th and Broadway in Oklahoma City. The arts education campus will include: A four-story, 50,000-square-foot building with classrooms, galleries, a dance studio and a flexible theater space to promote learning about the artists of our time and educating those to come. Expanded classes in ceramics, fiber, painting, sculpture, drawing and dance, plus a new media curriculum with programs in filmmaking, animation, photography, web design and 3-D printing. A remodeled 10,000-square-foot building will house an Industrial Arts program, focusing on wood, ceramics, metal and jewelry. Grounds with space for outdoor sculpture exhibits, children’s art education activities and outdoor music, movie and drama productions.

Oklahoma Contemporary is a regional 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization founded in 1989 by businessman and philanthropist Christian Keese and Kirkpatrick Foundation Director Marilyn Myers.

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