

FOCUS

Rhythm Off the Stage

'Def Poetry Jam on Broadway' in bookstores

Where Walt Whitman meets Michael Jackson and Emily Dickinson meets Mary J. Blige, Russell Simmons' "Def Poetry Jam on Broadway" is now a Tony Award-winning Broadway event that you can curl up with.

The book, released in September, brings not-to-be-missed theatrical experiences to every page, collecting the work of nine gifted and provocative young poets who speak from the heart about everything from love and sex to politics and Krispy Kreme donuts.

The poets showcased in the book include Suheir Hammad, author of "Born Palestinian, Born Black"; Black Ice, the first spoken word artist signed to Def Jam Records; Beau Sia, author of "A Night without Armor II" and two-time National Poetry Slam champion; and Poetri, one of the founders of Los Angeles' Lounge.

Essential for every fan of contemporary poetry, this book is a cutting-edge and constantly surprising volume of fresh and often comedic look at who and where we are today. Russell Simmons, CEO of Rush Communications, has brought hip-hop to the forefront of popular culture—most notably through his immensely successful record label, Def Jam.



Russell Simmons Def Poetry Jam features the work of nine up-and-coming poets.

Life After Def

Multi-platinum singer and producer Montell Jordan releases a much-anticipated fifth album, "Life After Def," released by his own label, The Enterprise, Inc.

The album bowed to number four on Billboard's top R&B/hip-hop chart and sold more than 1.3 million copies in the United States. The 13 tracks reveal Jordan's diverse talents, from club-ready grooves to ballads and devotionals.



Montell Jordan

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Zoo Prepares Eagle Canyon Exhibit

Animals are arriving and construction is well underway on the Oregon Zoo's newest exhibit Eagle Canyon. Bold features will be added in the coming days, including a 40-foot poles and mesh to showcase bald eagles in flight and large acrylic panels to view endangered salmon swimming in a swift-moving stream.

Eagle Canyon, the latest element to the Great Northwest exhibit, will tell

the story of eagles and salmon and their role in the ecosystem. It will explain how salmon travel to sea as fingerlings and after three years, return to the tributaries of their birth; and will explore how eagles and other species rely on salmon for their survival. The exhibit will expand upon the existing Cascade building that displays local animals such as the river otter, beaver and other native watershed species.

Tupac's Mom Touched by Hip-Hop Support

(AP) — Afeni Shakur, the mother of rapper Tupac Shakur, says she's touched by the hip-hop community's support, seven years after her son's death.

"I always feel like I get special treatment. I never felt that I couldn't ask anyone for anything," Shakur said in an interview last Wednesday.

"I respect them, I have a lot of respect for them. I like them. They're nice to me, and they're good to my son."

Shakur created Amaru Entertainment-Amaru Records after her son was shot to death in 1996, and the company has put together albums of his unreleased work. Shakur says she's relied on help from rappers including Dr. Dre and Eminem to help keep her son's name, and music, alive.

"I'm conscious of the fact that I'm 56 trying to do my son's work," she said. "I don't know that we would have been able to

keep an ethical, quality project without the hip-hop community caring almost as much as me."

The Source Youth Foundation is honoring Shakur for her charitable work, including the creation

of the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation Inc., which encourages children in the arts.

Tears of Joy Theatre Season of Enchanting Puppetry

by Sharon Whitney

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