

The New Victory Theater Presents
Rennie Harris: Funkedified



**World Premiere
June 1 - June 10**

New York, NY (May 2, 2018) -- Get on up with **Rennie Harris Puremovement** in the World Premiere of ***Rennie Harris: Funkedified***, a celebration of funk music and 1970's street dance, playing at The New Victory Theater from June 1 - June 10, 2018.

Inspired by the political turmoil and atmosphere of his childhood, Harris asserts funk music as the foundation of hip-hop dance and modern culture in his newest work, ***Rennie Harris: Funkedified***. This multi-media production, set against a video montage of African American communities in the 1970's, features **Rennie Harris Puremovement** (*Rome & Jewels; Unlocked; Continuum; Rennie Harris' New York Legends of Hip Hop*, New Vic 2007; *Rennie Harris Puremovement*, New Vic 1999) in a variety of styles such as Campbell locking, popping and waving, breaking and 1970's social party dances.

Rennie Harris: Funkedified also stars fellow Philadelphia dance crew **The Hood Lockers**. They are internationally recognized as one of the most seminal locking groups since Don Campbell and The Campbell Lock Dancers, who represent a pivotal influence in Harris' childhood.

"When I think about what inspired me to dance, I remember watching Don Campbell on *Soul Train* when I was in the 4th grade and being in awe of seeing moves like his on the biggest possible stage," says Harris, who began advocating for the significance of street dance at the age of 15. "Although ***Funkedified*** challenges the typical narrative, it's meant to be fun for the

audience as I share my personal journey with funk music and culture, which truly influenced my work as a hip-hop artist.”

Complete with a live, onstage band, **Rennie Harris: Funkedified** fuses two separate eras of funk—old school and contemporary—while pushing the genre’s boundaries and celebrating such powerhouse songs as James Brown’s “Soul Power” and Dennis Coffey’s “Scorpio.” Weaving a nostalgic journey back to what Harris refers to as “The Day Before Hip-Hop,” **Rennie Harris: Funkedified** will have you grooving to the upbeat, the downbeat and every syncopation in between.

Philadelphia native **Lorenzo “Rennie” Harris**, named “the most respected—and the most brilliant—hip-hop choreographer in America” by *The New Yorker*, is a pioneer in bringing hip-hop culture and street dance to concert stages around the world. He founded **Rennie Harris Puremovement** (RHPM) on the belief that hip-hop can express universal themes beyond racial, religious and economic boundaries. Harris’ work encompasses the diverse and rich African American traditions of the past, while simultaneously presenting the voice of a new generation through ever-evolving interpretations of dance. By merging traditional African dance with contemporary art forms, RHPM’s cohesive and cogent voice merges social dances with theater and has been credited for bringing street dance into the mainstream.

Harris is committed to providing audiences with a sincere view of the essence and spirit of hip-hop, in counterpoint to the commercially exploited stereotypes sometimes portrayed by the media. His past New Vic presentations include *LUV: American Style* (RHAW, 2015), *Rennie Harris RHAW* (RHAW, 2013), *Rennie Harris’ New York Legends of Hip Hop* (RHPM, 2007, 2005) and *Rennie Harris Puremovement* (RHPM, 1999). For *Rome & Jewels*, RHPM received three Bessie Awards, two Black Theater Alvin Ailey Awards, a Herb Alpert Award nomination and a Laurence Olivier Award nomination.

Rennie Harris: Funkedified is choreographed by Rennie Harris and features **Rennie Harris Puremovement’s** Gabriel Emphasis Alvarez, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr., Tatianna Desardouin, Leigh “Breeze-Lee” Foad, Mai Lê Hô-Johnson and Yuko “Uko Snowbunny” Tanaka. **The Hood Lockers** include Ricky “Glytch” Evans, Joshua “J Peazy” Polk, Andrew “Riot” Ramsey and Marcus “Epic” Tucker. The live band is comprised of Shareef Clayton (Trumpet), Matthew Dickey (Guitar), Doron Lev (Drums), Nicholas Marks (Keys) and Osei Owen Williams (Bass) with Music Direction by Mathew Dickey and Doron Lev. Darrin Ross is Sound Designer, Composer and Producer, Joshua Fleitell is Visual Designer, Bob Steineck is Lighting Designer and Rodney Hill is Company Manager.

Learn more about **FUNKEDIFIED** at NewVictory.org.

Public Performance Schedule:

Friday, June 1 at 7pm

Saturday, June 2 at 2pm / 7pm

Sunday, June 3 at 12pm / 5pm

Friday, June 8 at 7pm *

Saturday, June 9 at 2pm / 7pm

Sunday, June 10 at 12pm / 5pm

*sign-interpreted performance

FUNKEDIFIED runs 60 minutes with no intermission, and is recommended for ages 9 and up.

Ticket Information

Full-price tickets for *FUNKEDIFIED* start at \$16. Tickets are available online (<http://www.newvictory.org/boxoffice>) and by phone (646.223.3010).

To purchase tickets in person, the New Victory box office is located at 209 West 42nd Street (between 7th / 8th Avenues). Box office hours are Sunday & Monday from 11am-5pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm.

About The New Victory Theater

The New Victory Theater brings kids to the arts and the arts to kids. Created in 1995 on iconic 42nd Street, this nonprofit theater has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States. Reflecting and serving the diverse city it calls home, The New Victory is committed to arts access for all students, teachers, kids, families and communities of New York to experience and engage with the exemplary international programming of theater, dance, circus, puppetry and more on its stages. A leader in arts education, youth employment and audience engagement, The New Victory Theater has been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the 2014 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, by Americans for the Arts with a National Arts Education Award, and by the Drama Desk for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

About The New 42nd Street

Founded in 1990, The New 42nd Street is an independent nonprofit organization charged with the continuous cultural revival of 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues, building on the foundation of seven historic theaters to make extraordinary performing arts and cultural engagement part of everyone's life. The New 42nd Street fulfills this purpose by ensuring the ongoing vibrancy of 42nd Street's historic theaters; supporting performing artists in the creation of their work at the New 42nd Street Studios and The Duke on 42nd Street; creating arts access and education at The New Victory Theater, New York's premier theater for kids and families; and through the New 42nd Street Youth Corps, its model youth development initiative, which pairs life skills workshops and mentorship with paid employment in the arts for NYC youth. Inspired by the city it serves, The New 42nd Street is committed to the transformational power of the arts.

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