

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Music Center Brings a Fusion of Hip-Hop Dance Experiences to Downtown L.A. Over Four Days in June

-- *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center's* Engagement of Compagnie Käfig Complemented by Live Performances, International Dance Competitions, Demonstrations and the Return to L.A. of Beat Swap Meet

-- The Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall to Stay Open Overnight for Hip-Hop Special Edition of Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours

Events Run from June 16-19, 2016 at The Music Center and at Grand Park

LOS ANGELES (May 5, 2016) – The Music Center will break new ground as it surrounds its upcoming dance engagement of [Compagnie Käfig](#) presented by [Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center](#) with four days of [Hip-Hop dance experiences](#) (#hiphop4days) from June 16-19, 2016, on The Music Center campus and in Grand Park. Working closely with a number of highly respected members of the Hip-Hop community, including academics, artists, dancers and curators among others, the performing arts center will examine the culture, artistry and evolution of Hip-Hop dance through live performances, international dance competitions, discussions, demonstrations, late-night dance parties and more. The public can choose from ticketed and free events.

The four days of events include a free panel discussion called [“Ain't No Half Steppin': Dance from Soul Train to B-Boys”](#) on June 16, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at Grand Park; three ticketed performances of [Compagnie Käfig](#) on June 17 and 18, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. and on June 19, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion; a free [Hip-Hop beginner dance class](#) led by Compagnie Käfig on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles; the ticketed [Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours/Hip-Hop Special Edition](#) on June 17, 2016 from 11:30 p.m. – 3:00 a.m. on June 18, 2016 at The Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall; and the free [Beat Swap Meet](#) on June 19, 2016 from noon – 6:00 p.m. at Grand Park. To celebrate the four-day experience, The Music Center has commissioned artist, curator and entrepreneur Man One to create a special piece of art that will be translated to the steps leading to The Music Center Plaza on Grand Avenue.

According to The Music Center President and CEO Rachel Moore, the four days of Hip-Hop dance events will introduce Angelenos to the progression of street dance in the context of the highly dynamic Hip-Hop culture. “Hip-Hop dance has evolved dramatically over the years from its early roots of funk style dances to the b-boys and b-girls and dance crews of today,” Moore said. “Our four-day exploration will highlight how and why Hip-Hop dance has played an important role, socially, culturally and politically,” she explained. “Dance fans will witness a range of performance types, including

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freestyle improvisations and dance competitions along with the work of French choreographer Mourad Merzouki with his Compagnie Käfig, who has expanded the language and theatricalized Hip-Hop dance for audiences around the world,” Moore added.

A review of the four days of Hip-Hop presented by The Music Center follows:

Panel discussion: “Ain’t No Half Steppin’: Dance from Soul Train to B-boys”

Thursday, June 16, 2016, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., free

Grand Park, 200 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Moderated by Dr. Imani Kai Johnson, assistant professor of critical dance studies at the University of California, Riverside, this panel discussion by Hip-Hop legends of soul, b-boying and theatre will explore how their contributions impacted the meaning of dance and grafted new roots onto Hip-Hop’s history. The panel features:

- **Imani Kai Johnson, Ph.D.**, an interdisciplinary scholar whose research focuses on African diasporic ritual cultures, Hip-Hop dance in global circulation, and the intersections of race, nation and gender. Dr. Johnson’s doctoral work on international Hip-Hop dance communities is the basis for her manuscript, *Dark Matter in B-boying Cyphers: Hip-Hop in a Global Context*. She is the founder and conference chair of the “Show and Prove” Hip-Hop Studies Conference Series.
- **Damita Jo Freeman**, one of the original “Soul Train” dancers, who is considered one of the most creative in the history of this American musical variety television program that aired from 1971-2006 and that featured performances by R&B, Soul and Hip-Hop artists. A trained ballerina, Freeman and her dancing style caught the eye of “Soul Train” production executives. Her work eventually bolstered the show’s ratings, and she became one of its most popular regulars, dancing at one point with James Brown. She later went on to perform on “American Bandstand” and in film.
- **Thelma Davis**, one of the longest-performing dancers of the original “Soul Train” gang, who spent 10 years on the show and was known for her definitive style and originality. Trained in Jazz, Ballet and Modern Dance, Davis’ signature short afro haircut and dance moves made her one of the most identifiable and popular female dancers of the show. She helped create positive images of women of color and became a role model to many young girls. Following her “Soul Train” days, Davis worked as dancer in Japan and had bit parts on various television shows.
- **Lil’ Cesar (Rivas)**, the founder of the Hip-Hop School of Arts in Pomona, CA, which provides a unique technical trade program designed to transform students’ creative energy through marketable skills, education, guidance and self-expression. Widely recognized for his pioneering work in b-boy dance, Lil’ Cesar has performed live with acts as diverse as Madonna and Kurtis Blow and choreographed videos for Janet Jackson and Fatboy Slim.
- **Dr. Rennie Harris**, founder, artistic director, choreographer and director of Rennie Harris Puremovement, a Hip-Hop dance company dedicated to preserving and disseminating Hip-Hop culture through workshops, classes, Hip-Hop history lecture demonstrations, long-term residencies, mentoring programs and public performances. Dr. Harris founded and captained a number of ensembles including The Scanner Boys, an innovative dance group that pioneered Philadelphia Hip-Hop movement in the early 80s. He is a recipient of numerous awards for his theatrical Hip-Hop dance performances, many of which have broken many dance stereotypes. Dr. Harris also founded RHAW (Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works), which is a touring dance company.

Compagnie Käfig / CCN Créteil & Val-de-Marne

Friday, June 17, 2016 and Saturday, June 18, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 19, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

All performances are ticketed.

The Music Center’s Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

French choreographer Mourad Merzouki will explore the confluence of many arts subgenres with an all-male cast of 10 Brazilian dancers, combining Hip-Hop, Capoeira, Samba, electronic music and Bossa Nova for a performance that

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showcases astonishing acrobatic skills along with energy and invention. Established in 1996, the Company found its artistic direction within the fusion of styles, including dare-devilish circus skills, street dance, martial arts, humor and the fun and energetic Hip-Hop vocabulary. By avoiding social stereotypes, the Company has managed to assert a unique style, enabling the Hip-Hop movement to win over audiences whose origins are as diverse as those of the dancers themselves.

Led by Artistic Director Mourad Merzouki, who applies a multi-disciplinary approach to the exploration of Hip-Hop, the Company will perform *Käfig Brasil*, a rhythmic and muscular dance that the *Times Union* said is, "...animated by waves of energy, as if volts of electricity were travelling from muscle to muscle and limb to limb. Then that tightly controlled power explodes into fireworks."

In addition, the Company will present *Agwa* (Water), which addresses this precious natural resource, a vital component of life and a symbol of renewal.

Käfig Brasil

Artistic Direction: Mourad Merzouki

Choreographies: Collectif Käfig Brasil, Denis Plassard, Céline Lefèvre, Octavio Nassur, Anthony Egéa, Mourad Merzouki

Musical Arrangements: AS'N, Guide Nibo Desandamm, Korobushka - groupe Bond, Vuelvo al sur - Groupe Gotan Project

Music: Vivaldi, Dinho Nascimento, Guy Monk, Ame, Camille, The Lushlife Project, AS'N, Deadmau5, Emmanuel Santarromana

Lighting Design: Yoann Tivoli, assisted by Cécile Robin

Stage Design: Mourad Merzouki and Yoann Tivoli

Costume Design: Emilie Carpentier

Props: Samuel Chenier

Agwa

Choreographer: Mourad Merzouki

Assistant choreographer: Kader Belmoktar

Music Design: AS'N

Music: AS'N, Guide Nibo Desandamm, Korobushka - groupe Bond, Vuelvo al sur - Groupe Gotan Project

Lighting Design: Yoann Tivoli

Stage Design: Mourad Merzouki and Benjamin Lebreton

Costume Design: Angèle Mignot

Dancers: Diego Alves Dos Santos, known as Dieguinho; Leonardo Alves Moreira, known as Leo; Cleiton Luiz Caetano De Oliveira; Aguinaldo De Oliveira Lopes, known as Anjo; Helio Robson; Dos Anjos Cavalcanti; Geovane Fidelis Da Conceição; Diego Gonçalves Do Nascimento Leitão, known as White; Wanderlino Martins Neves, known as Sorriso; Jose Amilton Rodrigues Junior, known as Ze; and Aleksandro Soares Campanha Da Silva, known as Pitt.

Single tickets for the June 17-19, 2016 engagement of Compagnie Käfig at The Music Center start at \$34 and are available at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Box Office, 135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012; by calling (213) 972-0711; and online at musiccenter.org/hiphop. For groups of 10 or more, call (213) 972-8555 or email mcgroupsales@musiccenter.org

Ticket holders to the June 17-19 performances can get further insight on the performances by joining DANCETALKS, on-site discussions held at the theatre one hour before curtain. DANCETALKS for the Compagnie Käfig engagement will be led by Music Center teaching artist Tiffany Bong, who will introduce audience members to the history and culture of Hip-Hop dance styles, including Lockin', Poppin' and b-boyin'/b-girlin'. Bong is a Hip-Hop dancer, choreographer, educator and administrator for Culture Shock LA, an international, non-profit Hip-Hop dance organization. DANCETALKS are also

available in real time by calling 1-800-371-8200 (access code: 314902) and can be heard after the engagement on The Music Center's Soundcloud channel: soundcloud.com/music-center-LA

In addition, the public (18 and over) can sign up for a free **Hip-Hop beginner dance class led by Compagnie Käfig** on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles. The class is geared towards beginners with no experience necessary. Visit musiccenter.org/kafig to sign up.

Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours/Hip-Hop Special Edition

Friday, June 17, 2016 at 11:30 p.m. – Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 3:00 a.m.; ticketed

The Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Keeping the doors open late at night, Sleepless: The Music Center After Hours (Sleepless) takes over The Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall for the first time ever with a never-before-seen use of the iconic venue. This highly popular immersive multi-sensory experience, curated by The Music Center, reimagines the Concert Hall with DJs, dancing, live art demonstrations, light projections, exclusive basement level skating jams and much more. This Hip-Hop Special Edition of Sleepless includes:

- Roller skating, live graffiti painting by the gr818ers and classic cars;
- Global Hip-Hop jams curated by Rani de Leon and dublab, expressing musical roots from around the world including Brazil, Cuba, France, Ghana, Kenya, Korea, Japan, Latin America, Levant, North Africa, the Philippines and the United Kingdom; DJs include Al Jackson, Arshia, Chico Sonido, DJ Ghost, Hashim B, Rani de Leon; and T-Kay;
- Improvisation installations/in-the-moment performances and dance crew battles by some of L.A.'s top Hip-Hop dance companies and dancers, led by Tiffany Bong, Amy "Catfox" Champion of Antics, Lil' Cesar and Rennie Harris;
- Dancing to the old and the new with music curated by Monalisa and dublab, including DJ Babu, DJ Inka One; and DJ Jedi;
- Current L.A. Hip-Hop expressions and music curated by ArtDontSleep, featuring Exile, DJ Expo and 14KT;
- Photographic installations by Pocho One that document L.A.-based street art and graffiti; and
- Relaxing with a beverage in the Grand Lounge.

Tickets for the Hip-Hop Special Edition of Sleepless are \$30. Pre-sale tickets for Sleepless will be available online on the day of the event, Friday, June 17, 2016, from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. at musiccenter.org/hiphop. Walk-up tickets will be sold at the Walt Disney Concert Hall Box Office, 111 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012, on Friday, June 17, 2016, starting at 9:30 p.m.

Beat Swap Meet

Sunday, June 19, 2016; free

Noon-6:00 p.m.

Grand Park, 200 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Now in its 8th year, Beat Swap Meet is a free public celebration of music and all of its manifestations, rooted in a good old-fashioned record swap. Committed to vinyl as the highest form of music collection and dissemination, Beat Swap Meet attracts thousands of national and international record collectors, music lovers and people of all ages. This is the first time Beat Swap Meet will take place in Grand Park; the event is being co-produced by Beat Swap Meet and The Music Center.

Elements of Beat Swap Meet include:

- Selling, buying and trading of collectible records;
- Dance competitions for all ages, including one-on-one b-boy and b-girl competitions;
- Freestyle dancing;
- Turntablism lessons;

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- Live graffiti art-making;
- MC battles;
- Turntable repair, provided by DJ Abel (costs apply);
- Kids craft area provided by Woven Culture;
- Classic car display;
- Food drive organized by Universal Zulu Nation (non-perishable items only);
- Live performances of a range of urban music genres, hosted by L. Scatter of Zulu Nation/JUICE;
- Live graffiti writing and mural painting with Venice Beach Art Walls; and
- Food, beverage, clothing, records, art, jewelry, vintage and music items for sale.

For more information about Beat Swap Meet, visit beatswapmeet.com

Photos available upon request.

About The Music Center

The Music Center is Los Angeles' home to the world's greatest artistic programs and events. With four iconic theaters and four renowned resident companies – LA Phil, LA Opera, Center Theatre Group and the Los Angeles Master Chorale – and recognized for its illustrious dance programming, Glorja Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, The Music Center is a destination where audiences find inspiration in the very best of live performance, as well as nationally recognized arts education and participatory arts experiences. The Music Center also programs and manages Grand Park, a 12-acre adjacent greenspace, with year-round free programming. For more information, visit musiccenter.org and follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat (@MusicCenterLA).

About Glorja Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center

As The Music Center's highly regarded dance series, Glorja Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center is one of the leading presenters of dance on the West Coast. The celebrated series offers significant works by prestigious ballet and contemporary dance artists from around the world. Entering its second decade, Dance at The Music Center continues to be a powerful commissioning force through the support of new works and artists-in-residence projects by today's most influential companies and choreographers. Performances take place throughout The Music Center's historic Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, its distinctive Ahmanson Theatre, and its iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall, providing the ideal setting for inspiring dance experiences. For more information, visit musiccenter.org/dance

About Compagnie Käfig

Compagnie Käfig was created in 1996 by Mourad Merzouki, a major figure on the Hip-Hop scene since the 1990s. He works at the junction of many different disciplines: To his exploration of all Hip-Hop styles, he adds circus, martial arts, fine arts and live music. In 2009, Merzouki was appointed director of the Centre Chorégraphique National de Créteil et du Val-de-Marne, where he developed a project called "Dance: a window on the world." In 20 years, Compagnie Käfig has given more than 2,600 performances in 61 countries for more than one million people.

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About Grand Park

A vibrant outdoor gathering place, Grand Park is a beautiful public park for the entire community in Los Angeles County. With expansive green space for gatherings large and small, Grand Park celebrates the county's cultural vitality and is host to community events, cultural experiences, holiday celebrations, and many other activities that engage and attract visitors from all communities. The 12-acre Grand Park stretches from The Music Center on the west to City Hall on the east, and is easily accessible by Metro via the Red/Purple line to the Civic Center/Grand Park station. The park was named one of American Planning Association's 10 "Great Public Spaces" in the U.S. for 2013. Working closely with the county, The Music Center is responsible for all operations and programming for the park. For more information, visit grandparkla.org and follow Grand Park on Facebook (GrandParkLosAngeles), as well as Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat (@GrandPark_LA).

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