

“Bling’d: Blood, Diamonds And Hip Hop” Premieres On VH1, Thursday, February 22 At 8PM

NEW YORK, NY, February 20, 2007 – “Bling’d: Blood, Diamonds and Hip Hop,” a new documentary under VH1’s Rock Docs franchise will take a hard-hitting look at the diamond trade in Sierra Leone, West Africa and the discovery by the “diamond-obsessed” hip-hop community that they may have unintentionally played a role in the country’s war.

This past summer, VH1, Article 19 Films, Djali Rancher Productions and the United Nations Development Program were in Sierra Leone, along with hip-hop artists Paul Wall, Raekwon (of Wu Tang Clan), and reggaeton king Tego Calderon, to film this documentary which premieres on VH1 Thursday, February 22 at 8 PM*.

In the U.S., Kanye West, Jadakiss, Big Daddy Kane, Juelz Santana, Chris Aire, Mr. T and others will weigh in on the evolution of “bling,” what it means to wear diamonds in Hip-Hop America, as well as the issues surrounding conflict diamonds and poverty in mining communities. Along with their insight, the film will be interspersed with testimonials, factoids and graphic images of those directly affected by the diamond trade. These artists are representative of the hip-hop community coming to terms with its obsession with “bling” and the discovery of the effect it has on the impoverished people in Sierra Leone. Kanye West captures this realization quite simply, “It’s just ironic that what made black people feel so empowered was completely demoralizing and destroying other black people.”

The 11-year war was largely perpetuated by the revolutionary

united front and other genocidal rebels and primarily funded through the illegal trading of conflict or "blood" diamonds in exchange for drugs, food and guns. The rebels sought to control the country's diamond mines and forced civilians including women, the elderly and children to mine these stones or risk losing life or limb. Blood diamonds are a challenge not only in Sierra Leone, but in several West African countries where miners often earn less than a dollar a day and peace and security remain elusive.

In Sierra Leone, Wall, Raekwon and Calderon not only heard first-hand accounts of the atrocities suffered during this time but they witnessed how these citizens are trying to rise from the ruins of conflict and improve their living conditions. The rappers met with local musicians, amputees, refugees and former child soldiers living in the country. Viewers will meet Ishmael Beah, a New-York based former child soldier who went back home to Sierra Leone for the first time in ten years to thank the people who helped rehabilitate him when he was just fifteen years old. The artists got a first hand look at the country's main source of diamond mines when they took a helicopter from Freetown to the Kono district in the northeastern section of the country and visited an alluvial and industrial mine as well as the villages that rely on the diamond trade.

"Bling": Blood, Diamonds and Hip Hop, will capture hip-hop's reaction to the human violations, bring global awareness to this issue, and educate Americans about how they can play a role in eradicating the smuggling of blood diamonds and become conscious consumers.

VSPOT, VH1's broadband channel (<http://vspot.vh1.com>) will feature exclusive scenes and commentary not in the on-air version. For more information on "Bling": Blood, Diamonds and Hip Hop, visit

http://www.vh1.com/shows/dyn/vh1_rock_docs/series.jhtml.

“Bling”™: Blood, Diamonds and Hip Hop, is produced by Article 19 Films in co-production with Raquel Cepeda, director, for Djali Rancher Productions and in association with VH1 and UNDP. Rebecca Chaiklin (Article 19 films), Filippo Bozotti (Article 19 films) and Raquel Cepeda (Djali Rancher Productions) serve as producers.½ Serving as executive producers are Irena Mihova for the United Nations Development Program and Brad Abramson, Shelly Tatro, and

Michael Hirschorn for VH1 with Warren Cohen serving as supervising producer.

VH1 connects viewers to the music, artists and pop culture that matter to them most with series, specials, live events, exclusive online content and public affairs initiatives. VH1 is available in 90 million households in the U.S. VH1 also has an array of digital services including VH1 Classic, VH1 Soul and VSPOT, VH1’s broadband channel. Connect with VH1 at www.VH1.com.

The United Nations Development Program is the UN’s global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

Through its TV and Cinema Partnerships initiative, UNDP reflects the many original and surprising ways that people have devised to confront world social problems. Creating moral, insightful and uplifting television and cinema in partnership with major broadcasters and renowned producers is used as a powerful vehicle for understanding the global development agenda. The impact on the global audience is the barometer of the initiative’s performance, and a notion of social action.

Diamonds for Development (D4D) is UNDP initiative launched in 2005, focusing on the sustainable use of revenues from mineral resources. It includes complementary activities for policy

reforms, local governance for development by empowering communities and fighting poverty thus improving livelihoods. The program aims to ameliorate the equity, transparency and accountability in mineral resource management on both the grassroots and the policy level.

Classic Soul/Rock Singing Sensation Liv Warfield To Release Debut Album



Liv Warfield is one of the most promising voices in indie soul music today. Her triumphant debut album, *Embrace Me*, is a compelling overload, combining warm, seductive vocals and vintage R&B with a funky new-age twist. Her music is a celebration of love and life; a powerful package of brilliant songwriting and flawless harmonizing. But Liv's greatness lies in her simplicity. She still has that demure mid-western charm about herself and a unique vulnerability that paints a picture of a young woman with an old soul full of timeless, liberated melodies.

Ascending from a family history of extraordinary talent arises a self-trained singer, songwriter, performer, arranger and co-producer, Liv Warfield. Warfield is R&B's purest new musician since Sade. Out of an era dominated by the R&B synthesizer, over sampled hip-hop production and a distinctly bohemian neo-soul movement, emerges a fundamentally pure artist that defies the modern trends of her genre and embodies

a global art form through her cross-categorical appeal. A singer who organically blends classic soul, electric rock, sultry rhythm and straight-up sexy blues like Tina Turner—and it’s only the beginning. Artistic genius flows through the veins of this Peoria-born songstress and close relative of the late comedian Richard Pryor. It is through Warfield’s lyrical clarity, her vocal conviction and the brilliance of her timeless arrangements, where she eclipses her contemporaries. Her succinct and purposeful songwriting, inspired by the “message music” of Curtis Mayfield, fuses her gospel-guided sensibilities with secular lyrics that are sultry without sacrificing her foundation of moral authority. CD Baby

Liv, who is the cousin of legendary comedian Richard Pryor, didn’t inherit her love of music by way of genetics, Sunday morning church choir participation or school band rehearsals, although she did play the violin for 13 years, Liv was a track star who longed to sing. Born and raised in Peoria, Illinois to a family of prideful, standout athletes Liv kept her emotions, talents and dreams to herself and lived vicariously through her musical heroes such as Jill Scott, Nina Simone, Tina Turner, Sarah Vaughn, Sade and Mary J. Blige. “All of these women have strong voices and there is something in each of them that I see in myself. They were not afraid to be vulnerable and didn’t put on fronts. They were raw, pure and intense.”

“In four years she has gone from a raw talent, unsure of herself onstage, often sitting on a stool wearing a running suit, to a powerhouse, assured of her talent and her ability to move an audience, punctuating her music with movement and magically made-over to allow her outer beauty to match the inner beauty bursting out of every pore.” The Oregonian Newspaper

Embrace Me, is all about acceptance and not being afraid to spread your wings to soar to the next level. It is a woman’s

album with male sensibilities. Along with an intoxicating blend of rock, alternative, soul and R&B rhythms, there are lush, rhythmic details and arrangements that create a magical sound, with one common thread on the 11-track album being about love- losing love, receiving love, giving love; the pains, the thrills, the inspiration and the disappointment. On the uncomplicated track, "ABC's", a mid-tempo jam about loving yourself for who you are every single day and letting your mind be free, Liv perfects the undisputed rule of being true to ones self. While "I Decided" is a slow-burning groove that deals with the heartache of leaving an emotionally-destructive relationship, "Work For Me", is an inspiring, educational and uplifting single, that transcends time. Liv also drops a dramatic jewel on the live, epic ballad "Brother Man".

"One of the best surprises of all, 27 year old Liv Warfield. The Peoria native comes out of left field as a kind of Sade-meets-Jill Scott-meets-Anita Baker, her sultry, steamy voice deftly handling an excellent collection of jazz-influenced soul on her debut album, Embrace Me, live instrumentation is the perfect backdrop for Warfield's groovy, appealing compositions and her surprisingly assured vocals. A stunning new talent and one of the best debut albums you'll hear this year." Soultracks

As the year winds down, I wanted to take a moment to share with you one of the best CDs that I've heard in 2006. The artist is Liv Warfield, and the name of her debut release is "Embrace Me". She's a very talented young lady hailing from Portland, Oregon. Liv Warfield can SANG! Its R&B music at it's best; soulful, sensual, funky, and raw. I don't know what's going on out in the mid-west, but I think we're missing out on something. Discover soulful music from the heartland. Liv Warfield's "Embrace Me" is the perfect introduction. Rhythm Flow

Crooning sweetly on sexy radio-ready tracks and easy-listening ballads, Liv expertly pairs emotive poetry and lyrical storytelling amidst the soundscape of solid instrument laden grooves. Having opened for heavy hitters such as B.B. King, The Dave Matthews Band, The Roots and Floetry, to name a few, this self-described "spontaneous, laid back" chanteuse, has not always been so fortunate in her career. "I've sat on the street and sang until five in the morning, sang for money to put gas in the car, checked out of my apartment to be able to have money to do music."

"This is a lovely, strong set of songs, with Liv's vocals forefront, indicating the quality of this woman's vocal delivery. The opener 'A, B, C' has, not only Bernard 'Pretty' Purdie on drums and vocal chores, but quite the 'dirtiest' bassline I have heard all year. An excellent opener, that leads us through Liv's Soulful musical garden. These songs are all of a very high standard, with, perhaps, 'Waiting', 'Work For Me' and "Get Away" being the sets other highlights. All told, very satisfying throughout and a great addition to any Soul collection."

Soulwalking.co.uk

"Liv is a singer and a songwriter with unlimited potential. She is a vibrant 27 year-old black woman who has all the things going for her that could make her a star. Warfield is so damned positive, such a good wordsmith, sings with such power and conviction that even jaded old reporters can see sunbeams shooting out the top of her head. Her love songs aren't sappy or nasty, they're sexual, but you actually get the feeling she's talking about love with sex. Quite a concept. She sings about the heartbreak without whining, and calls him out without calling names." Counterpunch

Hip-hop, pop, R&B, soul, rock from a female perspective, the rising star of Liv Warfield and her debut Embrace Me are soon to shoot to instant-classic status. "You can listen to this CD all the way through and it's going to keep you in a vibe

the whole time and then youâ€™re gong to want to listen to it again. You can take away everything else, but my music is something that I will fight for.â€” Spoken like a woman set out to conquer the world.

â€œLocal soul sister Liv Warfield may have gotten her start karaoke-ing at the Galaxy, but now she counts stars like Method Man among her admirers.â€” Portland Mercury Newspaper

For more info [click here](#).

M.E.E & Hip-Hop Edutainment Grows in Brooklyn

The It's All About M.E.E. (Media, Expression, and Education) Festival is a 3-day multi-media celebration taking place from February 23ï½225, 2007. Itï½s All About M.E.E combines the best of our Freshest Youth Program, the Urban Word NYC Poetry Slam Final, and the Hip-Hop Education Summit [H2Ed].

Over 15 community arts and media organizations will participate in the celebration, representing cities like San Jose, Oakland, L.A., Chicago and DC, as well as countries like Mongolia, Brazil & Canada. Workshop Facilitators include Full Circle, The Grassroots Artists MovEment (G.A.ME), Beatbox Entertainment, What's the 411 Initiative, Words Beats and Life, and Hip-Hop Congress. Special celebrity guests include Roxanne Shante, Doug E. Fresh, Raqiyah Mays and Pharoahe Monch, as well as notable Educators and community leaders such as Jeff Duncan-Andrade, Tamara Dawit, Professor Dave Stoval, Mark Gonzales, Ora Wise, Lavie Raven, and Professor Andrew Ryan will engage in dialogue and workshops. In addition to

three days of programming, the Hip-Hop Association will celebrate the official release of the Hip-Hop Education Guidebook: Volume 1, a comprehensive tool for those interested in Hip-Hop Education.

“Teachers have no other choice but to learn how to use hip hop in the classroom. It’s the language of the children. They have to respect the culture of Hip-Hop.”

–Talib Kweli, Hip-Hop Artist

Schedule:

Media & Activities | February 23, 2007 | 12pm to 6pm:

Setting off the festival, the Freshest Youth Program will be filled with engaging edutainment activities for youth that include break-dancing (b-boying), graffiti art, DJing, MCing, as well as compelling performances by youth in Hip-Hop theatre and film screenings.

Also taking place on this day will be the panel discussion, “When the Gun Draws: Addressing the Epidemic of Gun Violence and the Propaganda Behind It” featuring Legendary Lyricist, Pharoahe Monch, who will be joined by distinguished panelists to examine the rash of gun violence sweeping the nation and strategies to alleviate this preventable plague which is disproportionately effecting Black and Brown communities nationwide.

Panelists include Raqiyah Mays of The Ave Magazine (Moderator), Piper Anderson of Black Out Arts Collective, Hezues R of Guns 4 Camers, Monifa Bandele of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and Terrence Fisher, Director of Bullets In The Hood, winner of the 2005 Sundance Film Festival Short Filmmaking award.

Panel will include a Special Screening of Pharoahe Monch’s New Music Video, “When the Guns Draws.”

+This event is FREE and open to the public and will be taking

place at the Brooklyn Community Arts and Media High School.

Expression | February 24, 2007 | 7pm – 10pm:

In the Urban Word NYC Annual Teen Poetry Slam Final held this year at Brooklyn Academy of Music | Howard Gillman Opera House, hundreds of teens representing every borough and most ethnicities come together in celebration of youth spoken word, to determine which five teens will form that year's NYC Teen Poetry Slam Team and compete at Brave New Voices, the National Teen Poetry Slam.

Seats are almost sold out! To Purchase Tickets visit www.h2ed.net/itsallaboutmee

Education | February 25, 2007 | 7:30am – 7pm:

Closing up the festival once again at the Brooklyn Community Arts & Media High School, the H2Ed Summit will give opportunities for educators, social workers and parents to learn and participate in workshops that will teach how to use Hip-Hop as an educational tool across a multi-disciplinary curricula.

Workshop Schedule:

11:50-12:50AM (1st Hour Facilitator)

Workshop A: Literacy | Rhythm & Reason: Utilizing Hip-Hop to engage literacy, critical thinking and creative writing facilitated by Urban Word

Workshop B: History | African Ancestry: Tracing Your Roots by Gina Paige

Workshop C: Music | Human Rights Are For Young People Too! – Supporting Children's Rights & Participation Through Hip-Hop by Tamara Dawit & Tristan "Collizhun" Graham

Workshop D: Immigration, Social Justice & Leadership | From

West Coast to West Bank: Understanding Ideas and Imperialism Through Global Hip Hop by Mark Gonzales

Workshop E: Media – Global Action Project Youth Presentations

Workshop F: Tolerance – Slingshot Hip Hop: Culture and Resistance from Brooklyn to Palestine by Ora Wise

2:50-3:50PM (2nd Hour Facilitator)

Workshop A: English Language Arts – Hip-Hop Novel Vs. Street Literature – Facilitated by Kwan

Workshop B: Global Studies | Global Education Through Hip-Hop
and HIV/AIDS by Tamara Dawit & Eternia

Workshop C: Math – Edu Rap: Improving Test Scores and Discipline for the Hip Hop Generation by Dr. Ron Kelley

Workshop D: Peer-Peer Mediation and By Cashus D, Federation for Hip-Hop Preservation- Chicago

Workshop E: Technology – By Andrew Ryan, Hip-Hop Matters

Workshop F: Diversity and By Lavie – BCAM/University of Hip-Hop

Sponsors of the 1st Annual It's All About M.E.E. Festival include SoonR, African Ancestry, St. Martin Press, The Ave Magazine, the Institute for Urban Education at the New School University, and Breakthrough.tv

For more information and registration visit www.h2ed.net/itsallaboutmee.

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About the Hip-Hop Association:

The Hip-Hop Association (H2A) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) community building organization with national headquarters in

Harlem. Our mission is to utilize Hip-Hop culture as a tool to facilitate critical technology, education, and leadership development; while preserving Hip-Hop culture for future generations. For more information visit www.hiphopassociation.org.

About Urban Word NYC:

Urban Word NYC ignited the youth spoken word and poetry scene in New York City when it was established in partnership with Teachers & Writers Collaborative in 1999. Since then, Urban Word NYC has provided thousands of New York City teenagers with free, safe, ongoing, and uncensored writing and performance opportunities. Urban Word believes teenagers can and must speak for themselves and the key to building self-confidence, honing critical thinking skills, and developing imaginative and honest writing is to honor what they say and feel. For more information, please visit www.urbanwordnyc.org.

About BCAM:

Brooklyn Community Arts & Media High School provides students a small, personalized learning environment with school, family, and the surrounding Brooklyn and citywide community in a collaborative educational partnership. We offer an exciting and challenging college preparatory academic curriculum and a professional focus in leading communications, arts, and media fields, in a culture wherein students are encouraged to develop individual responsibility, social awareness, self-expression, collective action, and discipline. Through this three-dimensional notion of high school, BCAM students gain the academic, professional, and social skills to enter a range of college and professional opportunities, and most importantly, succeed in this high stakes 21st Century.

Thank you to our wonderful sponsors, workshop facilitators & staff for supporting our mission to facilitate, foster, & preserve Hip-Hop Culture!

Lee “Scratch” Perry Compiles His Favorite Trojan Tracks on The Upsetter Collection: A Lee Perry Jukebox (3/20

Lee “Scratch” Perry’s impact on the sound of Jamaican music can never be understated. During a career spanning over 40 years he has taken Reggae to new, often strange heights, with his singularly unique approach to music making. He is a producer, mixologist and songwriter who helped shape and create the sound of dub, as well as having a hand in developing reggae music to be the powerful force in the pop music world that it is today. Many years of producing various recordings have resulted in Perry being a part of some of the most influential tracks in the history of reggae music. Today, 25 years after the destruction of his famed Black Ark studio in Kingston , this enigmatic genius is one of the best known and most highly regarded musicians on the international Reggae scene. His music is continually attracting new fans all over the world.

For this one of a kind collection, Lee Perry has personally selected 45 of his own works that hold a special place in his heart and mind. Opening with a handful of his early Ska and Rocksteady recordings, this compilation carries us on a musical journey that takes in his earliest tracks as an independent producer before moving on to a slew of mind-bending glorious Black Ark cuts, finally closing with a number of more recent outings, including “Jamaican E.T.” from his Grammy winning album of the same title.

This set is the latest in Trojan's artist choice jukebox series which includes collections from Jonny Greenwood , DJ Spooky and Don Letts.

2007 marks the 40th anniversary of Trojan Records.

Disc 1:

1. Give me Justice, Lee Perry
2. The Woodman, Lee Perry
3. Run For Cover, Lee Perry
4. I Am The Upsetter, Lee Perry
5. Kimble, Lee Perry
6. People Funny Boy, Lee Perry
7. Honey Love, Burt Walters
8. Evol Yenoh, The Upsetters
9. Tighten Up, The Inspirations
10. Return Of Django, The Upsetters
11. Man From M15, The Upsetters
12. Clint Eastwood, The Upsetters
13. A Live Injection, The Upsetters
14. Medical Operation, The Upsetters
15. Prisoner of Love, Dave Barker
16. My Cup, Bob Marley & The Wailers
17. Soul Rebel, Bob Marley & The Wailers
18. 400 Years, Peter Tosh & The Wailers

19. Duppy Conqueror, Bob Marley & The Wailers
20. Kaya, Bob Marley & The Wailers
21. Small Axe, Bob Marley & The Wailers
22. Rhythm Land , U Roy
23. Beat Down Babylon , Junior Byles
24. Words Of My Mouth, The Gatherers
25. To Be A Lover, Chenley Duffus
26. I do Love You, The Heptones

Disc 2:

1. Cow Thief Skank, Lee Perry & Charlie Ace
2. Bathroom Skank, Lee Perry
3. Kentucky Skank, Lee Perry
4. Dub Organizer, The Upsetters (featuring Dillinger)
5. Rejoice Jah Jah Children, The Silvertones
6. The Lama (aka Spiritual Whip)
7. Penny Reel Prince, Jazzbo
8. Enter The Dragon, The Upsetters
9. Hurt So Good, Susan Cadogan
10. Curley Locks, Junior Byles
11. Move Out Of My Way, Bunny Rugs
12. Kojak, Lee Perry & The Upsetters
13. Fire Fe The Vatican , Max Romeo

14. Sons Of Slaves, Junior Delgado
15. Natural Mystic (Black Ark Version), Bob Marley
16. Bad Food, Seke Molenga & Kalo Kawongolo
17. Judgement Inna Babylon, Lee Perry
18. I Am A Madman, Lee Perry
19. Jamaican E.T., Lee Perry