



Once Hiropon A Time©, 2008 Alexis Peskine

For Immediate Release Artists Make It Funky at H & F Fine Arts Gallery

May 25, 2008, Mount Rainier, Maryland –
The Funk Aesthetic: *Chocolate Coated, Freaky & Habit Forming*, opens on June 4th – 29th at the H&F Fine Arts Gallery located at 3311 Rhode Island Avenue, Mount Rainier, MD.

Curated by Tonya Jordan with commentary by author Thomas T. Stanley, the exhibition presents new art grounded in the aesthetic of Funk music of the mid-sixties to early eighties and features international and locally based artists visually interpreting the music form through various media: **Aniekan, Pedro Bell, S. Ross Browne, Deadra Bryant, Miles Bumbray, K. Wesley E. Clark, Jamel Craig, Ronald "Stozo" Edwards, Dejon N. Gee, Gary Johnson, Alexis Peskine, Akia "Space Lady" Quander-Jordan, William Rhodes, Jerome Spinner, Katurah Thomas, Hank Willis Thomas, and Tedra Wilson.**

Funk, a highly rhythmic African American music form, emerged in the sixties with bands such as Sly & The Family Stone. The music is a hybrid of Soul, R & B, and Jazz--- with bass guitar and percussive instruments taking an upstage position. James Brown is often cited as the forefather of the Funk music movement with compositions rhythmically rooted on the *downbeat* or *on the one*-- laying the groundwork for Funk's groove. The seventies and eighties marked expansions in the music form through performers and groups such as George Clinton, Parliament Funkadelic, Betty Davis, Bootsy Collins, Prince, The Ohio Players, Cameo, Curtis Mayfield, and Tower of Power to name a few. The music was heightened by visual presentations with elaborate costumes, intricately themed stage productions, and bold Afrocentric and otherworldly expressions in fashion and attitudes.

Public Programs:

June 7th - Opening Reception
H & F Fine Arts Gallery
5-8pm

After Party & Live Music
Artmosphere Café - 9pm until
\$10 cover

June 21st – Panel Discussion
H & F Fine Arts Gallery- 4-6pm
Free

June 28th – Artist Talk & Closing
Reception
H & F Fine Arts Gallery
Free

"Unlike myself, many of the artists in this show are 70's and 80's babies that grew up in the Hip Hop Movement with Rap," says Jordan. Funk and R&B was the music that informed my generation, spawning a new form of consciousness and awareness---visually, creatively, politically, and socially. It ushered in a whole new sense of freedom of expression and a cathartic experience. I was excited about the visual translation that would occur across these generational lines and how artists would interpret Funk music in this new century. Funk has been the backbone for Rap through music sampling, with its distinctive grooves and polyrhythms. The show's subtitle, Chocolate Coated, Freaky and Habit Forming, lyrics borrowed from the P Funk anthem, *Wants to Get Funk'd Up*, encapsulates the Funk aesthetic."

According to Stanley, "Funk celebrates life through transgressive permutations of mind and body and a palette of candid metaphors drawn equally from Black urban and rural experiences. Funk is tantric. Defiant. Improvisational. Leud. And sacred."

An **opening reception will be held Saturday, June 7th, 5-8pm** followed by a musical performance by **Mind Over Matter Music Over Mind** (featuring Bobby Hill, Thomas T. Stanley, and Chris Downing) and an after party with a special guest DJ at **Artmosphere Café**, 3311 Rhode Island Avenue, Mount Rainier, MD.

Public programs include a panel discussion the Funk movement and aesthetic on June 21st and an artist talk/closing reception June 28th.

For more information visit www.hffinearts.com and/or www.musicovermind.org.

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