



BAM presents *Word. Sound. Power. 2020: Border/less*, Apr 23—25

Three nights of electrifying hip-hop and spoken word performances featuring **Nejma Nefertiti**, **Circa '95**, **Dizzy SenZe**, **Peggy Robles-Alvarado**, **Nedda Sou**, **Robotron**, **DJ Reborn**, and **Baba Israel** as host

Word. Sound. Power. 2020: Border/less

BAM Fisher (Fishman Space, 321 Ashland Pl)

Apr 23—25 at 7:30pm

Tickets: \$25

Ages 14+

Brooklyn, NY/ February 13, 2020— BAM presents *Word. Sound. Power. 2020: Border/less*, its 16th annual celebration of spoken word and hip-hop. Following the success of last year's sold-out performances, an additional night is added to the concert lineup. The three-night showcase features a stunning roster of groundbreaking poets, musicians, and dancers who demonstrate the vitality of hip-hop and spoken word. Artists include emcees **Nejma Nefertiti**, **Circa '95**, and **Dizzy SenZe**; poet **Peggy Robles-Alvarado**; internationally acclaimed Dutch choreographer and dancer **Nedda Sou**; musician **Robotron**; and **DJ Reborn**. The highly anticipated showcase will take place on April 23—25 at BAM Fisher.

"Every year, *Word. Sound. Power.* brings the dopest artists from around the world to BAM in the spirit of artistry and activism. These artists are known for pushing back against the barriers of race, nationality, and identity through their music, movement, and message," said BAM Education Manager and co-curator of *Word. Sound. Power.*, **Mikal Amin**. "This year's showcase offers the full force of hip-hop and is an example of how powerful and wide-ranging the artform can be. *Word. Sound. Power. 2020* artists will create and perform around this year's theme [Border/less], which is as much about breaking free as it is about coming together."

Hosted by acclaimed hip-hop artist Baba Israel, this year's *Word. Sound. Power.* showcase features performances inspired by stories of inclusion and displacement centered around the timely question, *what if everywhere could be home?* Using the transformative power of rhythm and poetry (RAP), the artists will explore stories about the differences that shape us, the borders that divide us, and how to break barriers. Joining the artists will be select student poets from Brooklyn public schools, including Teachers Preparatory High School, Brooklyn School for Music and Theater, Brooklyn Preparatory High School, Brooklyn High School for the Arts, and the High School for Innovation in Media. The student poets all participated in BAM's Brooklyn Reads in-school residency program designed to build students' literacy through creative writing, poetry analysis, and individual performance.

Tickets for *Word. Sound. Power. 2020: Border/less* go on sale February 25 for the general public (February 18 for members). Visit bam.org/literary/2020/word-sound-power for more details on tickets.

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate at ctate@bam.org or 718.724.8022

About the Artists

Peggy Robles-Alvarado is an award-winning poet and educator who inspires triumph and embodies strength. She is a Pushcart Prize nominee, a CantoMundo Academy for Teachers and Home School Fellow, and a Bronx Recognizes Its Own award winner. She's an International Latino Book award winner and tenured educator with degrees in Elementary and Bilingual Education and an MFA in Performance Studies. Robles-Alvarado authored *Conversations with My Skin* (2011) and *Homage to the Warrior Women* (2012). Through Robleswrites Productions, she curated *The Abuela Stories Project* (2016), and *Mujeres, The Magic, The Movement and The Muse* (2017). She's also an initiated priestess in the Lukumi and Palo spiritual systems, celebrating womanhood and honoring cultural rituals. Robles-Alvarado was featured on HBO Latino's *Habla Women*, performed at Lincoln Center, and The BAAD!ASS Women Festival. Her poetry appears in the anthologies *What Saves Us: Poems of Empathy and Outrage in the Age of Trump* (2019), *Latinas: Voices of Protest and Struggles* (2017), and *¡Manteca!- Afro- Latin @ Poets* (2017).

Baba Israel was raised in New York and has toured across the US, Europe, South America, Australia, and Asia. He's performed with hip-hop acts including Outkast, The Roots, Ron Carter, and Afrika Bambaataa. He began his career as an arts educator in Australia and has gone on to be a leading educator and consultant working with organizations such as Urban Word, BAM, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He worked as a cultural ambassador with the State Department. He served as artistic director and CEO of Contact Theatre in Manchester, England from 2009—12. Israel is the co-founder and artistic director of Playback NYC Theatre Company, which brings theater to under-represented communities. He has also served as a lead teaching artist for the Brooklyn Reads education program at BAM. His debut solo show *Boom Bap Meditations* was supported by the Ford Foundation and the Hip-Hop Theater Festival. Israel is a core member of the hip-hop/soul project Soul Inscribed and has an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College.

Hailing from New York City, **Circa '95** is an indie Afro-Latino hip-hop group comprising of Patty Dukes and Reph. Puerto Rican and Dominican by way of The Bronx and Washington Heights, they rhyme seamlessly through English and Spanish. Circa '95 recently completed an artist residency at Carnegie Hall and continues to serve on the Artist Advisory Board for the Bronx Music Heritage Center. They have been featured in HBO Latino's *Road Trip* and *Habla Ya*. The duo performed at Carnegie Hall, SXSW, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, and the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC. A testament to their growth and creativity, their latest music project *Problems and Bills* features a collection of songs reflecting the struggles many people encounter while growing up in the mean streets of New York City.

DJ Reborn is a Brooklyn-based DJ who has been moving audiences for more than a decade with her mellifluous blend of soul, hip-hop, reggae, house, Latin, electronic, and Afrobeat. She has spun at shows by artists including The Roots, Common, Talib Kweli, John Legend, and India.Arie, and at museums, including the Whitney, Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum, and Brooklyn Museum. DJ Reborn has also spun exclusive events for Maxwell, Metallica, and Lauryn Hill, as well as for visual artists Kara Walker and Wangechi Mutu. She has appeared on BET's *Rap City* and served as the 2004—05 international tour DJ for Russell Simmons' *Def Poetry Jam*. She was musical director and DJ for actor/playwright Will Power's off-Broadway hit *Flow*. As a youth mentor and arts educator with Urban Word NYC, DJ Reborn created a workshop for teenage girls that explores the art of deejaying, creative writing, and critical analysis of women's images in media culture.

Robotron is a multi-instrumentalist and improvisational musician whose skills range from piano, trumpet and cello to beatboxing, and electronic music production. He has worked on award winning films and traveled the world with musical acts including GZA and members of The Wu-tang Clan, Soul Incribed, Uglybraine and his own project *Rob0tr0n*. The Staten island native has built a career in the New York music community and is currently preparing a fusion project for 2020 with Jerome Jordan, Doron Lev, Sean Nowell, and Djibril Toure.

Nejma Nefertiti is a revolutionary hip-hop artist, sound designer, and songwriter based in Brooklyn. Her work inspires awareness, self-determination, and social change for the oppressed. Nefertiti's theater work includes Marina Celander's solo show *Mermaid's Howl*, Caridad "La Bruja" De La Luz's adult comedy cabaret *The Bru HA*, and *The Migrant Liberation Movement Suite* with The Afro Yaqui Music Collective. She has worked with hip-hop pioneer Louis "Breakbeat Lou" Flores and is a core member of The Afro Yaqui Music Collective, the ASCAP award-winning, multi-lingual jazz band. Nefertiti was a featured artist in Nona Hendryx's annual Rock Solid Women's Festival: Celebrating Women in Art & Music and Toshi Reagon's Word*Rock*Sword: A Festival Exploration of Women's Lives. She collaborates with hip-hop Afrobeat artist Napoleon Da Legend, several international artists, and is a mentor to younger generations.

Dizzy SenZe is a Bronx-bred lyrical assassin and multi-talented creative. As an emcee, she embodies the exact definition of moving the crowd with insane wordplay and amazing energy. Her artistry is centered around her life experiences, whether that pertains to the inescapable vices in human nature or celebrating the feelings of prosperity, energy, and love. Catering to true hip-hop enthusiasts and mainstream music lovers, Dizzy SenZe leaves no musical crave untouched. She has shared the stage with several hip-hop legends, including Talib Kweli, Homeboy Sandman, Kendrick Lamar, and more. She's also a producer, engineer, and photographer who has produced photo shoots for KRS-One, Dave East, and Grandmaster Caz. Dizzy SenZe's approach is always from a visionary standpoint. Steadily progressing within her craft, she is not only aiming to ingrain her sound into the airwaves, but to imprint a change in the world.

Nedda Sou is an international professional dancer, theater maker, choreographer, coach, and artist. Sou fell in love with dancing as a teenager thanks to clubs, festivals, and television shows. She soon found herself at the top of the international urban dance scene, where she was featured in several theater productions and commercial shows for Footlocker, Nike, and MTV. Nedda is the founder of The Arc a creative collective in Rotterdam, and the youth theater company Ja He'. Currently Sou is a teacher at the Amsterdam University of the Arts and working on *Robots with Emotions* and *Midnight in the Netherlands*.

Credits

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Borough President Eric L. Adams. BAM would like to thank the Brooklyn Delegations of the New York State Assembly, Delegation Leader Joseph R. Lentol; and New York Senate Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. Harvey Theater at BAM Strong is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas features first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St. for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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