

For immediate Release
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PHASE 2: MYTH CONCEPTION

A SURVEY 1972 - 2019

Through June 30, 2023

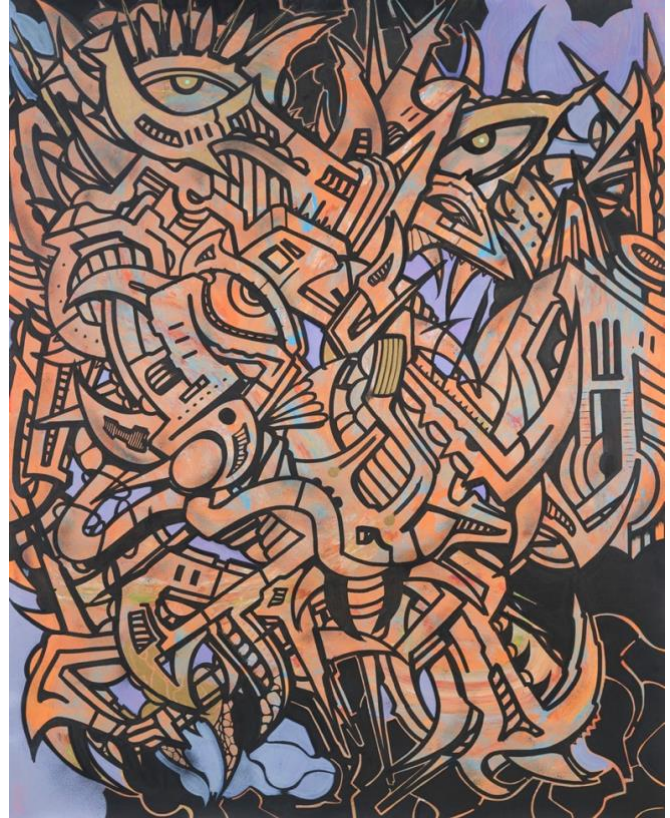


ACA Galleries is pleased to present a solo exhibition of the legendary PHASE 2 (1955-2019) and celebrates his extraordinary contributions to hip-hop and contemporary urban culture. Throughout his life he evolved and explored his craft through a multiplicity of forms from painting, assemblage, collage, sculpture, design, drawing, custom vinyl toys and beyond.

This five-decade survey chronicles the diverse media, styles and themes PHASE 2 created and revisited throughout his career. This exhibition traces the development of his distinctive visual language starting with a “style writing” “aerosolic” painting from 1972 through the 1980s with his “unspoken word” motif to his later “labyrinth” style artworks. Sculptures from the 1990s and his exploration of three-dimensional assemblage and one of a kind vinyl hybrid figures will also be on view alongside works on paper and embossed aluminum plates. A first-generation “writer” with roots in the NYC subway art movement, he was an innovator of what he called “wild lettering.” In 1973 he pioneered the “softie” letter style used in the earliest subway “pieces” and introduced drips, loops, arrows, heart and hump extensions, formatted bars, feet, and fuses, cloud backgrounds and other aesthetic elements that have become a staple in the worldwide art form. PHASE 2 was also among the first “aerosol artists” to paint on canvas and exhibit in galleries. From the first exhibition of the art form in 1973 – at NYC Soho’s Razor Gallery to countless global exhibitions from Italy to Japan.

Known as a “Hip-Hop” pioneer for his fashion trends, musical talent, dance traits and unique party fliers. From rap’s beginnings, PHASE 2 was there from the park jams to the clubs. He rhymed and chanted with his original crooning style rap flow and released the 1982 record entitled “The Roxy”. Through his dance crew, Electrified Movement, he introduced the B-boy world to battle (up) rocking and other styles. He assembled one of the most important B-boy crews, The New York City Breakers. In 1982 he also participated in THE EUROPE 1 sponsored first Hip Hop Tour, “NYC RAP” where he contributed as both as an aerosol artist and a DJ / MC. It was PHASE 2 who initiated and set off the “flyer craze” with his often imitated “funky nous deco” style, which aided in putting “Hip Hop” on the map.

PHASE 2 was the foremost voice for artistic integrity and historical truth within the “writing” and “hip hop” movements. He formed a decade-long partnership with IGTimes, the premiere international street art publication where he edited, art directed and critiqued the culture. His book, “Style: Writing from the Underground,” subtitled “(R)evolution of Aerosol Linguistics,” was published by IGTimes in 1996. PHASE 2 was a master of “style writing” whose works first focused on language, the letter, communication, and then evolved to his own hierographic and beyond — to what he called “visual symbolics”. He was a master draftsman who transformed the graphic into fine art with themes of Afrocentric, Asiatic and inner-city cultures to self-discovery and inner strength. PHASE 2 strove to be an underground artist, building his own worldwide network to advance his artistic narrative — a unique fusion serving our contemporary culture, as architect, artist, advocate. This presentation pays homage to this seminal figure whose true impact has yet to be fully recognized.



A full color catalog accompanies the exhibition with contributions by David Schmidlapp, Pete Nice, Vulcan, Coco 144 and Serouj Arahamian.

About ACA GALLERIES est. 1932

For over 90 years, the American Contemporary Art Gallery (ACA Galleries) has been at the vanguard of American Art by featuring artists whose talent transcends their gender, religion, nationality, or race. ACA Galleries has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to supporting artists in diverse disciplines with singular points of view. Throughout the gallery’s history ACA Galleries has presented over 800 exhibitions and published over 420 books, catalogues and monographs. The artistic and humanitarian mission of the gallery still endures today, and ACA Galleries remains committed to upholding this tradition by continuing to support the highest quality artists in their commitment to make significant and brave contributions to the field.

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Gallery Hours:
Tuesday – Saturday:
11 am – 6pm.
Sunday – Monday:
By Appointment

Artwork Captions:
1) T.O.N.Y. (OY/NOT/VEHME/YELDI)
Spray paint and paint marker on canvas
59 x 114 in.
2) Warriors Chant
Spray paint and paint marker on canvas
69 x 53 in.