



# The Combat Hippies

*present*

# AMAL

Tuesday, November 16, 8 p.m.

Sharp Theater



Our connection to the ancestry of this land and the lands of our ancestors guides and informs this work. We acknowledge the Tequesta, Miccosukee, Calusa, Seminole, Taino and Lenape peoples and their land we create on. We stand in solidarity, honor and respect for all of our ancestral connections from Africa to the New World and all points in between.

**The Berrie Center for the Arts**

*presents*

**AMAL**

by

**The Combat Hippies**

**Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 8 p.m.**

**Berrie Center for the Arts,  
Ramapo College of New Jersey**

# **AMAL**

## **The Cast & Artist Creators**

Teo Castellanos – Artistic Director/Direction & Dramaturgy

Anthony Torres – Executive Director/Writer & Performer

Hipólito Arriaga – Writer & Performer

Angel R. Rodriguez Sr. – Percussionist & Performer

Gary Lund – Light Design & Stage Manager

Seth “Brimstone” Schere – Music Producer

Karelle Levy (Krelwear) – Wardrobe Design

Nour Hudaini – Voiceover

## **Musician Credits**

Drums – Jody Hill

Bass – Natalie “Natty” Schere

Guitar & sound effects – Buffalo Brown

Horns – Leo Casino

Congas & Bata – Angel R. Rodriguez Sr.

Produced, arranged, engineered & mixed by Seth “Brimstone” Schere

Co – produced by Teo Castellanos

## **Support Organizations**

Thomas O. Kriegsmann (ArkType) – Artist Representative

Anchor Arts Management, Inc. – Tour Management & Fiscal Sponsor

Miami Foundation – Fiscal Sponsor

Rick Delgado (NuFrontier Pictures) – Photos & Video

Romain Maurice - Photographer

**AMAL** – A provocative and inspiring spoken-word theater piece that delves into the societal impact of war. Direction and dramaturgy by award-winning theater artist, *Teo Castellanos*, written and performed by military/war veterans *Combat Hippies*, with a head bangin’ original *AfroRican Punk* soundtrack, produced by *DJ Brimstone127* and live percussion by *Angel Ruben Rodriguez Sr.* *AMAL* examines the impact of war with equal parts humor and urgency. It explores the quest for meaning, purpose and identity sought through enlisting in the military and shares the unifying experiences of combatants and noncombatants as people of color. Tough and tender, *AMAL* relays stories of veterans’, refugees’ and civilians’ adjustment to life after war. This all-Puerto Rican theater company, places Puerto Rico’s colonial status, cultural and military heritage center stage. *AMAL* was originally developed for MDC Live Arts at Miami Dade College.

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**Teo Castellanos** – is an actor/writer/director, who works in theater, film and television. His award-winning solo *NE 2nd Avenue* toured extensively for a decade and won the Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Scotland 2003. His most recent solo *Third Trinity* was directed by Oscar winner Tarell Alvin McCraney, whom Teo has had a working relationship and friendship for over 25 years. He founded the Dance/Theater Company *Teo Castellanos DProjects* in 2003 and is Artistic Director of the devised theater company *Combat Hippies*. Teo has toured solo and company works throughout the U.S., Europe, South America, China and the Caribbean. Some acting theater credits include playing Elegba in Tarell’s *The Brothers Size*, (Miami) and Santos in *The Hittite Empire’s Skeletons of Fish* (London). Film credits include playing opposite Matt Dillon in *Sunlight Jr.* and opposite John Leguizamo in *Empire* as well as in *A Change of Heart* with Jim Belushi. He is a United States Artist Fellow 2019 funded by Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and a recipient of several awards and grants including NEA, NEFA, MAP, NPN, Knight New Works, Knight Arts Challenge, Knight Foundation People’s Choice Award, Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs and also won the State of Florida Individual Artist Fellowship 2005 and 2013. He’s a Sundance Institute Screen Writers Intensive Fellow 2015. Teo is a member of SAG/AFTRA, and Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers and holds a BFA in Theater from Florida Atlantic University.

**Gary Lund** – is the President of Anchor Arts Management, Inc. a full-service production management organization devoted to the performing arts. Mr. Lund is a production manager, light designer and stage manager with International, National and Miami artists in dance, theater and music. Mr. Lund has toured with several artists in numerous concert halls and festivals throughout the United States, Europe, South America, the Caribbean, Russia and China. Mr. Lund’s professional career spans over 4 decades.

**Seth “Brimstone” Schere** – is a dynamic leader, educator, activist and artist who embodies Hip Hop’s “Can’t stop, won’t stop!” attitude. He us a Co-founder and Artistic Director of PATH: Preserving, Archiving and Teaching Hip Hop, Inc. He has written and been featured in several articles on Hip Hop culture and education and has served as a lecturer and specialist on Hip Hop history.

**Hipólito Arriaga III – Writer/Performer** – Born and raised in the South Bronx, in 2003 at age 19 Hipólito joined the U.S. Marine Corps where he served as an artilleryman. Following four years of service, which included two deployments to Iraq, he separated from the military honorably. Post service, he began seeking healing for various injuries he sustained, both physical and invisible, leading him on an evolving journey of self-discovery. Hipólito is a writer and performer for the Combat Hippies. He’s also trained in Baptiste Power Yoga and Trauma Conscious Yoga. And serves as a wilderness expedition leader with No Barriers Warriors. His performance and writing experience include “AMAL” and “Conscious Under Fire.”

**Angel Ruben Rodriguez, Sr. - Percussionist/Performer/Writer** – Musician, singer, poet, composer, arranger, actor, producer & educator was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico in 1954. He started playing drums at the age of 9; his first paid gig was at the age of 13. For the past 45 years Angel has dedicated himself to preserving & maintaining Puerto Rico’s rich musical culture. Over his career he has recorded & performed with a who’s who of Latin musicians & served as percussionist at the world famous Apollo Theater Amateur Night With Ralph Cooper Sr. Some of his theater credits include “UBU Enchained” directed by Wiesaw Gorski & Steven Sapp & Full Circle Productions “Soul’er Powered”. One of Angel’s lasting legacies is helping to found & run the Point CDC; a local Bronx based community center with the mission of developing & mentoring youth through the arts.

**Anthony Torres, Jr. – Executive Director/Writer/Performer** – Anthony Torres, Jr. was born in Brooklyn and raised in Utica, New York. He began his military career as a Civil Affairs Specialist in the Army Reserve from 1999-2002, then on active duty as a mental health specialist at Fort Hood, Texas from 2002-2006. In 2004 he was attached to the 115<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital and served on a 12-month deployment to Abu Ghraib Prison, Iraq. While deployed, he provided mental health treatment to both U.S. troops as well as Iraqi detainees. Following an honorable discharge he relocated to Miami, Florida and worked as a psychology technician at the Miami VA Medical Center from 2008-2013. He holds an MS in Psychology from Carlos Albizu University and a Master’s degree in Social Work from Barry University.

## Combat Hippies

**Combat Hippies** – is an ensemble of Puerto Rican military veteran performing artists based in Miami, Florida. Formed during a creative writing workshop for veterans in 2015 which culminated with their inaugural theater piece “*Conscience Under Fire*”, they have since developed multiple evenings of spoken word and music, generative approaches to workshops designed toward healing, community engagement offerings and more. The company focuses on works about combatants as people of color, and shares experiences of veteran’s adjustments to life after war as well as that of civilians from war-torn countries. Their work also explores the search for meaning, purpose, and identity through enlisting in the military, as well as Puerto Rico’s cultural and military heritage. The Combat Hippies are funded through generous support from the Knight Foundation, National Performance Network (NPN), New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), National Ensemble of Theaters (NET), and the MAP Fund.

For more information on **Combat Hippies** visit <https://www.thecombathippies.com>

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Teo Castellanos  
D-PROJECTS



## Volunteers Needed

Interested in the arts? Do you want to do something that is satisfying, fun and of service to the community? Then become a Berrie Center volunteer! We are in need of individuals who have a passion for the arts combined with outstanding patron service skills and are committed to the spirit of volunteerism. Volunteering at the Berrie Center is a great way to expand your knowledge of our multidisciplinary programs, meet new people, and share your love of the arts.

For more information and an application, please contact **Edouard Eloi** at **(201) 684-7341** or email us at **eeloi@ramapo.edu**

### ***Check out our upcoming performances!***

#### **Casey Abrams Trio**

Saturday, December 4, 2021, 8 p.m.

#### **Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass**

Saturday, January 29, 2022, 8 p.m.

#### **Healing Hands – Act I**

Saturday, February 19, 2022, 8 p.m.

#### **Healing Hands – Act II**

Saturday, February 20, 2022, 3 p.m.

#### **Decoda**

Thursday, March 10, 2022, 8 p.m.

#### **Mack Brandon's Gospel Explosion**

Saturday, April 23, 2022, 8 p.m.

### ***More programs are being added!***

For the most up-to-date listing, go to our website at

**[ramapo.edu/berriecenter](http://ramapo.edu/berriecenter)**

or call the box office at **201.684.7844**



"Amal" is funded in part by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.