

**Hang 'Em High Productions Presents the 3rd Annual Southern Entertainment Awards
January 20-22, 2006
Grand Casino Resort, Tunica, MS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(August 29, 2005-Nashville, TN)—Since 2003, the annual **Southern Entertainment Awards** has been revered as the first awards show in the South to honor the independent talent of those working within the urban entertainment industry. It's also the first awards show to provide the community, both artists and fans alike, with the opportunity to nominate and vote for the winners in each category. For this reason, the SEAs has quickly become one of the most celebrated events for regional DJs, models, rappers, R&B singers, websites, mix tapes, magazines and more.

“We saw a void that other award ceremonies did not want to fill,” says **Janiro Hawkins**, co-founder and event coordinator for the SEAs. “Sadly, it's rare that independent talent will get recognized for any of their achievements, especially within their local community, until they ‘make it’. We have lost great talent in the past because they didn't feel as though they were appreciated. If an artist knows that what they do is important and that people are actually listening [we believe] they will continue to make quality music and that they will continue to get better.”

While the SEAs enthusiastically applauds the accomplishments of all urban music entertainers, the founder of the awards, **Jesse Johnson** (DJ Infamous) especially wanted to provide a platform for those who work within his craft. “DJs in the South have always been overlooked by other ceremonies and so we took it upon ourselves to highlight the accomplishments of DJs for creatively making the lasting impression on music that they do,” he says.

In 2005, the SEAs had over 1200 people in attendance including nationally-known artists like David Banner, Pastor Troy, Yo Gotti, Big V (Nappy Roots) and All Star. This year as the coverage expands to 11 southern states (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas), it is expected that this number will double thanks in part to scheduled panel discussions including, “How To Get A Record Deal”, “How To Get Your Record Played On The Radio” and “How To Loose \$1 Million: Top 10 Mistakes People Make In The Industry”, and the endless networking opportunities that will be available to all attendees over the three-day event.

—more—

“Next year, our conference will have more to offer than ever before,” says Hawkins. “Our conference organizer, **Wendy Day** [of the Rap Coalition] has some new and fresh ideas that will take our show to another level. Also, because all of our events will take place onsite at the Grand Casino Resort (Tunica, MS), people won’t have to travel to different venues around town which will give attendees more time to meet with more people in their field. You never know, the artist, DJ or music Exec that you need may be just a few feet away from you. By coming out to see what our event has to offer, it can only help your career in the sense that it’s a supportive and celebratory environment for all of those in the independent music industry that are trying to make a difference.”

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4th Annual Southern Entertainment Awards

Celebrating the BEST in independent urban entertainment in the SOUTH

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Nashville, TN—February 2006—This past January marked the huge success of the 3rd Annual Southern Entertainment Awards at the Grand Casino in Tunica, MS. Co-founders, Janiro Hawkins II and DJ Infamous are already gearing up another great year.

Thanks to the incorporation of *all* the Southern states (TN, GA, OK, TX, MS, FL, AR, AL, NC SC and LA), new award categories including best “Urban Magazine”, “Mixtape Website”, “Model” and “Spoken Word Artist”, and the assistance of the Rap Coalition founder, Wendy Day, the SEAs have received more than just a little buzz around the urban entertainment community.

Nationally-generated pre-press garnered them a feature on the celebrated online hip-hop magazine website, AllHipHop Dot Com and MTV was on site during the awards program that had an attendance of over 1,200 people. National DJs (Clinton Sparks, DJ Drama, Rapid Ric), artists (BG, Yo Gotti, La Chat, Ms. Cherry, Gangsta Boo, DSR), promoters and label executives from all over the country including New York, New Jersey, California, Ohio and Michigan were also in attendance, proving that this event is not just for southern-based artists but for all those in the independent industry.

“I’ve also noticed more people planning ahead for the SEAs, from the timing of when artists release their CDs to magazines creating special issues around the event,” says Janiro Hawkins II. “I’m really proud of its progression. The only thing differently I would like to see in 2007 is for more people to make it out for the entire weekend so that they can benefit from not just the awards show but the conference and various panels as well. This year there were about 300-500 people in attendance at the conferences, which is approximately a 200% growth from when we first began. But, because we’re always trying to stay on top of the advancements in the entertainment industry, we believe that the entire experience could play a significant role in taking independent artists to that next level.”

Next year will bring about more additions including new award categories (“Impact Personality”, “Slept On Personality”, “Record Pool”, “Independent DVD”, “Mix DVD”, “DVD Magazine”). However, while the founders of the SEAs currently reside in Nashville, the home of the awards show will remain in Tunica.

“Tunica has welcomed us with open arms and for now, this is the place best suited for what we want to achieve,” says Hawkins.

Nominations for the 2007 Southern Entertainment Awards will begin on Monday, May 1, 2006 and voting will start on Friday, September 1, 2006.

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2007 SEA Awards a sure bet at Tunica's Grand Casino Resort

Nashville, TN—January 31, 2007—If you weren't one of the 1900 people in attendance at the 4th Annual Southern Entertainment Awards in Tunica, MS., you definitely should've been. The weekend long event which kicked off with an artist showcase on Thursday, January 25 and ended with the awards show on Sunday, January 28 was filled with music, conferences and invaluable networking for all participants—both on stage and off.

Although the focus of this event is to formally acknowledge independent DJs, recording artists, poets, website designers, magazines, e-zines, models, designers and venues working regionally in the rap industry, Janiro Hawkins II, VP and event coordinator says therein lies a deeper motivation.

"We love music, but what we strive to do during this time is educate artists about the business side of music," says Hawkins. "We work twice as hard as the person who works twice as hard so that we can do our part to better the quality of music that's coming out."

Friday, January 26 and Saturday, January 27 were filled with standing room only panels featuring topics like *How to Get a Record or Production Deal*, *Making an Impact: Building a Tremendous Buzz*, *The Digital Frontier*, *The Mixtape Game*, *How to Get Your Record Played on the Radio*.

The event also included a Serato Scratch workshop and Meet & Greet sponsored by Swisha House. But, perhaps the most memorable moments during the award-winning weekend were the star-studded performances by Jody Breeze, Trae, Dee Boi, Paper, Big Tuck & Tum Tum, La Chat, 4ize, Rudy Currence, Lotto, Pure Pain, Cadillac Don & J. Money, Billy Cook, Mr. Sche, Billy Cook and Gangsta Boo.

"Every year, thanks to the staff and conference organizer Wendy Day, the SEAs get larger and larger," says Hawkins. "Already we're working on getting the word out about our 5th year and we plan on it being our best one yet."

So, what will they be doing in the meantime? "We have a magazine in the works that will feature some of the SEA nominees, winners, sponsors and upcoming talent in the South," says Hawkins. "It will premiere bi-yearly; once during nominations (May) and then again when it's time for people to place their votes (September). We're also putting plans together to have next year nationally televised. It's time that more people know that the South is doing great things."

The 5th Annual SEA Awards will take place on Thursday, January 24 thru Saturday, January 27, 2008 in Tunica, MS.

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THE 6th ANNUAL SOUTHERN ENTERTAINMENT AWARDS “It Just Keeps Gettin’ Betta!”

Nashville, TN---Those who attended the 5th Annual Southern Entertainment Awards (SEA) can certainly vouch for the fact that it was the best one to date. With approximately 3,000 people in attendance over the three-day weekend event and close to 1900 attending the Sunday awards show, the urban independent music scene of the South definitely made their presence seen, heard and felt at the Harrah’s Casino & Resort in Tunica, MS.

As the SEA phenomenon continues to grow, sponsors are signing up in show of their support including the Houston-based BCD Music Group, which gave the 2008 Indy Rap Artist of The Year a \$30,000 package containing a cash prize of \$5,000, an all expense paid trip to their Houston facility, and a recording and EP release budget. This being just another sign of what the SEA founders, Janiro Hawkins II, Jesse “DJ Infamous” Johnson and Brent “DJ Outlaw” Buford believed back in 2003: that the independent hip-hop culture of the South is lucrative, powerful and not going anywhere any time soon.

As they gear up for their sixth year, even greater things are in store. The first day will kick off with events honoring women in the industry with female-focused pampering sessions, workshops and panels. There will be 18 new categories added to this year’s nominations ballot including DJ Crew/Family of the Year, Photographer/Journalist of the Year, “Beat” of the Year, Program/Music Director of the Year (radio), Internet Hustler of the Year, Slept On Model of the Year, Community Activist of the Year and Role Model of the Year. The recipients of 2009 Impact Awards have also been announced: Tony Neal (founder of Core DJs/Core DJ Retreat/Core Streets/Core Models), J. Prince (founder of Rap-A-Lot Records), Tony Draper (founder of Suave House) and the legendary Luke (founder of 2 Live Crew and Luke Records).

“The SEA Impact Award was created to give recognition to individuals who have contributed significantly to the growth and development of entertainment in the South,” says Janiro. “We are excited to present awards to these four men because we feel that they have been an integral part of accomplishing this objective.”

As the SEAs officially inducts an additional state to their SEA delegate ballot (Kentucky), in the effort to better serve the voting community, they have also made some changes to the nominations process which begins on Thursday, May 1, 2008. For the first time, there will only be online voting (no paper ballots) and a “Power Ballot” will also be introduced into this year’s voting process.

“This special ballot will be mailed out secretly to two people per (eligible) state,” says Janiro. “These ballots will count for 30% of the overall vote, while the online votes will round out the remaining 70%. While we want to make sure that the voting process is fair, we will always want this to be an awards event where the people/fans have the final say. That’s always going to be what’s most important to us.”

An awards show that respects the power of the southern urban independent music scene? If you’ve never made it the Mississippi way, what are you waiting for? Make your plans now to attend the 6th Annual SEA Awards. They will be taking place on February 26th – March 1st, 2009 at the Harrah’s Casino & Resort in Tunica, MS and it’s definitely worth the trip. Just ask the thousands who already know!

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For more information on the SEAs check out www.southernentwards.com