



Up Close and Personal with Manno Charlemagne "The Bob Dylan of Haiti" 3rd HAITI ON FIRE

Opening Show – Thursday, July 23, 2009
Théâtre Plaza – 6505 St-Hubert Street, Montreal
7 p.m. - \$20 (in advance) - www.haitienfolie.com

Montreal, June 8, 2009 – The 3rd edition of Haiti on Fire is going to create some added heat in Montreal this summer! Manno Charlemagne, activist Haitian singer and guitarist, whose last visit to Montreal dates back to the 2002 *Francofolies*, kicks off the festivities on July 23, 2009 at Théâtre Plaza (6505 St-Hubert Street, Montreal). The Sponsors of the 3rd edition of Haiti on Fire are Dan Behrman and Maguy Metellus and the Spokesperson is Francine Grimaldi.

The Fabienne Colas Foundation, the organizer of Haiti on Fire, is proud and very honoured to present this special intimate evening with Manno Charlemagne, to mark his extraordinary 30-year career. His latest album, *Les Inédits de Manno*, will be available for purchase at the show. Manno Charlemagne is: a unique voice; activist, lyrical poetry; a blend of imagery, protest and humour; unparalleled charm!

AN ANTI-CONFORMIST NAMED MANNO

Described as the "*Bob Dylan of Haiti*" by Dan Behrman, as the "*Georges Brassens of Haiti*" by Jean-Marc Ravatel, and as "*a rare, well-preserved monument*" by countless others, Manno Charlemagne is a Haitian writer, singer and guitarist, as well as a political activist and former politician. His songs, recorded in Creole and French, denounce the status quo in Haiti, as well as its social and political inequalities. His firm, whistle-blowing stances contributed to getting him exiled in the 1980's and in the early 1990's.

Manno's life was threatened after the 1991 coup d'état and he had to take refuge at the Argentine Embassy in Port-au-Prince. News of his situation spread to the U.S. and to a very influential friend of his, director Jonathan Demme. Demme got a group of friends together - Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, James Earl Jones and Robert De Niro – who all intervened to set Manno free and to get him asylum in the U.S. In 1994, he returned to Haiti and became mayor of Port-au-Prince from 1995 to 1999.

To someone who does not speak Creole, Manno's songs may sound like love songs, but they are songs of protest against oppression, injustice and corruption. Songs that call us to resist, songs that speak about change. Songs that awaken the conscience of the most underprivileged and the most exploited among us. Through his lyrical style, he gives a voice to the peasants, the poor, the weak, the millions of people with no voice...

While he was mayor of Port-au-Prince, his work overshadowed his musical career and one of his rare public performances during this period was in the summer of 1997 with the Haitian-American rap group, The Fugees. Manno also appeared in Jonathan Demme's film "The Truth about Charlie" (La Vérité à propos de Charlie).

HAITI ON FIRE – THE MOST COLOURFUL FESTIVAL IN TOWN

Haiti on Fire is a 4-day program of rich and varied entertainment: music, cinema, dance, theatre, food, crafts. 4 days, 4 locations, 4 shows, 4 premieres – from July 23 to 26, 2009!!! Haiti like you've never seen it before, right in the heart of Montreal! Program: www.haitienfolie.com .

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Source: Fabienne Colas Foundation
www.Fondationfabiennecolas.org

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