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ZAKAFEST KICKS-OFF HAITIAN HERITAGE MONTH FOR ITS 8TH ANNUAL ZAKAFEST ART FESTIVAL

The tradition continues in the heart of Little Haiti with Haitian music, lectures, folk culture, art and food at the family friendly Zakafest Art Festival scheduled to take place at the Little Haiti Cultural Complex on Saturday, May 6, 2017.

(April 5, 2017) -Miami, FL. – Fondasyon Zaka, a not-for-profit organization based in Miami, ushers in **Haitian Heritage Month** at the 8th annual **Zakafest Art Festival**. The afternoon-long celebration of Haitian roots, culture and folklore is scheduled to take place at the Little Haiti Cultural Complex on Saturday, May 6th starting at 1pm until 10pm.

“Zaka” is the patron spirit of farmers and Zakafest is an amalgamation of all forms of Haitian folk culture. The festival has grown over the years, and includes lectures, educational performances that showcase a variety of Haitian traditional art forms including music, dance and other cultural activities. Attendees will be able to enjoy food and traditional handmade, artistic craft.

This year’s festival will open with a new element-a panel discussion entitled, *Black Liberation, Religion & Spirituality Today*. Moderated by local artist and emerging scholar **Empress Addi**, within the center’s theatre, the panel aims to bring leaders of different sects who, although do not serve to speak for entire bodies of their chosen religions/congregations, can offer solutions to the disservice of divisiveness, we face in our communities. The esteemed panel guests include Student Minister of the Nation of Islam, **Patrick Muhammad**; noted scholar and published author and professor, **Dr. Paul Camy Mocombe**; Archdeacon for Immigration and Social Justice Ministries Diocese of Southeast Florida, the venerable **Dr. J. E. Fritz Bazin**; Department Chair of Anthropology at Faculté d’Ethnologie of University of Haiti, **Walex Pierre**; 7th Day Adventist Pastor and Masters of Divinity, **Henoc Paulicin**; and Okomfowaa (priestess-in-training of the Akan spiritual lineage of Ghana), Yogi and Vegan Chef **Nzingah Oniwoson**.

The festival will ensue with a line-up of industry superlatives. World renowned, **Jean Caze**, Julliard trained, virtuoso trumpeter who has performed and/or recorded with Herbie Hancock, Aretha Franklin, Michael Bubl , Mariah Carey, and Al Jarreau, to name a few, will grace the mainstage. Also, world-touring vocalist, **Ada**, whose powerful presence and authenticity continues to captivate audiences everywhere will be belting powerful tunes from her recent album. Added to the bill is the **Oxygen Box Band**, which is a social justice band that promises to retrain the world how on to love; local rappers **Steve Marve** and **Godobe**; and master world drummer, **Elhadji Mohamed**. Cultural dances performances, art exhibitions and food presentations will also be integral parts of the festival.

The mission of Fondasyon Zaka is to promote Haitian culture to Haitians and non-Haitians by providing interactive educational activities. We strive to connect people to Haitian folk culture via music, art, and dance. Our vision is to become an organization in the South Florida community that educates the public about Haitian Folk culture, providing them with exposure to Haitian educational activities, positive role models and a productive environment.

For more information visit www.Zakafest.com or call 954.643.2833. For information regarding the religious panel call 305.731.1461