

Mayor Mamdani Proclaims Lyricist Lounge Day. Co-Founder Anthony Marshall Says the Real Work Is Just Beginning

Mayor Zohran Mamdani's proclamation marks 35 years of Lyricist Lounge, and a new chapter Anthony Marshall is calling hip hop's next mission

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Mayor Zohran Mamdani has proclaimed August 14, 2026, "Lyricist Lounge Day" in New York City, honoring 35 years since Anthony Marshall and Danny Castro turned a weekly open mic on Manhattan's Lower East Side into one of hip hop's most influential launching pads. The proclamation coincided with BRIC's Celebrate Brooklyn concert series event celebrating Lyricist Lounge's 35th anniversary at the Lena Horne Bandshell in Prospect Park, headlined by Jadakiss.

The honor caps three decades that gave early stages to Notorious B.I.G., Eminem, 50 Cent, The Roots, Mos Def, Talib Kweli, and Common, and produced the influential Lyricist Lounge, Volume One compilation with Rawkus Records, along with The Lyricist Lounge Show on MTV.

Mamdani, the first NYC mayor to have previously pursued a career as a rapper, called Lyricist Lounge a standout among the institutions that shaped the city.

But for Anthony Marshall, the anniversary points forward, not back. "This is beyond entertainment," Marshall said in a recent interview with WPIX. "This is cultural wellness."

Marshall's read is straightforward: a packed room, a free show, a crowd walking away happy and buzzing after a night out, that isn't just a good time. It's a public health moment. Joy is not incidental to community wellness. It is a delivery mechanism for it, and hip hop, Marshall argues,



Co-founders Anthony Marshall and Danny Castro

is one of the most effective vehicles the culture has ever built for delivering it at scale.

With a mayor's office now on record recognizing the institution Marshall helped build, the question Marshall is posing next is bigger than one concert or one proclamation: what happens when a city with real infrastructure decides hip hop is not just entertainment to celebrate, but a public wellness tool worth investing in.

Marshall is available for interviews to discuss what cultural wellness looks like in practice, and where he sees the movement heading next.

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