



## RED BULL ARTS NEW YORK ANNOUNCES LARGEST SURVEY TO DATE OF LATE ARTIST AND NEW YORK ICON

### RAMMELLZEE



Rammellzee as 'Crux the Monk', July 2002. Photograph by Keetja Allard.

(NEW YORK, NY — FEBRUARY 20, 2017) — [Red Bull Arts New York](#) is excited to announce *RAMMELLZEE: Racing for Thunder*, the largest survey to date of one of the most influential yet overlooked artists of the 20th century. The exhibition will be on view from **May 4–August 26, 2018**. For the first time, the exhibition's opening will inaugurate the opening of **Red Bull Music Festival New York**.

The cultural impact of the equation know as The **Rammellzee** (1960-2010)—legendary artist, graff writer, hip-hop pioneer, Gothic Futurist theoretician, and New York cult icon—laid the groundwork for today's interdisciplinary creative hyphenates. A polymath who emerged from the late 1970's New York City graffiti and hip hop culture as “King of the A Line,” Rammellzee has always been an in-the-know reference. Making striking cameos in works by his contemporaries, he took the stage in **Charlie Ahearn's** early hip-hop film classic “[Wild Style](#),” mesmerized in his cameo for director **Jim Jarmusch's** “[Stranger Than Paradise](#),” and was depicted wearing his signature sunglasses by his one-time collaborator **Jean-Michel Basquiat** in the painting “[Hollywood Africans](#).” Rammellzee's seminal record “[Beat Bop](#)”—produced and first issued by Basquiat—is still widely regarded as one of the foundational tracks of early rap, and has inspired myriad artists such as **Parliament Funkadelic**, the **Beastie Boys** and **RATKING**.

At the height of his career, Rammellzee rejected the art world and withdrew from society to his infamous Tribeca loft, the **Battlestation**, where he would complete his total work, including two iconic bodies of work that would cement his place in history. The first, his **Letter Racers**, combine the dynamic formalism of Italian Futurism with the dumpster-diving accumulation



of plastic pop culture. These assemblages, mounted on skateboards or the chassis of remote-controlled cars, are both futuristic and derelict. The second, his pantheon of **Garbage Gods**, is a virtuosic army of techno-mythic figures, created from the detritus found strewn in the streets of New York City.

Taking over the entirety of **Red Bull Arts New York**, this expansive survey examines the evolution of Rammellzee's diverse body of work. From seminal post-graffiti works to his rare but robust formal output throughout the 1980s, and important artworks and sculptural series created primarily in the *Battlestation* over the last 20 years of his life. The exhibition gathers archival materials and artworks from Rammellzee's estate, collections around the world, and oral histories recently commissioned by Red Bull Arts New York. This historic exhibition aims to introduce a new generation to the artist-prophet from the edge who found himself, again and again, in the center of everything.

**RAMMΣLLZΣΣ: Racing for Thunder** is organized by Red Bull Arts New York Chief Curator **Max Wolf** and cultural critic **Carlo McCormick**, with Associate Curators Christian Omodeo, Jeff Mao, and Candice Strongwater.

Special thanks to Lucy Castile and the Estate of RAMMΣLLZΣΣ.

Exhibition collaborators:

Art Direction: Erin Knutson

Architecture & Exhibition Design: studioSTIGSGAARD

Exhibition Manager: Amanda Contrada

Installation Managers: Kyle Clairmont-Jacques, Kyla Chevrier

Gallery Manager: Jenny Slattery

**RED BULL ARTS NEW YORK** is an experimental, non-commercial arts space dedicated to offering new opportunities to local and international artists by supporting bold ideas and ambitious projects. Red Bull Arts New York focuses on extending the boundaries of exhibition making; supporting the production of new work by emerging and established artists; presenting historical surveys and large-scale presentations; and exploring the intellectual and philosophical provocations of our contemporary ethos. Past exhibitions include *Sarah Meyohas: Cloud of Petals* (2017), *Ugo Rondinone: I ♥ John Giorno* (2017), *Bjarne Melgaard: The Casual Pleasure of Disappointment* (2017), *TOTAL PROOF: The GALA Committee 1995-1997* (2016), and *BIO:DIP* (2015), a two-person solo exhibition by Nicolas Lobo and Hayden Dunham curated by Neville Wakefield, among others.

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