

AKINTOLA HANIF



BIOGRAPHY

Growing up in Brooklyn, Akintola Hanif was no stranger to the fine arts scene. As a child, he and his father often frequented places like the National Black Theater and the legendary Studio Museum in Harlem, introducing him to some of the most prominent artists of the time. This early exposure was the stepping stone for Akintola's immense interest in the visual arts.

Akintola was introduced to the graffiti and pop art movement, which dominated New York City's gallery scene, at a young age. By his early teens, Akintola had learned the art of airbrushing and spray painting and began painting murals on the walls and storefronts of New York City under the tag Dest (AOK,CWK). One of his murals is immortalized in Henry Chalfant's 1985 book "Spraycan Art".

Akintola was given the alias Hyze at the age of 19 and later moved to New Jersey, where he studied photography. After receiving his Associate's Degree in Visual Communications, he continued to pursue his creative interests at New York City's prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology.

Hyze started documenting the lives of the people of the Arcadian Gardens in 2000. It is an ongoing project that has also begun to take shape as a feature-length documentary film entitled "The Bity". In 2005, Hip-Hop for the P.E.O.P.L.E., a project led by Newark Deputy Mayor Ras Baraka, hired Akintola as Director of Photography for a prolific documentary that outlines their groundbreaking efforts to establish a peace treaty between rival gangs in Newark. Akintola's first film, *Freedom or Everybody Dies*, a 5-minute mixed media short, was featured in the kick-off for the Museum of African American Music, in May 2005. This was followed by his first solo show at the Eyejammie Fine Arts Gallery in New York City. Akintola's work has also been featured at landor Fine Arts Gallery as part of the Newark Art Council's Fall 2004 Open Doors Tour, the Annual Lesbian Erotic Arts Fair at New York's The Center and the 2005 H2O [Hip-Hop Odyssey] Film Festival.

Currently, Akintola is teaching photojournalism at New Jersey's Youth Build Newark program where he is also the resident photographer.

For inquiries and bookings contact:

Raquel Wilson
DOPE SWAN
(718) 841-7916
rock@dopeswan.com
www.dopeswan.com