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**HBO Def Poet Paul Flores takes Free Street's stage this fall
with a solo show and a master artist workshop.**

Chicago, IL—Free Street Theater presents a one-night performance by hip-hop theater and HBO Def Poet **Paul Flores** in his solo show: **YOU'RE GONNA CRY**. Combining hip-hop theater, spoken word, video and a gangster puppet show, Paul Flores portrays numerous characters that live in San Francisco's Mission District, including Latino bohemians, techies, and immigrants, to confront the issue of gentrification and its effect on local communities.

Featuring HBO Def Poet Roger Bonair-Regard, Young Chicago Authors Poet Jose Olivarez and Free Street youth artist Malikah Saunders. **This is a one night only event!** Be there on Friday, October 14th at 7:00PM at Free Street Theater's blackbox theater in Pulaski Park. 1419 West Blackhawk St, 3rd Floor. Tickets at the door and at freestreet.org: \$10-15. Doors open at 6:45PM.

On Saturday, October 15th, Free Street will host an open workshop lead by Mr. Flores: "Spoken Word and The MC as Hip-Hop Theater" at 2:00PM. Suggested donation for the workshop is \$10. Reservations can be made at freestreet.org.

About Free Street Theater

For 41 seasons, Free Street Theater has used the performing arts to enhance literacy, creativity, leadership qualities and employability of populations consistently excluded from mainstream cultural programming. After two decades of working with underserved populations in areas including Cabrini Green and the Cook County Correctional facility, Free Street focused its mission towards working with low-income youth. Through ensemble-based creative processes that engage youth, professional artist collaboration and mentorship and visiting scholars, Free Street Theater has been developing performances that explore artistic form, language creation and the essential meaning of being human.

Free Street youth have created and performed 11 productions internationally in 6 countries and performed in over 48 European Theater Festivals. In 2009, Free Street Theater celebrated its 40th year, reaching an important milestone in being Chicago's oldest running theater providing access to the arts for Chicago's underserved communities. In the same year, Free Street was the recipient of *The Hopie Award* for Innovation and Creativity from the Lester and Hope Abelson Fund for the Performing Arts. In 2010, Free Street Theater travelled to Thailand to collaborate with Makhampom Theater in an exchange of pedagogy, performance creation and cross-cultural experience.

Paul S. Flores is a published poet, performance artist, playwright and well known spoken word artist. His work explores the intersection of urban culture, Hip-Hop and transnational identity. Flores' PEN Award winning novel *Along the Border Lies* reflects his youth spent between Tijuana, Mexico and San Diego developing a border consciousness. His spoken word poem "Brown Dreams" from Def Poetry on HBO has been viewed on YouTube nearly 100,000 times, and continues to inform and influence young people all over the United States. In May 2011, Flores was named the San Francisco Weekly's 2011 Best Politically Active Hip-Hop Performance Artist. His play *REPRESENTA!* was directed by Danny Hoch, produced by San Francisco International Arts Festival and premiered at the Hip-Hop Theater Festival in 2007 at La Pena Cultural Center. Flores is a highly respected youth arts development specialist. As a co-founder of Youth Speaks, he introduced spoken word to hundreds of thousands of youth all over the country, from native reservations, to public schools, to juvenile halls, to counseling centers. He helped develop the national platform for young people to build peer relationships and strategize toward a better future through the Brave New Voices: National Teen Poetry Slam, now seen on HBO. Flores has twice received the National Performance Network's Creation Fund, and was recently awarded his third CCI Investing in Artists Grant, an NEA Theater grant and a NALAC Fund for the Arts grant. He now teaches Hip-Hop Theater and Spoken Word at the University of San Francisco.