OVERVIEW: In the spring of 2004, three BFA students in the Department of Undergraduate Drama at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, asked Dr. Daniel Banks, an internationally known theatre director and faculty member, to help them advance the work they had been doing independently, outside of their training studios and academic classrooms. As the group of students and curricular activities grew, the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative was born—a response to student desire to marry their acting training with their love for and commitment to Hip Hop culture.

MISSION:

Integrate the rigors of theatre making with the performance elements and politics of the youth-driven, activist culture of Hip Hop.

Train practitioners in critical thinking, leading arts workshops in communities, and facilitating dialogue about the social issues pertaining to Hip Hop.

Under the leadership of Daniel Banks, the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative (HHTI) has produced:

- a curriculum of six courses
- a series of workshops and lecture demonstrations
- a full-length devised Hip Hop Theatre performance
- community action projects in Ghana, South Africa, Mexico, Pittsburgh, and New York

HHTI’S WORK HAS BEEN SEEN AT:

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
University of Western Michigan
S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, New York
West Virginia State University
Naropa University
Southeastern Theatre Conference, Greensboro, NC
Bennett College for Women/ North Carolina A&T
Kent State University
Black Theatre Network Conference, University of Florida, Gainesville
University of Central Florida
University of California, Riverside
New York University,
Performance Studies Dept. & Tisch Scholars Program
Disney Theatricals, Orlando, FL
The Pittsburgh Project
Harlem Stages/Aaron Davis Hall
International Peace Research Association Conference, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
The Market Theatre, Johannesburg, South Africa
University of Ghana,
Legon Buduburam,
Former UNHCR Liberian Refugee Camp, Ghana

Press and references available upon request.