

## Tim'm T. West presents *Ready, Set, Grow: a coming of age story*



"Ready, Set, Grow" is a coming of age one-man show by critically acclaimed rapper and Spoken Word Artist Tim'm T. West that speaks to the question: What becomes of little black boys who've considered suicide robbed of any rites of passage? Inspired by the works of James Baldwin, Hélène Cixous, and his mentors Ntozake Shange and Carl Hancock Rux, Tim'm offers a coming of age story, through spoken word, rap, movement, and song, that suggests an inalienable right to these rites. Moving through the complex maze of American poverty, racism, sexism, and sexuality, "Ready, Set, Grow" suggests that "waiting for superman" may not be as empowering as becoming a super man. How do we save ourselves? How do we respect the diversity and complexity of black male experience when so many young men, objectified

and stigmatized at birth, are sucked into a system recycling defeatist and hopeless futures. One man, through his own transparent, vulnerable, and redemptive experiences offers one way he strives in spite of racism, poverty, homophobia, HIV/AIDS. Surely there are other ways: Ready. Set. Let's Grow!

"Ready, Set, Grow: a coming of age story" had its formal debut at the Black Arts Movement Festival in Austin, TX on June 16, 2011. A trial run of the show received standing ovations at both North Carolina Central University and South Dallas Cultural Center (October 2010).

**Tim'm T. West** is an author, poet, activist, and rapper who is Buckeye born (Cincinnati) and Razorback Raised (Little Rock & Taylor). He has degrees from Duke, The New School, and Stanford Universities and has spent much of his adult professional life between secondary & postsecondary teaching and Youth Advocacy and HIV Education & Prevention. Tim'm recently taught Philosophy and English at Houston Community College before relocating in the summer of 2011 to Chicago, IL. He continues to lecture and perform across the U.S. and abroad. More information about Tim'm can be found at: [www.reddirt.biz](http://www.reddirt.biz)

### Praise for "Ready, Set, Grow: a coming of age story"

*Tim'm West throws out the constraint of the monolithic, Black male sexual experience with his diverse and poetic memoir influenced one-man show. His exploration of sexism and poverty linked to the Black male experience is one that needs to be examined and treasured.*

- S. Velvet Noose, performance artist & author of forthcoming "Lip Sync"

*Navigating the terrain of social constructs like homophobia, racism, and poverty as well as HIV and other challenges, Tim'm West has always used his superb poetic heart, that, matched with a keen intellect to not avoid those subjects, but to dissect them and to help us understand them. It's his journey and he always offers to take us along.*

~ Doug Cooper Spencer, Author, 'This Place of Men Trilogy'

*Bearing witness for salvation is a tough sell in days of confession mistaken as testimony, but West never confuses the two. Using his personal to painstakingly expound upon the major themes and concerns of people too often considered minor, Tim'm infuses his ambitious work with a rare weight, vulnerable heart, and a sincere, urgent need to bear witness for both his salvation and our own. Preach, brother, preach.*

- L. Michael Gipson, Author, Collisions: A Collection of Intersections

*In "Ready, Set, Grow" Tim'm sings, raps and poets life to be spoken through the soil of racism, homophobia and HIV/AIDS. This is his gift, a sustaining voice to nourish black folks everywhere."*

- Marvin K. White, Author, Last Rights, Nothin' Ugly Fly, Our Name Be Witness and Status.

*Imagine this...a show that appeals to a resilience we all share...a story told in rap, music, and spoken word that asks us to rise above the complex oppressions of everyday life to be the best we can be everyday. In "Ready Set Grow" critically acclaimed rapper and spoken word artist Tim'm T. West will move you to rise above poverty, sexism, and heteronormative sexuality and the systematic recycling of hopeless futures to ask... "Why not me?"*

- Nancy Olson, Vancouver Canada