



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Recalculating route: New Yorkers play, dance, and jump in Times Square during the fourth annual Come Out & Play Festival June 12-14.

Dates: June 12-14, 2009

Location: The Tank (354 W 45th St; New York, NY 10036)

Contact: Catherine Herdlick, Festival Director (cherdlick@comeoutandplay.org, 917-821-3078)

(New York, NY) May, 26 2009 -- Mayor Bloomberg's innovative pedestrian-friendly initiative to close Broadway to vehicular traffic this summer levels up New York City in a major way for city-sized fun. During the weekend of June 12-14, as cars take alternate routes around the "Crossroads of the World," pedestrian-players will romp through Midtown's sidewalks, parks, and subways playing locative spelling games and golf with iPhones, chasing intergalactic aliens, and competing in a rodeo. It's part of the fourth annual **Come Out & Play Festival**. It's all free.

Once the province of art students or tech R&D departments, new types of games for shared physical spaces are now practically mainstream. The trend recently caught the attention of the *New York Times*, which recognized **Come Out & Play** games *Circle Rules Football* (2009) and *Whiffle Hurling* (2008) as part of a growing "art-sport" movement.¹ Additionally, the popular adoption of GPS-enabled smartphones like the iPhone has made it easier than ever to play location-aware games while opening the doors for commercial success.

"People want to take time to stop and smell the roses, but New York City doesn't smell rosey in June. Plus, it's a city built on raw adrenaline," says Catherine Herdlick, director of the **Come Out & Play Festival**. "Breaking a sweat to play the grid amidst a dramatic backdrop like Times Square or Central Park is an incredibly exhilarating and memorable way to connect with the city and its people." But not all the games require extreme physical exertion. Games like *Day in the*

¹ Williams, Alex. "Whiffle Hurling? Bag Tag? Hey, It's Art." *New York Times*. 15 May 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/17/fashion/17games.html>

Park (based on enormous tangrams) and *Train Mafia* (an urban variant of the party game Mafia) will challenge players' minds more than their bodies.

The **2009 Come Out & Play Festival** is the biggest one yet, with three days of over 30 brand new games created by top game designers from around the globe. The games take place along 45th street between the Hudson River and Broadway and in Central Park, with home base at The Tank. An opening ceremony on Friday night features a meet-and-greet about the games and the festival, a panel discussion on Saturday morning explores the intersections of geography and gaming, and a bumping party on Saturday night honors the people who make everything worthwhile: the players. New for 2009 is an awards ceremony on Sunday afternoon to recognize the best games of the festival. Visit www.comeoutandplay.org for the full schedule of events.

About Come Out & Play

Since 2006, the world-renowned **Come Out & Play Festival** has coaxed New Yorkers outside of their apartments to frolic and play together, re-imagining their city streets as a playground. We seek to provide a forum for new types of public games and play. We want to bring together a public eager to rediscover the world around them through play with designers interested in producing innovative new games and experiences. Oh yeah, and we want to have city-size fun.

About The Tank

The Tank is a non-profit arts presenter whose mission is to provide a welcoming, creative, collaborative, and affordable environment for artists and activists engaged in the pursuit of new ideas. Through a wide range of low-cost, high-concept arts and public affairs programming, The Tank seeks to cultivate a new generation of audience for live performance, civic discourse, and the work of emerging artists.

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