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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS ANNOUNCES THE RETURN OF THE 18TH
ANNUAL NEW YORK COMEDY FESTIVAL**

Karin Kopano, Managing Director, Hard Rock Hotel New York: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Karin Kopano. I am the managing director at Hard Rock Hotel in New York. I am so pleased to be welcoming you this morning. Hard Rock as a brand, we have a vision to be part of the cultural scene in New York City. We are so fortunate to be in the heart of Manhattan, a few steps from the Theater District, and we're surrounded with a lot of entertainment venues. It's so exciting to see the energy levels rising again in the city, and we're proud to be on the front row seat to see this resurgence. We have a full commitment to continue the momentum.

Kopano: Some of you may know that 48th Street is also called Music Row, and it used to be the mecca of recording studios and shops, and music is in our DNA and we're here to create truly authentic entertainment experiences. This level of commitment has led us to this amazing opportunity to partner with the biggest comedy festival in the U.S. as they are coming back to New York for its 18th year this November. Of course, this opportunity would not have been possible without the great support and partnership from one of the biggest advocates of arts, Mr. Fred Dixon from NYC & Company and his team. So I would like to introduce you to the CEO of NYC & Company, Mr. Fred Dixon. Thank you.

Fred Dixon, President and CEO, NYC & Company: Okay. Thank you so much, Karin. Good morning, everyone. Good morning. It's great to see you all. Thank you Karin for that nice introduction. It is wonderful to be in your house. Congratulations to your team on a remarkable opening of this spectacular hotel in April. We were just talking before the event of all the accents and voices you hear, I had to tussle my way through the lobby, which is always a great sign. And just another proof point that the city's tourism industry is back in a big, big way. Week after week, we continue to put up the big numbers on tourism's rebound. So, we're very excited about that.

Dixon: It is a pleasure to be here with our colleagues and with our dear friend Caroline and the mayor to kick off tickets on sale for the New York Comedy Festival in its 18th year, and to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Carolines, which is a remarkable achievement in its own right. And of course, Mr. Mayor, thank you for helping us champion this event and for your support of tourism always, and to our partners at the Mayor's Office of Media. Thank you for being here.

Ariel is here as well, so their support is so appreciated and we're teaming up to help promote this great event this fall.

Dixon: NYC & Company has had a long relationship with Carolines, of course, almost from the very beginning, I believe, Caroline. And of course, with a comedy festival, an iconic event that truly spotlights New York City as the undisputed capital of comedy for the world. This November, the best and the brightest comedians will, once again, come together to present a fabulous lineup of comedy across all five boroughs, over seven days, more than a hundred venues, more than 200 comedians. Caroline and Andrew have worked tirelessly to grow and nurture this festival, especially over the last couple of years, Caroline, it was quite a moment when you brought it back last fall, and we were really proud of that. They're never relenting in their commitment and all of us at NYC & Company are proud to help elevate these events to visitors from around the world.

Dixon: Now it is my pleasure to introduce the legendary Caroline Hirsch, the founder and owner. Yes, we can applaud for Caroline.

[Applause]

Dixon: Caroline is the founder and owner of Carolines on Broadway and the New York Comedy Festival, along with her partner, Andrew Fox. Caroline is a longstanding board member of ours at NYC & Company and a passionate advocate for nightlife and comedy. She was without question equally passionate about Times Square in New York City itself. Across her illustrious 40 year career, beginning in 1982 with a small comedy cabaret in Chelsea, then moving to the South Street Seaport, and then finally to Carolines on Broadway in 1992. She helped shepherd in the new era of Times Square in a remarkable way and so we're thrilled to help her celebrate this anniversary.

Dixon: She has jumped started countless careers in comedy. I could list off names that would boggle the mind. Almost everyone in the industry has been touched by Caroline in one way or another. She has helped so many get their beginnings. Now for the past 18 years, of course, has produced the biggest and most important comedy festival in the U.S. So we thank her for her leadership. Now, we couldn't be more excited to welcome back the comedy festival to cap off what is expected to be an incredible fall in New York City, full of events and activities, welcoming visitors back from around the world. So please welcome a true visionary and tireless advocate for our city, its performing arts, and the art of comedy, Caroline Hirsch.

Caroline Hirsch, Founder and Owner, New York Comedy Club and Carolines on

Broadway: Wow, Fred, thank you. Thank you for that introduction. Well, that really means a lot to me. Thank you Karin and the Hard Rock Hotel team for hosting us this morning. The hotel is truly beautiful. Welcome to the neighborhood. Your partnership means a great deal to the New York Comedy Festival.

Hirsch: This is a very special day for many reasons. I know that so many of you have on your calendars every year that today is National Tell A Joke Day. It's something we in the comedy bit world look forward to as much as Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve combined. So thanks to our crack PR team who let me know about it, I mean, reminded me about it. But seriously, who knew? If there was ever a day we need now more than ever, it is a day that embraces comedy, the

art of making one laugh. So it is truly fitting that we join today on National Tell A Joke Day to officially announce that the New York Comedy Festival is returning for its 18th year with more comedians, more venues and more acts than ever before. Let's go to the videotape.

[Video plays]

Hirsch: So, why just have one National Tell A Joke Day? The New York Comedy will celebrate seven days of laughter, at over 20 venues in all five boroughs this year. We also added a show this year at the UBS Arena in Belmont Park with John Mulaney. That's on the border of Queens. In addition to the show with John, we are pleased to announce Jenny Slate, Ms. Pat, Conan O'Brien, Jimmy O. Yang, Jo Koy, J. B. Smoove, Bassem Youssef, Shane Gillis, Tracy Morgan, Wanda Sykes, Bill Maher, Mo Amer and Nurse Blake are among this year's headliners, with many more great shows and menus to be announced really pretty soon. Tickets go on sale this Friday, August 19th.

Hirsch: Over the years, the New York Comedy Festival has had many supporters and some are here today. Special thanks to Fred Dixon and NYC & Company, and Kelly Curtin's here also, Ariel Palitz from the Office of Nightlife and the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, Andrew Rigie from New York City Hospitality Alliance, Cristyne Nicholas and The Broadway Association. And, of course, Tom Harris and the Times Square Alliance. We are grateful to have your support each and every day. We are so delighted to collaborate with the Hard Rock Hotel this year, the official host hotel, and would also like to recognize Audible, City, ABC 7, iHeartMedia, New York Magazine, New York Post, Sirius XM radio, and Vulture.

Hirsch: I am proud to stand here today to welcome a Brooklyn native, Mayor Eric Adams. A standup guy who has been our city's headliner since his election last November. We know it hasn't been an easy gig for eight months, but through good and bad, comedy and tragedy, Mayor Adams has stood up for the law-abiding New Yorkers and is fighting to turn around the post-COVID city that he inherited. Mayor Adams, you are synonymous with New York, smart, tough, strong, and a smile that is contagious in a good way.

[Laughter]

Hirsch: Your love and support of New York City's arts entertainment industry is a welcome change. Thank you. We thank you for your leadership and for your role that you play as New York's great ambassador promoter spokesman, and that is no joke. So mayor, please join me as I have my distinct pleasure to present to you this commemorative ticket, the first ticket to the New York Comedy Festival.

[Applause]

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you so much, Caroline, for just your years of laughter and your right, January 1st, taking the helm. I'll never forget a couple of days ago, I like to talk to young people all the time. Young man stopped me and said, "Mayor, what can I do when I grow up to become the mayor?" I looked at him, I said, "Are you crazy? Are you out of your mind? Are you stark raving mad?" And he said, "You know what? That list of job requirements is just too much for me, I can't do it. I give up." But laughter is everything. Particularly there has been nothing funny about the last two and a half years. It has devastated us. But when you do a connection

with not only what a laugh, how it makes us feel, but just the scientific evidence that's connected with laughing with our families and friends during difficult times.

Mayor Adams: So Caroline, you have been spreading laughter, and you may have identified the business aspect of it, but you just really saved us during this time. This comedy fest that's coming is so significant at this moment, we have forgotten the power of laughing. We have forgotten the power of just sitting around with a group of our loved ones and seeing how much we are thankful for. When you laugh, you walk out of these shows and you realize that, you know what? It's not that bad after all. We live in the greatest city on the globe, in the greatest country on the globe. Even with all of the ups and downs, when we pause for a moment during this festival and really have New Yorkers lean into the joy of watching someone on stage, not only making fun at the audience, but making fun at themselves, you find that we have so much to be thankful for.

Mayor Adams: I'm excited about the comedy fest that's coming. I love comedy all the time. I caught Chris Rock and some other comedians at Madison Square Garden a few months ago, and it was just so darn funny. I couldn't believe it. Then we supplied the goat, they wanted to call him the greatest of all time. So we were able to connect with one of the farm individuals. They walked a goat on the stage with a gold chain on.

[Laughter]

Mayor Adams: But when we walked out and I watched the people walking out, you know what was not lost on me? That didn't matter what was your country of origin, it didn't matter what you made for a living or what your profession was, it didn't matter what block you lived on, we all laughed together in Madison Square Garden. Comedy brings us together and allows us to look to the right of each other and the left of each other and watch each other smile and laugh.

Mayor Adams: That's what's great about New York. This diverse group of people from all over the globe are coming together to celebrate the beauty of our diversity and specialness of our city. If New York laughs, it cascades throughout the entire country and the country laughs. Then we would turn around the devastating impact of the sadness that accompanied us during COVID. So I'm looking forward to laughing a lot. I just want to thank Caroline, I want to thank this great hotel and all the partners. I want to thank NYC & Company that continues to find creative ways of having us enjoy a good meal from restaurant week to opening our tourism. You walk through Times Square and you notice that people are just back. So the entire team for re-energizing New York to deal, not only with the fun of New York City, but the economic value of our tourism industry. We have great partners, great teams, great people in the great city. So I look forward to a lot of laughter. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Adams: Caroline, we're going to give you a proclamation. So now therefore I, Eric Adams, mayor of the City of New York, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, April ... I mean August. Good Lord. That was a joke.

[Laughter]

Mayor Adams: August 16th, 2022 in the City of New York, as Caroline Hirsch Day, my fellow Brooklynite.

Hirsch: Thank you.

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