

# APOLLO

## **Apollo Theater 2015-2016 Season to Feature Commissions, Collaborations and Premieres with Artists from Around the Globe**

**Apollo will present more than 100 performances throughout the season, including:**

*The return of the global hip-hop dance theater festival **Breakin' Convention** featuring a new work developed at the Apollo by acclaimed choreographer **Rennie Harris***

***The New Orleans Jazz Weekend and Masquerade**  
Theater kicks off its multi-year partnership with newly appointed  
Jazz Artist-in-Residence **Irvin Mayfield** featuring  
Grammy- and Tony Award-winner **Dee Dee Bridgewater** and more  
for the New York concert premiere of Bridgewater's new album *Dee Dee's Feathers**

*World premiere of renowned Brazilian choreographer **Fernando Melo's Beautiful, Also, Is The Sun;**  
A co-commission with Ballet Hispanico*

*Apollo and Jazz à Vienne's artistic and cultural exchange continues with  
**Je Suis Soul: A Salute To French And African Jazz And Soul**  
A Celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jazz à Vienne Festival  
featuring French soul's biggest artists  
**Manu Dibango, Ben l'Oncle Soul with the Monophonics and Les Nubians***

*The New York Premiere of  
**Charlie Parker's Yardbird***

*The Theater's first Mainstage opera presentation and a co-production with Gotham Chamber Opera and Opera Philadelphia*

(Harlem, NY –May 5, 2015)—The Apollo Theater today announced its 2015–2016 season, encompassing world premieres, commissions, and collaborations with world-class performing arts institutions and international artists working across a range of disciplines and genres— from dance and theater to jazz, soul, and opera. The Theater will produce more than 100 performances for the new season (a record for the Theater), extending the nonprofit institution's commitment to supporting emerging and established artists from Harlem and around the globe, providing a home for artists to explore and push the boundaries of their respective forms.

The season begins with the return of ***Breakin' Convention***, a global celebration of hip-hop dance theater culture curated by hip-hop theatre spoken-word artist and director **Jonzi D**, featuring a new work by acclaimed choreographer **Rennie Harris**, currently in development as part of the Apollo's new works incubation program Salon Series. Additional highlights include: ***The New Orleans Jazz Weekend and Masquerade Party***, the first presentation of the Theater's multi-year partnership with newly appointed Jazz Artist-In-Residence **Irvin Mayfield** and his **New Orleans Jazz Orchestra**, returning to Harlem for the New York concert premiere of the new collaboration CD *Dee Dee's Feathers* and performing with legendary jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater; a new

ballet by renowned Brazilian choreographer **Fernando Melo**, co-commissioned with the Apollo and Ballet Hispanico — *Beautiful, Also, is the Sun*; a celebration of the Jazz à Vienne Festival’s 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary with *Je Suis Soul!: A Salute To French And African Jazz And Soul* featuring many of French soul’s most celebrated artists **Manu Dibango**, **Ben l’Oncle Soul** with the **Monophonics** and **Les Nubians**; The Classical Theatre of Harlem presents the world premiere of *The First Noel* by **Lelund Durond Thompson** and **Jason Michael Webb**; and the first opera presented on the Apollo’s Mainstage, the New York premiere of *Charlie Parker’s Yardbird* co-produced with Gotham Chamber Opera and Opera Philadelphia. Additional details follow below.

“Our 2015/2016 season looks to contemporary and uniquely American forms of expression, as well as to some of the genres developed on our legendary stage,” said Mikki Shepard, Executive Producer of the Apollo Theater. “The season also marks three ‘firsts’ for the Theater—the first presentation by our newly appointed Jazz Artist-in-Residence, Irvin Mayfield; our first ever Mainstage opera performance; and our first ballet commission. We will be presenting more than 100 performances next season, and are so thrilled to continue expanding our support of artists at all stages of their careers from around the world, welcoming back many whom we’ve helped nurture over the years, alongside those new to the Apollo and our audiences.”

The season will also feature the Apollo’s signature series *Amateur Night* and *Apollo Music Café*, which showcases boundary-pushing, emerging and mid-career artists in an intimate club-like setting on the Theater’s Soundstage. A cornerstone of the Harlem community, the Apollo will also present public conversations, education programs for students and families, and other community events to complement the season’s artistic offerings. **Tickets for the season go on sale Friday, May 15, 2015.**

## APOLLO THEATER 2015/2016 SEASON

*Season Highlights Include:*

### **Breakin’ Convention—An International Festival of Hip-Hop Dance Theatre**

October 16, 17, & 18, 2015

Featuring: **Rennie Harris Puremovement Dance, NL2, Ukweli Roach of Birdgang Dance, Compagnie Phorm, Street Kingdom, The Ruggeds, Antoinette Gomis, and More**

The Apollo presents *Breakin’ Convention*, a Sadler’s Wells London production, for three days of hip-hop dance theatre performances featuring the best dance artists and companies from New York City, the U.S., and around the globe. Curated and hosted by Sadler’s Wells Associate Artist **Jonzi D**, *Breakin’ Convention* is a celebration of hip-hop culture and its global impact and is part of the international festival’s first U.S. tour. New to this year’s Festival is the inclusion of an original work commissioned for *Breakin’ Convention* by the Apollo and created by acclaimed choreographer **Rennie Harris**, currently in development as part of the Apollo’s new works incubation program, the Apollo Salon Series. The Philadelphia-based **Rennie Harris Puremovement Dance Company** and the Brooklyn-based **Next Level Squad**, both standout participants in the Theater’s first *Breakin’ Convention*, will perform *100NAKEDLOCKS*, a new piece inspired by the themes of Afro futurism and the Black sci-fi genre.

The list of *Breakin’ Convention* artists include: **Rennie Harris Puremovement Dance (Philadelphia), NL2 (Brooklyn), Ukweli Roach of Birdgang Dance (UK), Compagnie Phorm (France/Argentina), Street Kingdom (Los Angeles), The Ruggeds (Holland) and Antoinette Gomis (France).**

The Apollo Theater first presented *Breakin’ Convention*, its first global festival, in June 2013. The Festival provides a platform to celebrate the Theater’s hip-hop roots while highlighting the development of the culture around the world.

*Tickets for Breakin' Convention are \$25 - \$45. Apollo Advantage: \$17.50 - \$31.50. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

**The New Orleans Jazz Weekend and Masquerade**

October 30 & 31, 2015

Featuring: **Irvin Mayfield and the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Brass-A-Holics and More**

Grammy Award-winning jazz musician and newly appointed Apollo Jazz Artist-in-Residence **Irvin Mayfield** returns to the Theater to bring the spirit of his hometown, New Orleans, to Harlem for a special Halloween weekend of events, marking the official start of the new artistic partnership between the Apollo and Mayfield. The weekend will include a special performance by the renowned trumpeter with legendary jazz vocalist **Dee Dee Bridgewater** in the New York concert premiere of Bridgewater's and Mayfield's new album, *Dee Dee's Feathers* (slated for release in the U.S. on August 11). The masquerade-themed concert will be followed by an after-party as part of Apollo Music Café in the Theater's Soundstage and will feature the New Orleans Go-Go brass funk band the **Brass-A-Holics**. The weekend will also include a special Apollo Music Café on that Friday night with Irvin Mayfield's Jazz Playhouse, curated by Bridgewater and featuring a jam-inspired set with some of the best young female jazz vocalists and a New Orleans Creole-themed mask- and music-making workshop as part of the Apollo Education *Family Workshop* series.

*Tickets for New Orleans Jazz Masquerade Mainstage concert are \$35 - \$65. Premium tickets (which include the Mainstage concert and access to the exclusive after-party with the Brass-a-Holics) are \$95. Apollo Advantage: \$24.50 - \$45.50.*

*Tickets for Friday night's Apollo Music Café are \$20. Apollo Advantage and A-list: \$15 in advance. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

**Beautiful, Also, Is The Sun**

A Co-Commission of the Apollo Theater and Ballet Hispanico

November 20 & 21, 2015; 8pm

The Apollo and the nation's leading Latino dance organization, Ballet Hispanico, present the world premiere of renowned Brazilian choreographer **Fernando Melo**'s new work, *Beautiful, Also, Is The Sun*. A co-commission of the Apollo and Ballet Hispanico, the work is choreographed to a medley of Brazilian sounds, electronic and acoustic, and explores the cultural contrasts of Melo's homeland of Brazil in an homage to Melo's native country.

Additional Ballet Hispanico programs include special Apollo Education performances of *Beautiful, Also, Is the Sun* with *Apollo School Day Live* and *Family Showtime*.

*Tickets for Ballet Hispanico are \$28 - \$58. Apollo Advantage: \$19.50 - \$40.50.*

*Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

**Je Suis Soul!: A Salute To French And African Jazz And Soul**

**A Celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jazz à Vienne Festival**

December 4 & 5, 2015; 8pm

Featuring: **Manu Dibango, Ben l'Oncle Soul, Monophonics and Les Nubians**

Apollo Theater and Jazz à Vienne continues their partnership and artistic exchange with a weekend in celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Jazz à Vienne Festival. Through the sounds of French and African jazz

and soul, *Je Suis Soul!: A Salute to French and African Jazz and Soul* will explore the influences of soul on jazz, funk, and other popular music from around the globe. Featured artists include: the legendary Cameroon saxophonist **Manu Dibango**, who made his Apollo debut in the 1970s and is best known for his hit "Soul Makossa"; French soul superstar **Ben l'Oncle Soul** performing with San Francisco's foremost retro-soul group, **Monophonic**; and **Les Nubians**, the Grammy-nominated duo whose unique mix of neo-soul, hip-hop and African music is epitomized in their most recent hit, "Nü Revolution." The celebration will also include Apollo Music Café performances in celebration of Jazz à Vienne.

Founded in 1980, Jazz à Vienne is one of the world's premier music festivals. This annual, three-week festival stretches from mid-June to July and features a mix of gospel, soul, funk, blues, groove and, of course, jazz. In July 2014, the Festival celebrated the Apollo Theater's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary in its 7,500-seat Roman amphitheater.

*Tickets for Je Suis Soul!: A Salute To French And African Jazz And Soul are \$25 - \$65. Apollo Advantage: \$17.50 - \$45.50. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, www.ticketmaster.com.*

### **The Classical Theatre of Harlem—The First Noel: A World Premiere Musical**

Preview Performances: December 11 & 12, 2015; 7pm

Opening Night: December 13, 2015; 7pm

Performances: December 15 – 30, 2015; 7pm (Matinee at 2pm)

In this World Premiere, The Classical Theatre of Harlem presents *The First Noel*, a new Harlem-based holiday musical that promises to be an evergreen classic for years to come. Presented in the Apollo's Soundstage, *The First Noel* follows three generations of a Harlem family affected by the tragic loss of a loved one until an unexpected visit reveals some long-absent Christmas joy. It is a story about how a community is healed, one family at a time, as everyday people do extraordinary things to help one another receive the gift of love at Christmas time. *The First Noel* features music that crosses genres—from disco to rock to gospel — to tell a universal story of love and belonging.

Book and lyrics by **Lelund Durond Thompson** (founder, YellaFella Entertainment and CTH Artistic Associate). Music and lyrics by **Jason Michael Webb** (*Motown the Musical*, *Violet*). **Kamilah Forbes** (*A Raisin in the Sun* and *Stick Fly*) serves as Director. For The Classical Theatre of Harlem: Artistic Director **Ty Jones** and Managing Director **David Roberts**.

*Tickets for The First Noel are \$25 for previews, \$75 for opening night, \$35 for weekday performances and \$50 for weekend performances. Apollo Advantage: \$30 - \$40. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, www.ticketmaster.com.*

### **Africa Now!**

March 26, 2016; 8pm

Featuring: **Bombino**, **Mokoomba** and **Jojo Abot**

The Apollo, in partnership with World Music Institute, presents the fourth annual **Africa Now!** concert celebrating the best of the contemporary African music scene. This year's main stage blow-out concert will feature **Bombino**, **Mokoomba** and **Jojo Abot**—artists whose music showcases the origins of African music and its extensions into today's global pop culture. Omara "Bombino" Moctar is a young Tuareg guitarist and songwriter whose electrifying jams capture the spirit of resistance and rebellion while echoing with guitar riffs reminiscent of Jimi Hendrix, Tinariwen, Ali Farka Touré, John Lee Hooker, and Jimmy Page. Mokoomba, the eclectic six-piece band, brings an electrified blend of Afro-fusion and traditional Tonga music and will be making their U.S. debut at the Apollo show. Jojo Abot is a Ghanaian singer-songwriter whose music is an experimental blend of electronica, afrobeat, jazz, neo-soul, house and reggae.

*Tickets for Africa Now! are \$25 - \$50. Apollo Advantage: \$17.50-\$35. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

### **Jazz and Spirit**

April 2, 2016; 8pm

Featuring: **Arturo O’Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra**

After the critically acclaimed premiere of the Afro Latin Jazz Suite on the Apollo stage last year, Grammy Award-winning composer Arturo O’Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra return for this concert featuring two works by O’Farrill, which explore the deep connection between jazz and spiritual traditions. The first piece, “*A Still Small Voice*,” is a hybrid of classical jazz and Afro Latin elements focused on the idea of a conscience— a voice inside of us that knows right from wrong. The second piece, “*The Cornel West Concerto*,” newly commissioned by the Apollo and penned by O’Farrill, will set text by the speaker, scholar and activist **Dr. Cornel West** to Afro Latin Jazz orchestration. Steeped deeply in the faith and in the oratory of great preachers, Dr. West’s clarion call for social justice rings loud and clear in the style of a great jazz musician.

*Tickets for Jazz and Spirit are \$35 - \$65. Apollo Advantage: \$24.50 - \$45.50. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

### **Charlie Parker’s Yardbird**

Opening Night: May 31, 2016; 7:30pm

Performances: June 3, 2016; 7:30pm and June 5, 2016; 3pm

Featuring: **Lawrence Brownlee, Angela Brown and Will Liverman**

The New York premiere of this new opera follows the inspirations, demons, and women who fueled the bebop great, Charlie Parker. *Charlie Parker’s Yardbird*, a co-production of the Apollo Theater, Gotham Chamber Opera and Opera Philadelphia, will premiere at the Apollo as part of the Apollo’s and Gotham’s artistic seasons, and will also be a part of the 2016 NY Philharmonic Biennial Contemporary Music Festival. Set in the famed NYC jazz club Birdland, saxophonist Charlie Parker composes his final masterpiece. Tenor **Lawrence Brownlee** stars as the legendary saxophonist—a role crafted around the effortless, improvisational style that makes him one of opera’s most sought- after tenors. Soprano **Angela Brown** appears as his mother, Addie Parker, and baritone **Will Liverman** debuts as jazz icon Dizzy Gillespie.

Music by: **Daniel Schnyder**; Libretto by: **Bridgette A. Wimberly**; Conductor: **Neal Goren**; Director: **Ron Daniels**; Set Designer: **Riccardo Hernandez**; Costume Designer: **Emily Rebolz**; Lighting Designer: **Scott Zielinski**. *Charlie Parker’s Yardbird* is a co-commission by Gotham Chamber Opera and Opera Philadelphia.

*Tickets for Charlie Parker’s Yardbird are \$21 - \$125. Apollo Advantage: \$35 - \$87.50. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

### **Amateur Night At The Apollo**

The Apollo Theater’s signature program, *Amateur Night*, continues to be a resource for discovering new talent and a defining experience for many emerging artists. The show has launched countless careers since 1934—from Ella Fitzgerald, James Brown, Michael Jackson, D’Angelo, Jazmine Sullivan and Lauryn Hill to recent winners like Matthew Whitaker, Machine Gun Kelly and Matthew Hashimoto. The *Amateur Night* 2015-2016 season will feature the following special editions:

*Amateur Night: Harlem Week Celebration*  
*Amateur Night: Super Top Dog*  
*Amateur Night: Holiday Special*

August 26, 2015  
November 25, 2015  
December 5, 2015

### **Apollo Music Café**

The Apollo Music Café presents forward-thinking artists and draws out equally adventurous audiences, and features diverse performances across a myriad of genres from R&B, hip-hop, soul, jazz, pop, funk, to rock. Presented in the Theater's intimate Soundstage, the series continues the Apollo's longstanding commitment to presenting diverse and innovative artistic voices. Since its debut in February 2011, the series has become a favorite destination for music lovers of all kinds—from Harlem tastemakers, to tourists, to the downtown hipster set. The Apollo Music Café 2015-2016 season will feature special editions including the *New Orleans Jazz Weekend and Masquerade* and *Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead*, presented in collaboration with John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

*Dates and performers to be announced at a later date.*

### **EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

The Apollo Theater Education and Community Program extend the Apollo's commitment to serve as a resource and gathering place for the entire community. The nonprofit Theater's education and community programs include events for school children and families; career development for teens and adults through the Apollo Theater Academy; and discussions on cultural and civic issues important to the Harlem community that highlight the history of the Apollo and its impact on American art, culture, and entertainment.

### **Apollo Family Showtime**

Over the course of its 81-year history, the Apollo has long served as a source of entertainment and often as an opportunity to discover live music, dance, and theater. *Apollo Family Showtime* is designed to continue this legacy and to provide families with the opportunity to experience live performances at the Apollo. Planned *Apollo Family Showtime* events for the 2015-2016 Season include:

<i>Breakin' Convention</i>	Sunday, October 18, 2015; 3pm
<i>Ballet Hispanico: Saturday En Familia</i>	Saturday, November 21, 2015; 2pm
<i>Africa Now!</i>	Saturday, March 26, 2016; 1pm

*Breakin' Convention Family Showtime tickets are \$10 - \$40. Ballet Hispanico: Saturday En Familia Family Showtime tickets are \$15. For tickets and information visit [www.apolloeducation.org](http://www.apolloeducation.org).*

### **Apollo Family Workshop**

*Apollo Family Workshops* provide families with an opportunity to learn more about the music, movements, and moments that define the Apollo's contributions to American history and culture through interactive activities. Children must be accompanied by an adult caregiver. Adults must be accompanied by a child. Planned Apollo Family Workshops events for the 2015-2016 Season include:

<i>Creole Mask and Instrument-Making</i>	Saturday, October 31, 2015; 1pm
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*Apollo Family Workshops are free and pre-registration is strongly suggested. For registration information visit [www.apolloeducation.org](http://www.apolloeducation.org)*

### **Apollo School Day Live**

*Apollo School Day Live* provides new generations of theater-goers with exciting opportunities to learn about the arts, history, and culture. Planned Apollo School Day Live events for the 2015-2016 Season include:

*New Orleans Jazz Orchestra School Day Live*  
Ballet Hispanico: *Beautiful, Also, Is The Sun*

Friday, October 30, 2015; 11:30am  
Friday, November 20, 2015; 10:15am and 11:30am

For tickets and information at [www.apolloeducation.org](http://www.apolloeducation.org)

### **Harlem Healthy Soul Festival**

September 19, 2015; 12pm-7pm  
Sponsored by Coca-Cola

The Apollo Theater will present its third annual community initiative focused on family wellness—**Harlem Healthy Soul Festival**. This day-long, free event is designed to serve as a platform for Harlem families to learn about the numerous community health resources to help live active and healthier lives. The Festival will transform the Apollo and 126<sup>th</sup> Street behind the Theater into a block party filled with music, entertainment, health, and educational resources, and family fun. Activities throughout the day will include live entertainment in front of the Apollo on 125<sup>th</sup> Street, as well as presentations by celebrities, doctors, and health experts inside the Theater. On 126<sup>th</sup> Street, vendors will be on hand promoting programs and services that encourage a healthy lifestyle. Families are encouraged to participate in the array of free activities such as health screenings, nutrition-focused cooking demonstrations, celebrity performances, and exercise modules.

*Harlem Healthy Soul Festival is free and open to the public.*

### **Coca-Cola Winter Wonderland**

December 19, 2015; 2pm-6pm

Before the Apollo Amateur Night Holiday Special, the Apollo and Coca-Cola are partnering to bring the magic of the holiday season to Harlem. Under the Apollo's iconic marquee, Coca-Cola will offer a variety of holiday-themed activities and performances free and open to the public. Hosted by **Billy Mitchell**, Apollo tour director and in-house historian, festivities include picture taking with Santa Claus and giveaways. Additionally, in the spirit of giving, the Apollo will be a designated location for a toy drive.

### **Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night**

December 27, 2015; 2pm & 7:30pm

Featuring: **Abdel R. Salaam's Forces of Nature Dance Theatre**

The Apollo Theater celebrates its 9<sup>th</sup> annual **Kwanzaa Celebration**, featuring the renowned New York-based dance company **Abdel Salaam's Forces of Nature Dance Theatre** and guest performances. Since 2006, the Apollo has established an annual show to celebrate this holiday tradition on one day of the Kwanzaa holiday. The Apollo's celebration is a joyful evening of dance and music honoring the principles of Kwanzaa—family, community, and culture. Hosted by radio personality **Imhotep Gary Byrd**.

*Tickets for Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night are \$20 - \$35. Apollo Advantage: \$14. Tickets will be available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).*

### **APOLLO UPTOWN HALL**

The Apollo continues to be a natural gathering place and “town hall” for local community residents as well as people from across New York City. This was demonstrated by the huge crowds that gathered under the Theater's

iconic marquee in response to world events such as the 2008 presidential election outcome and the passing of James Brown and Michael Jackson. Launched in September 2012, the Apollo Uptown Hall is a forum for presenting and discussing timely issues relevant to the community, the country, and the world, incorporating video, texting, and live performance to enhance and develop an interactive forum for community gathering and discussion.

**Apollo Uptown Hall: A Martin Luther King Tribute**

January 17, 2016; 3pm

In celebration of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, WNYC's annual Martin Luther King Day celebration will return to the Apollo for a special edition of the Apollo's Uptown Hall series. The series brings together community members, leaders, scholars and activists to engage in conversation about Dr. King's legacy and how his teachings affect us today. WNYC's Brian Lehrer will co-host this free event.

*Apollo Uptown Hall: A Martin Luther King Tribute is A WNYC and Apollo Theater presentation*

***You can follow the Apollo Theater on Twitter and Instagram at @apollotheater and like us on Facebook at facebook.com/apollotheater***

*The Apollo's season is made possible by generous support from American Airlines, BNY Mellon, Citi, Coca-Cola, Troy and Keisha Dixon, EmblemHealth, the Ford Foundation Fund for Global Programs, Frederick Wildman, The Howard Gilman Foundation, Carla A. Harris, Robert K. Kraft, The Reginald F. Lewis Foundation, The Parsons Family Foundation, the Ronald O. Perelman Family Foundation, JoAnn Price, Prudential Financial, Inc., Earl W. and Amanda Stafford, Time Warner Inc., the Reginald Van Lee New Works Fund, the Apollo Board of Directors, and many other generous donors.*

*Amateur Night at the Apollo is sponsored by Coca-Cola.*

**About the Apollo Theater**

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging talents and launching legends. Since its founding, the Apollo has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world.

With music at its core, the Apollo's programming extends to dance, theater, performance art, spoken word initiatives, and more. Recent highlights include *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot*, which began an international tour in 2015, the *Africa Now! Festival* and *Apollo Club Harlem*. The Apollo is a presenting organization that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and music works organized around a set of core initiatives: Apollo Music; Signature Programs—Amateur Night, Salon Series and the Apollo Music Café; Legacy Series, work that celebrates and extends the Apollo's legacy through a contemporary lens; Global Festivals, international and U.S.-based artist presentations focused on a specific theme; and Special Projects, multidisciplinary work with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms, and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, Miri Ben Ari, D'Angelo, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy.

The Apollo Theater is a not-for-profit organization and currently in the midst of fundraising for its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Apollo Campaign, created to extend the institution's role in fostering artistic innovation and in building appreciation of American culture around the world. For more information, visit [www.apollotheater.org](http://www.apollotheater.org).

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