

# APOLLO 85

## **Apollo Theater Announces Ta-Nehisi Coates as Inaugural Artist-In-Residence with Kick-Off for the National Book Tour of His First Novel**

***Ta-Nehisi Coates In Conversation: The Water Dancer*  
Monday, September 23 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Harlem, N.Y., July 1, 2019** – The **Apollo Theater** announced today that critically acclaimed writer, artist and thinker **Ta-Nehisi Coates** will begin the national book tour for his latest work, *The Water Dancer*, at the world-famous Apollo stage. The program will take place on Monday, September 23 at 7:00 p.m. with a special guest to be announced.

In his boldly imagined first novel, Ta-Nehisi Coates, the National Book Award–winning author of *Between the World and Me*, brings home the most intimate evil of enslavement: the cleaving and separation of families. Driven by the author’s fierce imagination and striking ability to bring readers deep into the interior lives of his brilliantly rendered characters, *The Water Dancer* is the story of America’s oldest struggle—the struggle to tell the truth—from one of America’s most exciting writers.

The evening will also serve as Coates’s first program as Apollo Theater’s inaugural Artist-In-Residence. The three-year initiative, which will include events on the Apollo’s iconic stage and in the new Apollo spaces in the Victoria Theater in Fall 2020, will further deepen the relationship between Coates and the nonprofit theater. In 2018, the Apollo collaborated with Coates on the world premiere staging of his award-winning book, *Between the World and Me*, directed by the Apollo’s Executive Producer Kamilah Forbes.

“Coates is an artist changing the landscape of American culture. As a performing arts space squarely focused on commissioning and presenting work that centers on African American voices, it was a natural fit for the Apollo to offer him a home for his work and ideas,” said **Kamilah Forbes**. “We look forward to announcing future events and programs very soon.”

Coates added, “I am looking forward to deepening my relationship with one of the most important cultural spaces deeply committed to African American arts and ideas.”

The launch of *The Water Dancer* book tour and Coates’s appointment as Apollo Theater’s inaugural Artist-in -Residence further enforces the nonprofit theater’s commitment to celebrating African American arts and culture, supporting emerging and established artists of color across disciplines, and serving as an artistic, educational, and community resource.

### **Tickets and Information**

Tickets begin at \$45 and include a copy of *The Water Dancer*. Tickets are available at the Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125th Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). A limited amount of *Half off for Harlem* tickets will be available in person at the Box Office. For more information visit [www.ApolloTheater.org](http://www.ApolloTheater.org).

### **More About *The Water Dancer***

Young Hiram Walker was born into bondage. When his mother was sold away, Hiram was robbed of all memory of her—but was gifted with a mysterious power. Years later, when Hiram almost drowns in a river, that same power saves his life. This brush with death births an urgency in Hiram and a daring scheme: to escape from the only home he's ever known.

So begins an unexpected journey that takes Hiram from the corrupt grandeur of Virginia's proud plantations to desperate guerrilla cells in the wilderness, from the coffin of the deep South to dangerously utopic movements in the North. Even as he's enlisted in the underground war between slavers and the enslaved, Hiram's resolve to rescue the family he left behind endures.

This is the dramatic story of an atrocity inflicted on generations of women, men, and children—the violent and capricious separation of families—and the war they waged to simply make lives with the people they loved. Written by one of today's most exciting thinkers and writers, *The Water Dancer* is a propulsive, transcendent work that restores the humanity of those from whom everything was stolen.

### **Apollo Theater and Ta-Nehisi Coates**

The Apollo Theater has been developing a unique relationship with Ta-Nehisi Coates for the past two years. In February 2018, he led a discussion on the global cultural impact of the film *Black Panther* with two of its lead actors, Chadwick Boseman and Lupita Nyong'o. A few months later, the Apollo presented the groundbreaking theatrical presentation of his book, *Between the World and Me* with subsequent performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

In November 2018, the Apollo hosted a discussion with Coates and journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones on his book *We Were Eight Years in Power*.

### **About Ta-Nehisi Coates**

Ta-Nehisi Coates is a distinguished writer in residence at NYU's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute. He is the author of the bestselling books *The Beautiful Struggle*, *We Were Eight Years in Power*, and *Between the World and Me*, which won the National Book Award in 2015. Ta-Nehisi is a recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship. He is also the current author of the Marvel comics *The Black Panther* and *Captain America*.

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### **About the Apollo Theater**

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging artists 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, spoken word, and more. This includes special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo, 100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*, the annual *Africa Now! Festival*, and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*. The Apollo is a performing arts presenting organization that also produces festivals and large-scale dance and music works organized around

a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend the Apollo's legacy through a contemporary lens; global festivals including the *Women of the World (WOW) Festival* and *Breakin' Convention*, international and U.S.-based artist presentations focused on a specific theme; and Special Projects, multidisciplinary collaborations 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, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy.

### **Support**

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