

APOLLO

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**The Apollo Legends Series
Presents
Ashford & Simpson
Featuring
Melba Moore
Saturday, April 21st, 8PM**

(New York NY, March 20, 2007) – The Apollo Legends Series is proud to present the first concert of its 2007 season with a truly classic Apollo line-up starring legendary performing and songwriting team **Ashford & Simpson** and featuring R&B star **Melba Moore**. The Apollo Theater will be the *only* place to be as music's most dynamic duo ring in the Spring season with an evening of perennial hits and favorites. Don't miss your opportunity to get your classic soul on with **Ashford & Simpson** and special guest **Melba Moore** on Saturday, April 21st at 8pm. Tickets are \$65*, \$55 and \$45 (*prime seating and post-concert reception) and are available through the Apollo Theater Box Office, 125th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues, 212/531-5305 and Ticketmaster, (212) 307-7171, www.ticketmaster.com. Tickets on Sale Now

Since embarking on their musical journey together more than four decades ago, husband and wife team **Nickolas Ashford** and **Valerie Simpson** have established themselves as one of the most prolific, versatile, and exciting couples in recording history. They have created an unprecedented catalog of chart-topping hit singles and albums as performers, writers and producers that has undeniably solidified their place in music history. Now, **Ashford & Simpson** will give soul music devotees a rare treat when they return to the world famous Apollo stage for the first time in over 10 years.

The **Ashford & Simpson** legacy began in 1964 when the two met at the famed White Rock Baptist Church in New York City. After discovering their shared musical talents, they began writing songs together, eventually signing on as staff songwriters for Scepter Records. Ashford & Simpson scored their first songwriting hit with, "*Let's Go Get Stoned*" for Ray Charles in 1966. That song caught the attention of Motown's powerhouse songwriting and production team Holland, Dozier and Holland, who brought the duo on board to the Motown dynasty as songwriters. Their first Motown single, "*Ain't No Mountain High Enough*", written for Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell, proved to be a smash hit and firmly established *the* signature **Ashford & Simpson** style with its soaring high energy harmonies and driving rhythms. While at Motown, the duo wrote several other hits for the Gaye/Terrell combination including "*Your Precious Love*," "*Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing*," and "*You're All I Need To Get By*."

Encouraged by their songwriting accomplishments for others, the pair decided to concentrate on recording their own material and, in 1973, **Ashford & Simpson** signed with Warner Brothers as recording artists, going on to release eight successful albums. Their numerous hit singles include "Send It," "Found A Cure," "Don't Cost You Nothing," "It Seems To Hang On," and "Love Don't Make It Right." In addition to their own growing catalogue of songs, **Ashford & Simpson** continued to work with other artists, writing and producing for Ben E. King, Chaka Khan, Gladys Knight and the Pips and Quincy Jones. They also gave Diana Ross four Top 40 pop hits, including the number one "Ain't No Mountain High Enough". In 1984, they released their next offering *Solid*, containing the #1 hit single and enduring classic, "Solid."

In 1996, **Ashford & Simpson** launched their own record label, Hopsack and Silk, with *Been Found*, a collaboration with poet Maya Angelou. That same year, ASCAP presented them with their highest honor - the Founders Award – and, in 1999, they received the Pioneer Award from the Rhythm & Blues Foundation. Also in 1996, the pair branched out to open the Sugar Bar, a popular restaurant/live entertainment venue in New York. **Ashford & Simpson**, married since 1974, continue to make wonderful music together and captivate audiences everywhere with their live performances. They are currently writing music for *The Invisible Life*, a musical based on the best selling novel by E. Lynn Harris.

With the astonishing ability to sing anything from gospel to pop and equipped with a soaring five octave voice, **Melba Moore** first enchanted audiences in her debut as Dionne in the Broadway musical, *Hair*. She later became the first African American woman to win a Tony Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical for her role as Lutiebelle in the long-running show *Purlie*. The recognition she gained catapulted her into a successful television and recording career. Her credits include Broadway's *Les Miserables*; television's *The Melba Moore/ Clifton Davis Show* and the mini-series *Ellis Island*.

In 1975, **Melba Moore** and her husband Charles Huggins formed Hush Productions and began managing R&B artists, most notably Freddie Jackson. In the late 70's and early 80's **Ms. Moore's** solo recording career began to surge with hits like "I Am His Lady," "Love's Comin' at Ya," "Livin' for Your Love," "A Little Bit More" (a duet with Jackson) and the Grammy Award-nominated song "Lean On Me." Her 1990 recording of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was instrumental in having the song entered into the Congressional Record as the official African-American National Anthem.

As one of America's best known actresses and recording artists, **Ms. Moore** has seen a series of ups and downs throughout her extraordinary career. Despite a period of extreme personal and professional hardships in which she suffered through the pain of welfare, blackbaling and other misfortunes, the talented performer was able to rebound. In 1996, she released *Happy Together*, her first album in six years, and toured the country with her one-woman autobiographical musical, *Sweet Songs of the Soul* in 1998. She was also featured in the *Jackie Wilson Story* at the Apollo Theater as well as in the Paramount/MTV movie *The Fighting Temptations*, alongside singing sensation Beyonce Knowles and Cuba Gooding JR, in 2003. Most recently, **Ms. Moore** is currently enjoying an exciting career revival with several new projects, including the release of her first gospel recording *I'm Still Here* on Warner Electra Light Year. The album serves as a powerful musical testimony of her trials and triumphant return.

Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has played a major role in the emergence of innovative musical genres including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul and hip-hop. Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Sammy Davis,

Jr., James Brown, Bill Cosby, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, and countless others began their road to stardom on the Apollo's stage. Based on its cultural significance and architecture, the Apollo Theater received state and city landmark designation in 1983 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Apollo Theater Foundation was established as a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit corporation in 1991 and is dedicated to the preservation and development of the Apollo Theater. The historic venue hosts major concerts and special events and continues its tradition of discovering future stars with its weekly installment of Apollo Amateur Night every Wednesday night and with the syndicated television show, Showtime at the Apollo, which is taped at the theater and airs weekly in over 150 markets nationwide. Harlem is Manhattan's third most popular tourist destination and the Apollo remains Harlem's top attraction, drawing 1.3 million visitors annually.

The world famous Apollo Theater, "where stars are born and legends are made"™ is located in the heart of Harlem at 253 West 125 Street, between Adam Clayton Powell Blvd (7th Ave.) and Frederick Douglass Blvd (8th Ave.). For further information about the Apollo Theater, visit the website at www.apollotheater.com.

Press Coverage

Electronic media and still photographers interested in coverage for any Apollo-produced event MUST submit requests on company letterhead via email to Nina Flowers, Publicity Coordinator at nina.flowers@apollotheater.com or fax to 212/749-2743 by **Monday, April 16th at Noon**. Requests for coverage will be confirmed via email by **Wednesday, April 18th at 5pm**.

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