

APOLLO

Sean “Diddy” Combs, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and Jonelle Procope To Be Honored at The Apollo Spring Benefit

*Benefit to honor The Apollo’s President and CEO **Jonelle Procope***

***Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs** will receive the Icon Award; **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar** will receive the Impact Award*

*Special appearances by **MC Lyte**, **Wyclef Jean**, and **D-Nice** with Music Direction by **Ray Chew***

***Warby Parker** to Receive Corporate Award For Outstanding Leadership in Innovation, Diversity and Global Community*

Monday, June 12 at 7:00PM ET

Harlem, NY – April 27, 2023 – **The Apollo** today announced this year's **Spring Benefit** honorees. The historic organization’s largest annual fundraising event will return on **Monday, June 12, 2023** themed “The Next Movement”. The celebratory benefit concert will honor The Apollo’s President and CEO **Jonelle Procope** as her twenty-year tenure comes to a close. **Sean “Diddy” Combs**, one of the most successful entrepreneurs and cultural icons of all-time, will be the recipient of this year's Icon Award. Six-time NBA champion and the league’s only six-time MVP **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar** will be awarded the **Impact Award**. Eyewear brand and industry leader **Warby Parker** will receive the **Corporate Award**. Also, marking the upcoming 50th anniversary of hip-hop, there will be special appearances from trailblazers including rapper and formidable actress **MC Lyte**, three-time Grammy award winning artist, producer and writer **Wyclef Jean**, and for a mainstage set and to helm the DJ booth at the event's infamous afterparty, **DJ D-Nice**. Musician, composer and producer **Ray Chew** returns to the Apollo stage as Music Director for the 12th year.

“I’m humbled to join my fellow honorees on the stage this year at our annual fundraising benefit”, said **The Apollo’s President and CEO Jonelle Procope**. “It is bittersweet to end my tenure, but I’m so proud to have been at the helm of an amazing team and overjoyed with all we have accomplished over these last 20 years. We have created a space that uplifts and supports Black artistry in its many forms, and will continue to champion the next generation of artists, community leaders and changemakers.”

All proceeds will support the non-profit organization’s year-round, world-class artistic, education, and community programs, as well as its commitment to articulating and projecting the African American narrative using arts and culture, and creating a 21st century performing arts canon.

The Apollo has been a place of dynamic energy and forward motion for more than 89 years. This season’s programmatic theme is aptly themed “The Next Movement!” and has presented signature programs, audience favorites, and exciting new works from artists pushing the boundaries of their art forms – from music and dance to fashion and film, and beyond.

“The Apollo has long been at the intersection of artistry and activism, and this year’s theme celebrates the progression of culture and how our communities have been the leading force behind much of American entertainment,” said **The Apollo’s Executive Producer Kamilah Forbes**. “Jonelle will be missed intensely, as there is no equivalent to her leadership, but we’ll take her teachings to keep The Apollo at the forefront of the arts and philanthropy.”

Watch this space for upcoming announcements as The Apollo unveils the host of this year's benefit and a thrilling line-up of special guests and additional performers. Visit www.ApolloTheater.org for more information.

To purchase benefit tickets, make a donation or for more information, visit www.apollotheater.org/event/spring-benefit-2023/. Proceeds from the Spring Benefit support The Apollo’s innovative performing arts, education and community initiatives, which serve 200,000 people annually.

For exclusive photos, updates and more, use hashtag #ApolloSpringBenefit and follow The Apollo:

[Facebook.com/apollotheater](https://www.facebook.com/apollotheater)

[Twitter.com/apollotheater](https://twitter.com/apollotheater)

[YouTube.com/apollotheater](https://www.youtube.com/apollotheater)

[Instagram.com/apollotheater](https://www.instagram.com/apollotheater)

About The Apollo

The legendary Apollo—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. In 2023, The Apollo will open The Apollo’s Victoria Theaters, which will include two new theater spaces, and begin the renovation of its Historic Theater, marking the first ever expansion and renovation of The Apollo in its nearly 90-year history. Read more about the project here:

www.apollotheater.org/renovation-restoration-and-transformation/

With music at its core, The Apollo’s programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes the world premiere of the theatrical adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me* and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*; special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo; 100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*; and the annual *Africa Now!* celebration. The non-profit Apollo is a performing arts presenter, commissioner, and collaborator that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and musical works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend The Apollo’s legacy through a contemporary lens, including the *Women of the World (WOW) Festival* as well as other multidisciplinary collaborations with partner organizations. Since introducing the first *Amateur Night* contests in 1934, The Apollo 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 Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, H.E.R., D’Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Jazmine Sullivan, Machine Gun Kelly, and Miri Ben Ari; and The Apollo’s forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. For more information about The Apollo, visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

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Press Contacts

Sunshine Sachs Morgan & Lylis

ApolloBenefit@sunshinesachs.com

Apollo Theater

Press@ApolloTheater.org