

Amin), director **Talvin Wilks**, and playwright **Nathan Yunkerberg**. The Apollo's current Master Artist-in-Residence, **Kamasi Washington**, will also present new works.

"*Apollo New Works* expands our commitment to supporting creative innovation by emerging and established artists whose work challenges, reflects, and is in dialogue with the most pressing issues within our communities," said **Kamilah Forbes, Apollo Theater Executive Producer**. "We thank the Ford Foundation and The Mellon Foundation for their incredible support of our *Apollo New Works* and Master Artist-In-Residence initiatives. I'm excited that these initiatives will be some of the first works at The Apollo's Victoria Theater, a space where The Apollo will engage, create, experiment, and incubate new work."

Apollo New Works builds upon The Apollo's commissioning history, including Russell Gunn's *The Blues and Its People*, which debuted this Spring and celebrated the 60th Anniversary of Amiri Baraka's book *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*; the 2018 stage adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*; and the 2017 genre-defying opera *We Shall Not Be Moved* by Daniel Bernard Roumain, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, and Bill T. Jones, co-commissioned by Opera Philadelphia. The initiative also encompasses The Apollo's Salon Series one-week residency program and Master Artist -in-Residence three-year program, providing leading artists of color with a home to create new works, curate and develop programming, and engage with students for the non-profit's education programs.

The opening of The Apollo's Victoria Theater will draw upon the organization's longstanding role as an anchor in the Harlem community and enable the organization to increase the number of performances and community and educational programs it offers. The new performance spaces will be integral to *Apollo New Works* and provide additional resources and space for The Apollo to incubate and develop these commissions. Scheduled to open for performances this winter as part of the Victoria Theater Redevelopment Project (a public and private partnership), The Apollo's Victoria Theater is a 25,000-square-foot facility, featuring two black box theaters designed by Kostow Greenwood Architects, and will enable The Apollo to expand its vibrant, year-round artistic, educational, and community programs that build on the cultural heritage of Harlem and celebrate uptown's enormous well of creativity. It will also provide access to professional-quality theater space for local artists, artist collectives, and small and mid-size Harlem and NYC-based arts organizations for the development and presentation of new work. To learn more about The Apollo's Victoria Theater, click [here](#). Additional details about inaugural programming in The Apollo's Victoria Theater will be announced at a later date.

Apollo New Works is generously supported by the Ford Foundation with additional funding from The Mellon Foundation and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

2023 APOLLO NEW WORKS ARTISTS

Bandaloop with composer/violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain

Redemption Too, At Least Some

The Apollo's Victoria Theater

Redemption Too, At Least Some is a collaboration between vertical dance company, BANDALOOP, and composer/violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR). This collaboration explores the themes of home, urban belonging, race, and privilege, charging performers and audiences to see their community in a new light. Drawing from Black and Haitian culture and musical influences, DBR's contemporary classical voice will merge with BANDALOOP's perspective-shifting choreography to create impactful public art that physically and creatively elevates predominantly BIPOC artists, while affording a dynamic platform from which place-based stories can be told.

Billy Childs***Kindred, An Operative Adaptation of Octavia Butler's Kindred*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

Grammy Award-winning composer, jazz pianist, arranger, and conductor Billy Childs will adapt Octavia Butler's *Kindred* into an opera. In Butler's bestselling novel, protagonist Dana time travels back and forth between 1970s Los Angeles and the pre-Civil War South, where she meets her ancestors. Each visit to the past becomes progressively longer, and her relationships with her family and their enslavers become more complicated. During these visits Dana tries to help her people in antebellum slavery, while still ensuring her safe return to her own time. The musical score will be rooted in the historical traditions of opera, while at the same time be representative of Black American music.

Francisca Da Silveira***barefoot in mindelo*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

barefoot in mindelo, a play with music about the life and music of Cape Verdean singer Cesaria Évora who is described as "the voice that lifted Cape Verde's little-known blues, morna, beyond the island and into the international world of music." Évora sang in Kriolu, which draws from West African dialects and Portuguese—the language of Cape Verde's former colonizer. Évora had a gift for elevating morna ballads, a style of song whose lyrics address poverty, longing, and most deeply, partings of both the physical and emotional kind. Her melodic voice conjured the beauty and struggle, melancholy and yearning of life in Cape Verde.

Kevin R. Free***A Hill on Which to Drown: a one man show with Andre De Shields*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

The theatrical work *A Hill on Which to Drown* is a geriatric coming-of-age story on the importance of legacy and inheritance told from the perspective of a 94-year-old queer Black man. He recounts his life story backwards, decade by decade. As he tells the story, he grows younger and younger, discovering—as he speaks—exactly what inheritance he's leaving behind. The play can be seen as a complement or companion piece to the August Wilson American Century Cycle, continuing to bear witness to the events in Pittsburgh's Hill District throughout the 20th Century. The main character's story stands on its own, as each of Wilson's plays do, but adds a dimension to the Century Cycle, focusing on rebirth, renewal, legacy, inheritance, and maintaining the visibility of the LGBTQ community on the backdrop of the African American life in the 20th century. *A Hill on Which to Drown* is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Ebony Noelle Golden***In The Name of The Mother Tree*****Co-produced by National Black Theatre****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

A performance work for flexible spaces, farms, gardens, and waterbodies, *In The Name of The Mother Tree* is a theatrical ceremony that combines music, dance, and poetry to tell the story of a community in the process of reclaiming earth-fortifying rituals after a major climate rupture. The work was originally developed as an Open Call project with The Shed, then commissioned by The Apollo. *In The Name of The Mother Tree* is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. Additional support for the development of Ebony Noelle Golden's *In the Name of The Mother Tree* has been provided by Double Edge Theatre and Mercury Store.

Stefon Harris**Untitled****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

Award winning jazz vibraphonist, thought leader, and developer Stefon Harris, will create an app that gives software the ability to improvise unpredictable harmony in tandem with artist-created melody and rhythm, resulting in a unique collaboration between software and human. Harris will build an evening-length work exploring the collaboration between live performance and technology.

Alex Harsley and The 4th Street Photo Gallery**The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

From The Victoria to The Village: A Visual History of Black Creative Spaces in NYC will offer a visual history of Black creative spaces in NYC starting with E. 4th Street Photo Gallery's Alex Harsley's rare colored photographs of The Jewel Box Review at The Apollo in the 1950s, then moving downtown, and everywhere in between. The exhibition will showcase Black art collectives, individual artists at work in their studios, and the camaraderie of Black artists. Dawoud Bey, Harsley's mentee who began his career in Alex's The 4th Street Photo Gallery, is an advisor on this project.

Aku Kadogo and jessica Care moore***Salt City: A Techno Choreopoem*****The Apollo's Historic Theater**

Salt City: A Techno Choreopoem is a collaborative work between acclaimed poet and writer jessica Care moore and award-winning director and choreographer, Aku Kadogo, along with a myriad of Detroit techno music legends. The script, written in poetic form, is centered around Detroit in the year 3071 and tells the story of a brown girl named "SALT" who time travels to the future but can't find her tribe.

Jonathan Payne***LINTON: A History Play*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

Following the main protagonist, Jeffrey, and spanning the Great Depression of the 1930s and Reconstruction after the Civil War to contemporary New York during the Great Recession, LINTON, tells an epic story of Black American life, ambition, and tragedy. Inspired by Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and the Slave Narratives gathered by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930's, the play will explore the haunting toll of the past and how historical fact is often crafted not by truth but an agenda.

Martha Redbone***Guardian Spirit- ode to bell hooks*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

Singer/songwriter/composer Martha Redbone draws from her Appalachian culture and heritage to create music and songs inspired by the poems prose and essays of writer and activist bell hooks.

Soul Science Lab***The Renaissance Mixtape*****The Apollo's Victoria Theater**

The Renaissance Mixtape is a mixed reality musical work that celebrates Harlem Renaissance and its contemporary impact, while envisioning Black culture, history, and art 100 years into the future. With a group of performers, lead artists Chen Lo and Asante Amin are Black artists who use music, verse, and extended reality to reflect on compelling aspects of the Harlem Renaissance that parallel their current experience, while speculating on the Renaissance to come. Like any mixtape, *The Renaissance Mixtape* is a quantum mashup of time, ideologies, and Black art. *The Renaissance Mixtape* is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Kamasi Washington
Master Artist-in-Residence

The Apollo's Victoria Theater

The Apollo's 2023 Master Artist-in-Residence Kamasi Washington will create a composition for a yet-to-be named ballet in collaboration with dancer/choreographer Lula Washington, Vision Theatre, and WACO Theater Center in Los Angeles. The Master Artist Residency Program is generously supported by The Mellon Foundation.

Talvin Wilks

Snakehips In Our DNA: PREQUEL AFFIRMATION #1 (RENAISSANCE TO PERMANENCE)

The Apollo's Victoria Theater

Conceived and directed by Talvin Wilks, *Snakehips In Our DNA: Prequel Affirmation #1 (Renaissance to Permanence)* is a choreographic video exploration in homage to tradition and lineage. Following the dancer Lil Buck's mantra, "The DNA of Snakehips is embedded in contemporary street dance," and utilizing stock footage, animation, collage and commissioned dance video, Director/Dramaturg Talvin Wilks will develop a 15-minute, looping visual and audio experience through video installation and meditation that will celebrate the Harlem Renaissance and its relevance today.

Nathan Yunkerberg

THEA

The Apollo's Victoria Theater

THEA is a theatrical experience with music that celebrates the life of Sr. Thea Bowman. Thea, the granddaughter of enslaved Africans, was the only African American member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, and she transcended racism to leave a lasting mark on U.S. Catholic life in the late 20th century. In November 2018, U.S. Bishops endorsed the canonization of Sr. Thea Bowman who will be the only Black female canonized as a saint.

Support

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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 Theater, 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!* Festival. 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, 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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