

APOLLO The Metropolitan Opera

The Apollo and The MET Announce Free Simulcast of Anthony Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* at The Apollo on Saturday, November 18, at 12:55PM

This marks the first-ever collaboration between the two New York cultural institutions

New York, NY (November 6, 2023)—The Metropolitan Opera and The Apollo announced a free simulcast of **Anthony Davis's** groundbreaking opera *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* on Saturday, November 18, at 12:55PM. This marks the Met's first live opera stream into The Apollo, and approximately 1,200 seats in the historic theater will be available; registration is required.

"This inaugural livestream to The Apollo is important at a time when we are attempting to broaden our audiences," said Peter Gelb, the Met's Maria Manetti Shrem General Manager.

"The Apollo is thrilled to be partnering with the Metropolitan Opera to bring the legendary opera *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* directly to the Harlem community where Malcolm's presence continues to vibrate throughout our buildings, sidewalks, and streets. Two iconic institutions coming together to uplift this powerful work in homage to one of our greatest Black leaders, while making it accessible to the people who live in the historic neighborhood where Malcolm X found his voice, is no better manifestation of the values and mission of The Apollo," said Kamilah Forbes, Executive Producer of The Apollo.

The influential opera, which had its world premiere in 1986, appears in a new staging by Tony-nominated director of *Slave Play* **Robert O'Hara**, who imagines Malcolm as an everyman whose story transcends space and time. With a libretto by **Thulani Davis** and story by **Christopher Davis**, the opera explores how one man's fight to define his life on his own terms becomes a battle cry for justice for an entire people.

Conductor **Kazem Abdullah** conducts the newly revised score, which features a layered, jazz-inflected setting for this powerful historical drama. The cast stars Grammy Award–winning baritone **Will Liverman**, who triumphed in the 2021 Met premiere of Terence Blanchard’s *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, as Malcolm, alongside soprano **Leah Hawkins** as both his mother, Louise, and wife, Betty; mezzo-soprano **Raehann Bryce-Davis** as his sister Ella; bass-baritone **Michael Sumuel** as his brother Reginald; and tenor **Victor Ryan Robertson** as Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad.

Led by O’Hara, the creative team also includes set designer **Clint Ramos**, costume designer **Dede Ayite**, lighting designer **Alex Jainchill**, projection designer **Yee Eun Nam**, wig designer **Mia Neal**, and choreographer **Rickey Tripp**—all in their Met debuts.

The simulcast will be presented by award-winning actress **Angela Bassett**. Bassett starred as Dr. Betty Shabazz, alongside Denzel Washington as Malcolm, in the 1992 film *Malcolm X*. She will provide exclusive behind-the-scenes access and conduct interviews with the cast and creative team during intermission.

For more information and to register for the event, go to apollotheater.org.

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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 2024, 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: 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*, the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*, and 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 and 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 apollotheater.org.

About the Metropolitan Opera

Under the leadership of Peter Gelb, the Met's Maria Manetti Shrem General Manager, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director, the Metropolitan Opera is one of America's leading performing arts organizations and a vibrant home for the world's most creative and talented artists, including singers, conductors, composers, orchestra musicians, stage directors, designers, visual artists, choreographers, and dancers. The company presents approximately 200 performances each season of a wide variety of operas, ranging from early masterpieces to contemporary works. In recent years, the Met has launched many initiatives designed to make opera more accessible, most prominently *The Met: Live in HD* series of cinema transmissions, which dramatically expands the Met audience by simulcasting select performances to movie theaters in more than 50 countries around the world.

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