

# APOLLO 90

## **The Apollo's Dining with the Divas Luncheon Hosted by Bevy Smith Raises \$450K for Arts Education**

**Speakers included Depelsha McGruder, Ford Foundation; Tiffany R. Warren, Sony Music; playwright and actor Dominique Morisseau**

**Musical performance by Amber Iman and Quentin Darrington from Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical and special appearance from DJ Twin Duo, Angel and Dren**



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(Harlem - NY, February 16, 2024) **The Apollo** and **Michelle Ebanks**, its President and CEO, proudly announce the success of its annual *Dining with the Divas* luncheon, hosted by the incomparable **Bevy Smith**, which raised over \$450,000 in support of arts education initiatives.

The event, held on Wednesday, transformed the iconic Apollo into a vibrant dining space, echoing with the sounds of **Angel and Dren**, and featuring performances by **Amber Iman** and **Quentin Darrington** from *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*.

This year's luncheon paid tribute to **Carolyn “Cookie” Mason**, a longstanding Apollo Board member, for her unwavering dedication to the *Dining with the Divas* event over the past decade. Inspirational remarks were delivered by **Depelsha McGruder, Tiffany R. Warren, Dominique Morisseau, Michelle Ebanks, Kamilah Forbes, and Jonelle Procope** underscoring the event's commitment to celebrating extraordinary women across various industries who serve as role models and mentors.

Among the distinguished guests were Speaker **Adrienne Adams**, NYC Commissioner of Cultural Affairs **Laurie Cumbo, Crystal McCrary McGuire, Michelle Miller, Tonya Lewis Lee, Malaak Compton, Erika Liles, and Susan L. Taylor**. Notably, **Kwanza Jones** generously sponsored a table for students from Bennett and Spelman Colleges.

The event saw a gathering of over 370 attendees who came together to rejoice, network, and contribute to The Apollo's vital year-round education, community, and performing arts programs benefiting New York City students and families.

### **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 opened The Apollo's Victoria, which includes two new theater spaces, and will begin the renovation of its Historic Theater, marking the first ever expansion and renovation of The Apollo in its 90-year history. For more information about The Apollo, visit [www.ApolloTheater.org](http://www.ApolloTheater.org). Read more about the project here: [www.apollotheater.org/renovation-restoration-and-transformation/](http://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, 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](http://www.ApolloTheater.org).

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