

APOLLO

The Apollo Theater Holds Sixth Annual *Dining with the Divas Luncheon*

*Fundraiser Celebrating the Achievements of Extraordinary
Women in Media, Music, Fashion and Business*

*Raising an Unprecedented **\$400,000** For Non-Profit Theater's
Artistic, Education and Community Programs*

Harlem, NY – February 10, 2017– On Thursday, February 9th, the world famous Apollo Theater hosted its sixth annual *Dining with the Divas* luncheon, a fundraiser celebrating the extraordinary accomplishments of women in the arts and in business. This year's event raised over **\$400,000**, the most in *Divas*' history, and will support the Apollo's education and community programs, which reach underserved students, other members of the community, and enable the Theater to continue to serve as a town hall that both celebrates the community's accomplishments and spotlights it challenges.

Jonelle Procope, Apollo president & CEO, kicked off the afternoon with welcome remarks and an introduction of this year's event co-chairs, **Betsy H. Cohen**, **Joan Haffenreffer**, **Lauren Maillian**, **Carolyn Minick Mason** and **Jennifer Scully-Lerner**. The focus of this year's *Divas* event was legacy and impact. **Tiffany Dufu** (Author and Speaker), **Pamela Newkirk** (Author and Director of Undergraduate Studies, NYU) **Patricia David** (Senior Diversity Advisor, JP Morgan) and **Lindsay Bernardez** (Former Apollo Theater Intern) gave insightful presentations about the importance of defining your legacy and making an impact in today's society. The event also included a performance by **Brianna Thomas**.

Held on the Apollo's iconic stage, where legendary divas such as Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin and Gladys Knight have enchanted audiences, *Divas* offers participants an opportunity to connect with some of the country's most powerful, accomplished, and influential women. Attendees included: **Star Jones**, **Susan Taylor**, **Susan Fales-Hill**, **Crystal McCrary**, **Sheinelle Jones**, **Carla Harris**, **Erika Liles**, **Marva Smalls**, **Wendy Washington**, **Thelma Golden**, **Gwen Norton**, **Caroline Graves**, **Cheryl Heinonen**, **Dana Tyler**, **Michelle Miller**, **Paula Williams**, **Diana Elghanayan**, **Karen Maria Alston**, **Terri Parker Borden**, **Charlane Brown-Wyands**, **Lesley Goldwasser**, **Daisey Holmes**, **Kimberly Banks MacKay** and **Racquel Oden**.

"Dining with the Divas is one of our major fundraisers and one of my favorite events that we do here at the Theater. It gives us an opportunity to celebrate women from all walks of life who impact

the world through their work and their leadership,” said Apollo president and CEO, **Jonelle Procope**. “Throughout its 83-year legacy, the Apollo has always nurtured young talent, providing a springboard for countless careers and we continuously honor that legacy through our education programs and through events like *Divas*, which advance women’s leadership through arts education. It is very important that we give our young people access to these inspirational women, and to let them stand on our shoulders as we have all stood on the shoulders of others.”

Sponsors for *Divas* include **JP Morgan Chase & Co., Barneys New York, Citi, Morgan Stanley** and **Teneo**.

About the Apollo Theater

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging talents 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.

With music at its core, the Apollo’s programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes the October 2014 premiere and 2015 international tour of the dance celebration project *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot*, the annual Africa Now! Festival, and the recent New York premiere of the opera Charlie Parker’s YARDBIRD. The Apollo is a presenting organization that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and music works organized around a set of core initiatives: Apollo Music Signature Programs—Amateur Night, Salon Series, Apollo Music Café; Legacy Series— work that celebrates and extends the Apollo’s legacy through a contemporary lens; Global Festivals including the Women of the World (WOW) Festival and Breakin’ Convention, international and U.S.-based artist presentations focused on a specific theme; and Special Projects, multidisciplinary work with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater 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 D’Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, Miri Ben Ari, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo’s forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy.

The Apollo Theater is a not-for-profit organization with the mission to extend the institution’s role in fostering artistic innovation and in building appreciation of American culture around the world. For more information, visit www.apollotheater.org .

Apollo Theater Information

Box Office Hours:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri – 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday – 10:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday – 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

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