

# APOLLO

## Apollo Theater 2019 Fall and Winter Programming

**Season Highlights Include the National Tour and Encore Engagement of Apollo's Staged Adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*, Launch of Apollo's Artist-in-Residence Program, Advance Screening of the HBO Documentary *The Apollo*, and World Premiere Work from Ballet Hispánico**

**Audience Favorites Including *Amateur Night at the Apollo*, *Apollo Music Café*, and *Apollo Comedy Club*, *Holiday Joy* featuring Yolanda Adams and Donald Lawrence, And the annual Kwanzaa Celebration with Forces of Nature Dance Company**

Harlem, NY – (July 22, 2019) – The Apollo Theater today announced details of its 2019 fall season, featuring a myriad of music, dance, and theater performances and film screenings that expand the nonprofit theater's role as a partner, commissioner, and co-producer of programming that articulates African American narratives. Kicking off the season is the launch of Ta-Nehisi Coates' book tour for the forthcoming novel *The Water Dancer* on Monday, September 23, marking the beginning of his three-year appointment as the Apollo's inaugural Artist-in-Residence. The residency will continue in October with encore presentations of the Apollo's critically acclaimed stage adaptation of Coates' *Between the World and Me*, featuring the original music composed by MacArthur "Genius" Jason Moran and performed live by his trio, including Moran. *Between the World and Me*, which had its world premiere at the Apollo in 2018, will launch a national tour in Atlanta with other stops across the country to be announced. Widely considered the epicenter of black culture, the Apollo continues to provide a home to artists. Through its programming, educational and community initiatives, the Apollo continues to advance its commitment to creating a 21<sup>st</sup> century performing arts canon while tackling important social issues for Harlem, New York, and the nation.

"From our ongoing collaboration with Ta-Nehisi Coates to our *Uptown Hall* and *Live Wire* conversations, and our ongoing partnerships with Ballet Hispánico and ImageNation, there will be so much to offer next season. We look forward to the continued expansion of the Apollo as a home for artists with additional collaborations and the theaters at the Victoria in the year to come," said **Kamilah Forbes**, Apollo Theater Executive Producer. "We are thrilled to offer an artistic home for Ta-Nehisi Coates over the next three years. We are also deeply honored to give more New Yorkers, and audiences across the nation, the opportunity to see *Between the World and Me* on stage, and to be part of the conversations on a topic that continues to resonate throughout our country."

The Apollo season continues this fall with the Apollo's famed *Amateur Night at the Apollo*, the original, large-scale talent show and one of the longest-running continuous events in New York City. *Amateur Night at the Apollo* welcomes back "Set It Off Man" Joe Gray, returning for his 31<sup>st</sup> season, along with newcomer Greginald Spencer, who will also perform as the "Set It Off Man" on alternate days throughout the year.

Artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Luther Vandross, Lauryn Hill, D'Angelo, and H.E.R. have all rubbed the famed tree of hope before taking the stage. This year's line-up of contestants will compete for an ultimate cash prize of \$20,000.

This fall, the Apollo expands its cinematic offerings with two film programs. The first is a free, advance screening of the HBO documentary *The Apollo* on Friday, October 4. Directed by Academy Award winner Roger Ross Williams, the film chronicles the unique history and contemporary legacy of the landmark institution. On Thursday, November 21, the Apollo will launch *Apollo Film Presents: ImageNation's Cocktails & Cinema*. Evenings will include premier and advance screenings of Pan-African films, preceded by a reception with a live DJ/performance, followed by a talkback. The series will feature soul cinema—smart films, primarily directed by people of color, that explore the history, examine social issues, and highlight the humanity of Pan-African people in the genres of drama, science fiction, animation, comedy, documentary, experimental, and emerging media.

In November, the Apollo continues its partnership with **Ballet Hispánico**, the nation's leading Latino dance organization in New York City. The company will present three works at each performance, including the **world premiere of "Tiburones,"** choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, as well as restagings of "Naci" by Andrea Miller and "Con Brazos Abiertos" by Michelle Manzanales. Performances will take place on Friday, November 22 and Saturday, November 23, along with four Ballet Hispánico "Performances for Young People" presentations to more than 3,000 students from across New York City on Thursday, November 21 and Friday, November 22 in collaboration with Apollo School Day Live.

Gospel legends **Yolanda Adams** and **Donald Lawrence** headline the return of the Apollo's annual concert, *Holiday Joy: A Gospel Celebration* on Saturday, December 21. A week earlier, on Saturday, December 14, gospel choirs from the Harlem community will perform for free under the theater's famed marquee in the return of holiday favorite **Coca-Cola Winter Wonderland** followed by the *Amateur Night Holiday Special* showcasing recent winners of the show's "Apollo Stars of Tomorrow."

Once a month, the Theater celebrates its comedic roots with the *Apollo Comedy Club*, presented in partnership with the legendary Bob Sumner—producer of Def Comedy Jam, and the creator of Laff Mobb on Aspire TV. *Apollo Comedy Club* features the best up-and-coming talent in comedy today with more than 15 comedians this season. Full details and line up to be announced at a later date. The *Comedy Club* precedes the Apollo's weekend music series, the *Apollo Music Café*, extending the theater's late-night offerings.

The Apollo continues its longtime support of up-and-coming musical artists through its monthly *Apollo Music Café*, which takes place on Friday and Saturday nights at 10:00p.m. on the Apollo Soundstage. This fall, *Apollo Music Café* features more than a dozen forward-thinking, innovative artists performing across genres, from R&B, hip-hop, soul, and jazz to pop, funk, and rock. Highlights include vocalist and cellist **Shana Tucker** on Saturday, November 9, and FX "Pose" star **Ryan Jamaal Swain**, bringing his vocal talents to the Café on Saturday, December 7.

A hallmark program for the institution that extends the Apollo's commitment to enhancing the Harlem community, the Theater's year-round education and community initiatives continue this fall with Apollo's *Live Wire* conversations, part of the Theater's education series that honors iconic artists who have impacted the arts and culture. The first *Uptown Hall* of 2020 will be the Apollo and WNYC's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Program commemorating the legacy of Dr. King on Sunday, January 12. The event will take place in front of a live audience and will be taped for a future broadcast on New York Public Radio and NPR stations nationwide. The Apollo Young Producers, a collective comprised of Apollo Theater Academy alumni who create and develop events to connect young artists to the Apollo, will present the fourth annual *Harlem Cultural Connect* on Saturday, November 2. Additional education offerings will include an Apollo Theater Academy Career Panel, part of the institution's career development programming for teens and adults, with *Careers in Graphic Novels & Visual Storytelling* on Tuesday, December 17.

While fall and winter programming takes the stage at the Apollo's landmark home, the institution continues to develop the theaters at the Victoria, marking the first physical expansion in the Apollo's history and the first phase in the expansion to the Apollo Performing Arts Center. For more information about the theaters at the Victoria and the Apollo's mission to work with and support a greater number of emerging and established artists of color across disciplines, click [here](#).

\*\*A complete calendar listing of 2019 fall and winter programming is available on the following page. \*\*

### **TICKET INFO**

Tickets for *Amateur Night at the Apollo*, *Apollo Comedy Club*, *Apollo Music Café*, and many other programs are available now at the Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531-5305, 253 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000 or [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). *Half Off for Harlem* tickets will be available for *Between the World and Me* to Harlem residents, students, and employees as quantities are available. Please check [www.apollotheater.org](http://www.apollotheater.org) for updates on ticket availability to additional 2019 fall and winter season programming.

### **About the Apollo Theater**

The legendary Apollo Theater—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.

With music at its core, the Apollo's programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo, 100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*, the annual *Africa Now! Festival*, the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*, and the world premiere of *Between the World and Me*. The Apollo is a performing arts presenting organization that also produces festivals and large-scale dance and music works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend 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 collaborations 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, H.E.R., Machine Gun Kelly, Miri Ben Ari, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy.

### **Support**

*The Apollo's season is made possible by leadership support from Coca-Cola, Citi, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, and the Jerome L. Greene Arts Access Fund in the New York Community Trust*

*Public support for the Apollo Theater is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.*

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## CALENDAR OF APOLLO THEATER'S 2019 FALL SEASON:

### Ta-Nehisi Coates in Conversation: *The Water Dancer*

Monday, September 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets start at \$45 and includes a copy of *The Water Dancer*

In his boldly imagined first novel, Ta-Nehisi Coates, the National Book Award–winning author of *Between the World and Me*, brings home the most intimate evil of enslavement: the cleaving and separation of families. Driven by the author's fierce imagination and striking ability to bring readers deep into the interior lives of his brilliantly rendered characters, *The Water Dancer* is the story of America's oldest struggle—the struggle to tell the truth—from one of America's most exciting writers. Serving as Coates's first program as Apollo Theater's Artist-in-Residence, he will be joined in conversation with a special guest to be announced. The Master Artist Residency is sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

### Advance Screening of HBO's Documentary Film *The Apollo*

Friday, October 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Free with RSVP

In advance of the HBO premiere in November, the Apollo Theater hosts a community screening of the HBO documentary, *The Apollo*, directed by Academy Award-winning director Roger Ross Williams. *The Apollo* chronicles the unique history and contemporary legacy of the New York City landmark. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with members of the creative team.

### *Between the World and Me*

Book by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Developed and directed by Kamilah Forbes

Original score by Jason Moran

Co-commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Friday, October 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 26 at 8:00 p.m.

Monday, October 28 at 11:30 a.m., part of School Day Live

Monday, October 28 at 8:00 p.m.

Tickets start at \$30

Based on the award-winning book by Ta-Nehisi Coates, the theatrical event *Between the World and Me*, takes difficult, but necessary conversations around Black life and death and places them center stage. A profound work that pivots from the biggest questions around racism and police violence to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, *Between the World and Me* offers a powerful framework for understanding our nation's history and asks: What is it like to inhabit a Black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden? *Between the World and Me*, both the book and the theatrical event, is an eye-opening, emotional look inside these conversations.

Back by popular demand, after sold out runs at the Apollo Theater and Kennedy Center in 2018, this live performance features a cast of actors who bring to life Coates's words, along with an animated digital backdrop and music composed and performed live by MacArthur "Genius" **Jason Moran** (*Selma*, Netflix's *13th*) and his trio, direction by Apollo Executive Producer **Kamilah Forbes** (*By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark*; NBC's *The Wiz*).

*Half Off for Harlem* tickets will be available for Harlem residents, students, and employees as quantities are available.

*Between the World and Me* is sponsored by Citi. The Master Artist Residency is sponsored by Ford Foundation. Half Off for Harlem for *Between the World and Me* is generously supported by the Jerome L. Greene Arts Access Fund in the New York Community Trust.

**Apollo Theater Academy Programming**

Saturday, November 2 (time to be announced) – *Harlem Cultural Connect*, Presented by the Apollo Young Producers

Tuesday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m. – *Career Panel: Careers in Graphic Novels & Visual Storytelling*. More details to be announced

**Live Wire: She's a Rebel: A Tribute to the Girl Groups of the 50, 60, and 70s**

Featuring Joshie Jo Armstead, Sarah Dash, Martha Reeves. Moderated by Christian John Wikane

Thursday, November 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Free with RSVP

The Girl Groups of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s made an enduring impact on music and style internationally. Many were repeat featured performers on the Apollo stage. In celebration of the Theater's 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Live Wire pays tribute to these women and their contribution to American music. Moderated by music journalist and essayist Christian John Wikane, the discussion will feature original members of some of the more popular groups and center on their experiences as artists and as women in the music industry as well as their individual careers beyond their girl group membership including Joshie Jo Armstead of The Ikettes, Sarah Dash of Patti Labelle & the Bluebelles, and Martha Reeves of Martha Reeves and the Vandellas.

**Apollo Film Presents: ImageNation's Cocktails & Cinema**

Thursday, November 21 at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets start at \$25

ImageNation, an innovative Harlem-based company, partners with the Apollo to present quarterly socials featuring premier and advance screenings of Pan-African films, preceded by a reception with a live DJ/performance, followed by a talkback. The series will feature soul cinema—smart films, primarily directed by people of color, that explore the history, examine social issues, and highlight the humanity of Pan-African people in the genres of drama, science fiction, animation, comedy, documentary, experimental, and emerging media.

**Ballet Hispánico**

Mainstage performances: Friday, November 22 and Saturday, November 23 at 8:00 p.m.

School Day Live performances: Thursday, November 21 and Friday, November 22

Ballet Hispánico, the nation's premiere Latino dance organization, returns to the Apollo Theater to present three works, including the world premiere of "Tiburones," choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa; and restagings of "Naci," choreographed by Andrea Miller and "Con Brazos Abiertos," choreographed by Michelle Manzanales. In the world premiere, "Tiburones," Anabelle Lopez Ochoa reimagines the world of the street gang, The Sharks (from the award-winning musical *West Side Story*) from a Latinx and gender fluid perspective. Ochoa will embrace non-gender specific roles while deconstructing stereotypes and giving new life to an ever-appropriated cultural icon.

Ballet Hispánico is sponsored by Citi.

**Coca-Cola Winter Wonderland**

Saturday, December 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Free with RSVP

Under the twinkling lights of the marquee, the Apollo and Coca-Cola invite families to gather for holiday-themed activities including picture taking with Santa Claus and performances from local choirs.

**Holiday Joy: A Gospel Celebration**

Featuring Yolanda Adams, Donald Lawrence and company

Hosted by Marcus D. Wiley

Saturday, December 21 at 4:00 p.m.

Tickets start at \$35

The Apollo presents a night of soul stirring music to lift the audiences holiday spirits and season with Grammy-award winning singer Yolanda Adams and gospel artist Donald Lawrence.

**Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night**

Saturday, December 28 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Featuring Abdel Salaam's Forces of Nature Dance Theatre

Hosted by Imhotep Gary Byrd

Tickets start at \$25

The Apollo Theater celebrates its annual Kwanzaa Celebration featuring the renowned New York-based dance company Abdel Salaam's Forces of Nature Dance Theatre and guest performances. Since 2006, the Apollo has presented this annual show to honor this holiday tradition on one of the days of the Kwanzaa holiday. The Apollo's celebration is a joyful evening of dance and music honoring the principles of Kwanzaa—family, community, and culture.

**Uptown Hall: Apollo and WNYC present the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Program**

Sunday, January 12 at 3:00 p.m.

Free with RSVP

The Apollo once again collaborates with WNYC on the annual Martin Luther King Jr. program. Through a lively mix of one-on-one interviews and panels featuring notable guests, guests will commemorate the legacy of Dr. King.

**Amateur Night at the Apollo Fall Dates:**

All shows at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets start at \$24

Wednesday, July 24

Wednesday, July 31

Wednesday, August 7

Wednesday, August 14 – Amateur Night Salutes Harlem Week

Wednesday, August 21 – Semi-Finals, live-streamed

Wednesday, August 28

Wednesday, September 11

Wednesday, September 18

Wednesday, September 25

Wednesday, October 2

Wednesday, October 9

Wednesday, October 16

Wednesday, October 23 – Live Streamed

Wednesday, October 30

Wednesday, November 6

Wednesday, November 13

Wednesday, November 20 – Semi-Finals

Wednesday, November 27 – Grand Finale, live streamed  
Saturday, December 14 – Amateur Night Holiday Special

*Amateur Night at the Apollo* is sponsored by Coca-Cola.

**Apollo Comedy Club Fall Dates**

Doors at 9:00 p.m., show at 10:00 p.m.

Tickets start at \$22

Thursday, October 3

Thursday, November 7

Thursday, December 5

Thursday, January 9

Comedy Club comedians to be announced at a later date.

**Apollo Music Café Fall Line-Up**

Doors at 9:00 p.m., show at 10:00 p.m.

Tickets start at \$22

Friday, October 4 – ***Peter Collins***

Peter Collins has forged a sound that is uniquely his own. With his limitless vocal range and masterful command of the guitar, Collins delivers a contagious blend of pop and acoustic soul that has made him a favorite in the underground music scene.

Saturday, October 5 – ***Kennedy Administration***

Known for their irresistible sound and stage presence, the Kennedy Administration transcends time and genres with their catalog of soul, jazz, and funk. The band is comprised of a cadre of multi-talented musicians that have performed with artists ranging from Gregory Porter to the legendary Stevie Wonder.

Friday, November 8 – ***Bartolomeo***

Bartolomeo is a singer, songwriter, and musician who is known to most New Yorkers for his performances in the subway and at coffee houses around the city. Tonight, in the true spirit of supporting emerging artists, the Apollo welcomes Bart and his band for a melodic mix of urban and classic soul.

Saturday, November 9 – ***Shana Tucker***

Vocalist and cellist Shana Tucker is hailed by *New York Music Daily*, *JazzTimes* and NPR for her deep respect of lyrical storytelling and her ability to mix melodies with strong hints of jazz, classical, folk, acoustic pop and just the right touch of R&B to create a distinctive rhythmic tapestry.

Friday, December 6 – ***Damien Sneed***

In the spirit of the holiday season, composer/musician Damien Sneed and friends create a warm, intimate evening of jazz, gospel, and cheer.

Saturday, December 7 – ***Ryan Jamaal Swain***

On this special café night, Ryan Jamaal Swain, cast member of the hit television series “Pose” shares another side of his talent. Not only can Ryan act and dance, tonight he sings!

Friday, January 10 – *Yoli Zama*

Yoli Zama is a South-African born singer/songwriter, storyteller, and culture curator. Through a blend of her native language of isiXhosa mixed with English, Yoli fuses the lush and organic textures of Southern African music with the rich and dynamic melodies of folk and soul.

Saturday, January 11 – *Tony Tixier*

French pianist and composer Tony Tixier makes his debut at the Apollo Music Café during New York’s Winter Jazz Festival. He has worked with a wide range of artists—including Andrea Bocelli, Etienne Charles, Gregory Porter and more. Tixier has performed on the Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, Jimmy Kimmel Live, headlined at Jazz à Vienne in Lyon, France, and the legendary Ronnie Scotts in London. Tony’s latest album is the hauntingly beautiful “Life of Sensitive Creatures.”

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