



**The Apollo Theater and WNYC Announce the
14th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration**

“The Strategic King: MLK’s Visionary Leadership”

**Co-Hosted by WNYC’s BRIAN LEHRER and JAMI FLOYD
With WQXR’s TERRANCE MCKNIGHT as Master of Ceremonies**

Guests Include the Honorable John Lewis (D-GA), Washington Post’s Jonathan Capehart, Artist Carrie Mae Weems, and former Representative Bakari Sellers

Co-Presented by The March on Washington Film Festival

Sunday, January 12, 2020, 3PM – 5PM

**Event to be recorded for broadcast on NPR’s 1A,
airing on Monday, January 20, 2020**

(New York, NY – December 2, 2019) – WNYC and the Apollo Theater will present WNYC’s 14th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration, **“The Strategic King: MLK’s Visionary Leadership,”** as part of the Apollo’s *Uptown Hall* series, on **Sunday, January 12 at 3pm.**

Hosted by WNYC’s Peabody Award-winning host Brian Lehrer and *All Things Considered* host Jami Floyd, this annual gathering convenes artists and activists, journalists and changemakers to deeply engage with Dr. King’s legacy and how his actions and teachings speak to and inform the social justice matters of our own time.

This year’s event, **“The Strategic King: MLK’s Visionary Leadership,”** will focus on Dr. King and his colleagues’ skillful use of the media and politically strategic tactics to influence politicians and helped pass key legislation in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. The event will consider how those strategies continue to inform and inspire contemporary social justice movements, especially as some of those very protections are under attack today.

Featured guests include:

- **Herb Boyd** – Journalist, educator, and author
- **Taylor Branch** – Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian
- **Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas** - Dean, Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary
- **Jonathan Capehart** – Washington Post Opinion Writer
- **Dorothy Butler Gilliam** - journalist

- **Mary-Pat Hector** - National Youth Director for National Action Network
- **Khalil Gibran Muhammad** – Professor of History, Race, and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School and the Radcliffe Institute
- **Rashad Robinson** - President of Color Of Change
- **Bakari Sellers** – Former South Carolina State Representative, attorney, political commentator and politician

The program will be complemented by music and special spoken-word performances by artist and MacArthur Fellow **Carrie Mae Weems**, Pulitzer Prize-winner and U.S. Poet Laureate **Natasha Trethewey**, and playwright and producer **Jessica Care Moore**. WQXR's **Terrance McKnight** will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

For the first time since its inception, this year's event will take place one week before the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday, and will be recorded for national broadcast to over 300 stations on NPR's *1A* on the actual holiday, Monday, January 20. Locally in New York, WNYC's *The Brian Lehrer Show* will air the special on Monday, January 20, 2020, as well.

"This year's Uptown Hall partnership with WNYC explores a different more in-depth view of Dr. King, and gives us a chance to take a deeper dive into the political and media strategies that helped shape the core of the Civil Rights Movement. As the Apollo kicks-off this new decade, it will continue to uplift and celebrate bold leaders such as Dr. King, whose lasting influence and significance still remain," said **Jonelle Procope, President and CEO, Apollo Theater**.

"Dr. King often gets celebrated for his high ideals – as he should be – but at this moment of renewed activism for equality and social justice, it's also good to recognize his practical side," said **Brian Lehrer**. "We can learn today from how he organized for change, and how the strategic King had success. To that end, we're thrilled to have the mix of long-time movement leaders and younger activists that we do, and excited to bring it to a national audience via our colleagues at NPR and *1A*."

"Leadership is as much about strategy as it is about inspiration," said **Jami Floyd**. "Dr. King anticipated the strategies needed to bring about change. He employed powerful unconventional tactics to challenge the status quo. By recognizing and interpreting political undercurrents, moral awakenings in the North, and changing social mores – especially among younger Americans – King strategically set out to redirect political forces at local and national levels. Whether Marching on Selma or composing his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, Dr. King was driven by an uncompromising vision of social justice, he always approached tactical decisions with a seasoned eye for risks, unintended consequences, and symbolic value. King's impressive command of these strategic leadership disciplines led to truly historic success and made him the transformational leader we celebrate today."

"**The Strategic King: MLK's Visionary Leadership**" is free and open to the public, but RSVPs are mandatory at: apollotheater.org/uptownhall. Tickets will be available in January 2020.

The event presented in collaboration with the March on Washington Film Festival.

About WNYC

With an urban vibrancy and a global perspective, WNYC is New York's public radio station, broadcasting and streaming award-winning journalism, groundbreaking audio programming, and essential talk radio to the city and beyond. WNYC is a leading member station of NPR and also broadcasts programs from the BBC World Service, along with a roster of WNYC-produced local programs that champion the stories and spirit of New York City and the surrounding region. From its state-of-the-art studios, WNYC is reshaping audio for a new generation of listeners, producing some of the most-loved

nationally-syndicated public radio programs including *Radiolab*, *On the Media*, *The Takeaway* and *Snap Judgment*. WNYC broadcasts on 93.9 FM and AM 820 to listeners in New York and the tri-state area, and is available to audiences everywhere at WNYC.org, the [WNYC app](#) and through major digital radio services, all made possible through the generous support of our members, donors and sponsors.

About 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, and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*. 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, 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.

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