

# APOLLO

## The Apollo Fall 2021 Programming

“The Renaissance is Now!”

Highlights include a  
preview of *Apollo New Works* productions,  
a virtual screening of  
*Devil’s Pie: D’Angelo*, and the return of the annual  
Kwanzaa Celebration featuring  
Abdel Salaam’s Forces of Nature Dance Theatre

Additional events at the Apollo include Jamie Foxx’s  
“Act Like You Got Some Sense” book tour, NY Comedy Festival’s  
“Smart Funny and Black Live!” created by  
comedian, actress, and producer Amanda Seales, and the return of  
Shoshana Bean’s holiday concert *Sign your Hallelujah*  
presented by For The Record

Audience-favorite *Amateur Night at the Apollo* returns in-person  
February 2022

Auditions at the theater and online to begin October 2021

Harlem, NY – (September 20, 2021) — The Apollo today announced details of its fall 2021 season, taking place in-person at the Apollo and online on the [Apollo’s Digital Stage](#). The season features a broad range of free and ticketed events and programs, paying tribute to the Apollo’s legendary community of artists and highlighting new works and commissions. Highlights include in-person auditions for *Amateur Night at the Apollo* in October ahead of the long-anticipated February 16, 2022 return of the original, legendary talent show; a preview of upcoming projects from an array of *Apollo New Works* artists; an *Apollo Film Presents: ImageNation Cocktails & Sol Cinema* virtual screening of the rarely seen documentary *Devil’s Pie: D’Angelo* about the singer’s rise to stardom, sudden disappearance, and return to music; the beloved *Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night* featuring Abdel Salaam’s Forces of Nature Dance Theater returns to the Digital Stage, and more.

The Apollo will also host comedian, musician, and actor **Jamie Foxx** discussing his first-ever memoir, “Act Like You Got Some Sense,” presented by Live Nation; **Amanda Seales’** “Smart Funny and Black Live!,” as part of the 2021 NY Comedy Festival; and **Shoshana Bean’s** holiday concert, *Sing Your Hallelujah*, presented by For The Record. The Apollo officially re-opened to live audiences this August with a special concert, presented by Mastercard, featuring Grammy Award winner **Jennifer Hudson**. This fall, the Apollo will be the home for SiriusXM and Pandora’s *Small Stage Series* show in New York City with Grammy

Award-winning band **Coldplay** performing on the world-famous Apollo stage for the first time on Thursday, September 23.

The Apollo's season theme, "The Renaissance is Now!," and its presentations expand the nonprofit theater's role as a partner, commissioner, and co-producer of programming that centers Black artists and voices from the African Diaspora, while tackling important social issues for Harlem, New York, and the nation. Tickets for the Apollo's fall season are available today, September 20, at 12pm EST at [ApolloTheater.org](http://ApolloTheater.org).

"As we enter our 88<sup>th</sup> season, the Apollo remains steadfast in its commitment to serve our community, audiences, and artists. While we continue to navigate the evolving challenges affecting so many around the globe, our upcoming season serves as a reminder that the Apollo has long been a beacon of Black creativity and a place of resiliency, joy, and artistry in Harlem," said **Apollo Theater President and CEO Jonelle Procope**. "Providing a safe space for our community to freely express themselves is paramount to all that we do, and I'm thrilled that we are able to share an exciting season of programs that will unite and uplift us."

Looking ahead to the spring, in addition to *Amateur Night*, the Apollo will welcome back audiences to its late-night offerings, the *Apollo Music Café*, the Apollo's platform for emerging musical artists, and *Apollo Comedy Club*, celebrating the theater's rich comedic roots. On May 7, 2022, the Apollo will also offer *The Gathering: A Collective Sonic Ring Shout*, a sonic quest rooted in the African and African American ritual of the Ring Shout. Woven together through a diverse array of multidisciplinary artists featuring new musical works for orchestra and choir, *The Gathering* is co-presented with the American Composers Orchestra and co-curated with National Black Theatre and will feature orchestral commissions by Herb Alpert Award winner Toshi Reagon, Tony Award winner Jason Michael Webb, and Lelund Thompson. Additional programs for the spring will be announced at a later date.

"The Apollo has long been at the intersection of artistry and activism, and this upcoming season pays special tribute to our incredible community of artists with timely presentations that honor our past, examine our present, and look ahead to our bold future as we create a new canon of American art and culture," said **Apollo Theater Executive Producer Kamilah Forbes**. "From the inspiring new projects by our *Apollo New Works* artists to the return of the annual Kwanzaa Celebration and Apollo education events that serve students across the city, we look forward to discussions and collaborations that will happen both at the Apollo and in the community at large as we both open our doors and continue digital presentations in this time of renewal and renaissance."

Throughout the fall, the Apollo will collaborate with a number of producing partners to bring special events to the Apollo stage. On Saturday, October 16, comedian, musician, and actor **Jamie Foxx** brings his multi-city book tour to the Apollo to celebrate the release of his first memoir, "**Act Like You Got Some Sense**" (Grand Central Publishing—on sale October 19). In this hilarious and heartfelt memoir, Foxx shares the story of being raised by his no-nonsense grandmother, the glamour and pitfalls of life in Hollywood, and the lessons he took from both worlds to raise his two daughters. The event, produced by Live Nation, will also feature special guests to be announced.

The NY Comedy Festival returns to the Apollo on Friday, November 12 with "**Smart Funny and Black Live!**", created by comedian, actress, and producer, **Amanda Seales** (HBO's "Insecure"). The evening brings audience's favorite funny folks to the "Hall of Flava" to compete in a head-to-head battle of wits that tests their knowledge of Black history, Black culture, and the Black experience. After a night of games, flanked by a live band, the evening will end with one guest taking the crown and being inducted into the "Illustrious League of Master Blacksperts."

On Monday, December 13, Broadway veteran and Billboard #1 recording artist **Shoshana Bean** returns to the Apollo live with *Sing Your Hallelujah*, a concert capturing the spirit of connection, reflection, and joy.

With fresh interpretations of holiday classics and appearances by special guests, this year's concert, presented by For The Record, honors the nostalgia and comfort of tradition while embracing new reasons to sing.

Widely considered a cornerstone of Black culture, the Apollo continues to provide a home to artists. *Apollo New Works*, the theater's first major commissioning initiative launched in 2020, will offer a digital preview with performances of new works and conversations about the creative process on **Thursday, October 14 at 7:30pm EST** on the Apollo Digital Stage. It will feature **Kamau Ware** of **Black Gotham Experience**, **Keith Josef Adkins** of **New Black Fest**, multimedia duo Chen Lo and Asante Amin of **Soul Science Lab**, and playwright, scholar, and director **Talvin Wilks**.

The Apollo brings back its innovative series *Apollo Film Presents: ImageNation's Cocktails & Sol Cinema* on **Thursday, November 4 at 7:00pm EST** with a digital screening of the rarely seen *Devil's Pie: D'Angelo*. Directed by Carine Bijlsma, the documentary traces the story of the soul singer's return to the public eye after a 14-year absence and features D'Angelo, Questlove, Dave Chappelle, and Jesse Johnson. It will be followed by a conversation with Bijlsma and ImageNation Co-Founder Moikgantsi Kgama.

On **Sunday, December 26 at 7:00 pm EST**, the Apollo will celebrate its annual Kwanzaa celebration, *Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night*, 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 performance to celebrate Kwanzaa during the seven-day holiday. This year, Forces of Nature Dance Theatre will again co-produce a unique digital event of dance and music honoring the rich tradition of Kwanzaa.

A cultural anchor in Harlem and New York City, the Apollo continues its role as a catalyst for social engagement with community and education offerings. This fall, **Teen Takeover 2021** returns to the Digital Stage on **Friday, October 15 at 8:00pm EST**. It will showcase the talent of the Apollo's Fellowship Program as they explore the theme "What's Next?", highlighting the next evolution of Gen-Z creativity.

On **Sunday, January 9, 2022, at 3:00pm EST onstage**, the Apollo and WNYC will present the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration with a special edition of the Apollo's *Uptown Hall: MLK Celebration*, in partnership with the March on Washington Film Festival. This year's discussion focuses on the connection between activism, artistry and athletics, both past and present. Scholars, artists, and activists will examine how the struggle for social justice affected influencers from Nina Simone and Muhammad Ali to Beyoncé and Colin Kaepernick and how they, in turn, affected the struggle for social justice. This *Uptown Hall* will be recorded live at the Apollo and will be broadcast on public radio stations nationwide over the MLK Holiday Weekend.

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\*\*A complete calendar listing of upcoming programming is available on the following page.\*\*

### **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 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 Theater 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, 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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### **TICKETS**

Tickets for the Apollo's 2021 fall season, *Amateur Night*, and *The Gathering: A Collective Ring Shout* are available today, September 20 at 12pm EST at [www.ApolloTheater.org](http://www.ApolloTheater.org). Tickets for *Apollo New Works* Preview, Teen Takeover 21, and Apollo Educations events are available at no charge with RSVP.

### **SUPPORT**

*The Apollo's 2021-2022 season is made possible by leadership support from Coca-Cola, Accenture, Citi, the Ford Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, the Jerome L. Greene Arts Access Fund in the New York Community Trust, HBO, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.*

*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 Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, and from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.*

*Coca-Cola is the sponsor of Amateur Night at the Apollo and a generous supporter of the Apollo's annual Kwanzaa Celebration.*

*Leadership support for the Apollo New Works initiative is provided by the Ford Foundation. The New Black Fest is funded by The Black Seed and is also supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Commissioning support for Soul Science Lab is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts.*

*The Gathering: A Collective Sonic Ring Shout is generously supported by Art for Justice and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Linda and Stuart Nelson, Anonymous, JP Morgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and The New York Community Trust.*

*Teen Takeover is a part of the Apollo's Pathway to Careers in the Arts which is generously supported by Steve and Connie Ballmer, Disney, Fund II, the Hearst Foundations, the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation, The Pinkerton Foundation, The Neuberger Berman Foundation, and the Verizon Foundation.*

*Apollo Community Programs are supported by New York City Council Members Bill Perkins and Mark Levine.*

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## **CALENDAR OF APOLLO THEATER'S 2021 FALL SEASON:**

### **Amateur Night Auditions**

Saturday, October 9 and Sunday, October 10 at 9:00am – 6:00pm EST

*Amateur Night at the Apollo*, the original, large-scale talent show and one of the longest-running continuous events in New York City, attracts performers and audiences the world over. In-person auditions return to the Apollo in October ahead of the highly anticipated return of the in-person competition in February 2022.

### **Apollo New Works Preview**

Thursday, October 14 at 7:30pm EST

Free with RSVP

*Apollo New Works*, the theater's first major commissioning initiative launched in 2020, will offer a digital preview of performances of new works and conversations about the artistic creative process, featuring Kamau Ware of Black Gotham Experience, Keith Josef Adkins of New Black Fest, multimedia duo Chen Lo and Asante Amin of Soul Science Lab, and playwright, scholar, and director Talvin Wilks.

### **Teen Takeover 21: What's Next?**

Friday, October 15 at 8:00pm EST

Free with RSVP

During the pandemic era, young creatives have been sharing their talents and embracing novel skills while cultivating new audiences across social media platforms. As people of all ages emerge from quarantine, the Apollo Fellowship Program members ask, "What's Next?" Join the Apollo as these young artists and influencers take the stage to share their talents and illustrate the next evolution of Gen Z creativity.

### **Jamie Foxx: "Act Like You Got Some Sense" Book Tour**

Saturday, October 16 at 8:00pm EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Tickets start at \$49.50 and include a signed copy of the memoir

Comedian, musician, and actor Jamie Foxx embarks on a multi-city book tour to celebrate the release of his first memoir, "Act Like You Got Some Sense" (Grand Central Publishing— on sale October 19). In this hilarious and heartfelt memoir, Foxx shares the story of being raised by his no-nonsense grandmother, the glamour and pitfalls of life in Hollywood, and the lessons he took from both worlds to raise his two daughters. Joined by special guests and produced by Live Nation, this tour will be an evening of laughs, tears, and wisdom.

### **ImageNation's Cocktails and Sol Cinema – Devil's Pie: D'Angelo**

Thursday, November 4 at 7:00pm EST

Tickets: \$7; \$5 for A-List subscribers

Featuring D' Angelo, Questlove, Dave Chappelle and Jesse Johnson, *Devil's Pie: D'Angelo* is the story of a soul singer who returns to the public eye after 14 years of absence. The documentary explores D'Angelo, who had two platinum selling albums, a sold-out world tour, and a body chiseled to perfection, and then one day, at the height of his career in 2000, vanished. For 12 years he descended into darkness. Out of nowhere, in December 2014, his third album *Black Messiah* was suddenly released: a soundtrack of the lost years. After the screening there will be a conversation with ImageNation Co-Founder Moikgantsi Kgama and the director of *Devil's Pie*, Carine Bijlsma.

### **NY Comedy Festival Presents "Smart Funny and Black Live!"**

Friday, November 12 at 7:00pm EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Tickets starting at \$39

“Smart Funny and Black Live!” created by comedian, actress, and producer Amanda Seales (HBO’s “Insecure”) brings audience’s favorite funny folks to the “Hall of Flava,” to compete, in a head-to-head battle of wits that tests their knowledge of Black history, Black culture, and the Black experience. After a night of games, flanked by a live band, and a turnt-up audience, each show ends with one guest, literally, taking the “L,” the other, taking the crown, and being inducted into the “Illustrious League of Master Blacksperts.”

**For The Record Presents: Shoshana Bean, *Sing Your Hallelujah***

Monday, December 13 at 7:30pm EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Tickets: Starting at \$52.50

This December, Broadway veteran and Billboard #1 recording artist Shoshana Bean returns to the Apollo live with *Sing Your Hallelujah*, a concert capturing the spirit of connection, reflection, and joy. With fresh interpretations of holiday classics and appearances by special guests, this year’s concert honors the nostalgia and comfort of tradition while embracing new reasons to sing.

**Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night featuring Abdel Salaam’s Forces of Nature Dance Theater**

Sunday, December 26 at 7:00pm EST

Tickets: Pay what you Wish

*Kwanzaa Celebration: Regeneration Night* returns to the Apollo Digital Stage this December, featuring Abdel Salaam’s Forces of Nature Dance Theatre and hosted by Imhotep Gary Byrd. A tradition since 2006, the Apollo brings together dance, music, and poetry to honor the seven core principles of Kwanzaa including family, community, and culture through special performances. Participants reflect on these seven basic principles that focus on recommitting to the collective achievement of a better life for families, community, and Black people overall. As it did in 2020, the Apollo will once again offer the event virtually, connecting African American communities across the country.

**Uptown Hall: MLK Celebration**

Sunday, January 9, 2022, at 3:00pm EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Advance tickets are free and required for entry

The Apollo Theater and WNYC’s annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration continues as a special edition of the Apollo’s *Uptown Hall* series, in partnership with the March on Washington Film Festival. This Apollo Uptown Hall honoring Dr. King will bring together Harlem and NYC audiences with scholars, cultural and community leaders, and activists to engage in conversation about King’s legacy and how his teachings affect us. This year’s discussion focuses on the connection between activism, artistry, and athletics, both past and present. We’ll examine how the struggle for social justice affected influencers from Nina Simone and Muhammad Ali to Beyoncé and Colin Kaepernick and how they, in turn, affected the struggle for social justice.

**Looking ahead to this spring:**

**Amateur Night: Season Opener**

Wednesday, February 16 at 7:30 PM EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Tickets now on sale

*Amateur Night at the Apollo* is one of New York’s most popular live entertainment experiences, attracting performers and audiences the world over. The classic competition is known for its notoriously “tough” audience, gleefully deciding who will “be good or be gone” to win the grand prize. Who will be the next

Ella Fitzgerald, James Brown, or Jackson 5? After being on hiatus in 2020 due to Covid-19, *Amateur Night* returns in February 2022 with a program focused on local amateur talent and special guest performances, airing every other week on Wednesdays.

***The Gathering: A Collective Ring Shout***

Co-presented by the American Composers Orchestra and the Apollo Theater

Co-curated with National Black Theatre

In partnership with Gateways Music Festival and Harlem Chamber Players

Creative concept and direction by Jonathan McCrory

Featuring: American Composers Orchestra with Gateway Music Festival and Harlem Chamber Plays, Abyssinian Baptist Church Choir, and Sing Harlem Choir

Saturday, May 7, 2022, at 8:00 PM EST

Apollo Theater Mainstage

Tickets now on sale

*The Gathering: A Collective Sonic Ring Shout* is a sonic quest rooted in the African and African American ritual of the Ring Shout. Woven together through a diverse array of multidisciplinary artists featuring new musical works for orchestra and choir, this evening-length event brings the ancestral tradition of the Ring Shout into a contemporary context, opening a space to collectively grieve, to awaken joy as a source of liberation, and to find love as a form of resistance. Directed by National Black Theatre's Executive Artistic Director, Jonathan McCrory, the program features Carlos Simon's *Amen!*, Courtney Bryan's *Sanctum*, and the New York premiere of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* by Joel Thompson. These works are in conversation with new commissions from Herb Alpert Award winner Toshi Reagon, Tony Award winner Jason Michael Webb, and Lelund Thompson, created to honor our present needs for a collective space of remembrance. The performance is anchored by an 80-member orchestra and a 50-voice choir composed of singers, professional and amateur, from multiple African American churches and choral ensembles in New York.

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