

APOLLO

AMATEUR NIGHT AT THE APOLLO KICKS OFF ITS 86th SEASON

**Featuring New Contestants and Amateurs
To Compete for a Grand Prize of \$20,000**

Opening night - Wednesday, February 19th at 7:30 p.m.

New York, NY, January 27, 2020 - *Amateur Night at the Apollo*, sponsored by Coca-Cola, returns on February 19th at 7:30 p.m. marking the 86th year of the signature program, and will introduce the new “Set It Off Man” Greginald Spencer. This season, contestants will compete for the chance to win this year’s Amateur Night champion title.

Apollo Theater’s signature original, large-scale talent competition and one of the longest-running continuous events in New York City is hosted by comedian Capone and features staples like C.P. Lacey in the role of the “Executioner” (in charge of ushering off “booed” contestants), Greginald Spencer the new “Set It Off Man,” and the Apollo’s *Amateur Night* house band led by music director, Michael Mitchell.

Since introducing the first Amateur contests in 1934, *Amateur Night* has been the launching pad for some of the biggest artists in the world including Michael Jackson, D’Angelo, Lauryn Hill, and Ella Fitzgerald who won the very first year. Now, 86 years later *Amateur Night* continues to be a primary source for discovering and nurturing new talent and spotlighting up-and-coming artists including H.E.R., Sung Lee, NUMBERS, Christian Guardino, Machine Gun Kelly, Alexis Morrast, Matthew Whitaker, and Wé McDonald. *Amateur Night at the Apollo* is produced by Marion J. Caffey along with coordinator Kathy Jordan Sharpton.

This season, contestants will once again “Be Good or Be Gone” to compete for the chance to win a grand prize of \$20,000, along with a \$5,000 grand prize for the *Child Star of Tomorrow* category. *Amateur Night at the Apollo* has played a major role in the cultivation of artists and in the emergence of innovative musical genres including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Select performances including opening night will be live streamed via the Apollo Theater’s Facebook page.

Tickets and Information:

Tickets for Amateur Night begin at \$24 and are available at The Apollo Theater Box Office: (212) 531 5305, 253 West 125th Street, and Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, www.ticketmaster.com.

Credits:

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

The Apollo's 2019-2020 season is made possible by leadership support from Coca-Cola, Citi, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, the Jerome L. Greene Arts Access Fund in the New York Community Trust, 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 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.

About Us:

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 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 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.

In fall 2020, the Apollo Theater will mark its first ever physical expansion with the theaters at the Victoria, part of the vision for a future Apollo Performing Arts Center. The theaters at the Victoria will support the growth of the Apollo's artistic programming as it continues to provide a home to artists of color, create an expanded 21st century American performing arts canon, and provide additional educational and community programming in Harlem and beyond. For more information about the Apollo, visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

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