

# APOLLO

Apollo Theater and Absolutely Live Entertainment  
To Celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Billie Holiday  
With Presentations in Honor of the Legendary Jazz and Blues Singer

Songstress to Be Inducted into the Apollo Walk of Fame  
Ceremony to Include Two-Time Grammy Winner Cassandra Wilson  
*Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>*

*Cassandra Wilson: A Celebration of Billie Holiday* Concert  
Will Mark Wilson's First Time Headlining the Apollo  
*Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>*; 'Coming Forth By Day' (Legacy Recordings) Released  
*April 7<sup>th</sup>*

New York, NY March 2, 2015 – The **Apollo Theater** in collaboration with **Absolutely Live Entertainment** will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of **Billie Holiday** with presentations honoring the late jazz and blues singer and featuring two-time Grammy winning musician Cassandra Wilson. On **Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>** Billie Holiday will be inducted into the **Apollo Walk of Fame**, joining other legends honored by the Theater including Ella Fitzgerald, James Brown and its most recent inductee, Louis Armstrong. Musician **Cassandra Wilson** and Apollo president and CEO **Jonelle Procope** will present the legendary singer's Walk of Fame plaque during the ceremony. Accepting the honor on behalf of The Estate Of Billie Holiday, which is managed by The Bicycle Music Company, will be one of its managing partners, Steven Salm. Along with the Walk of Fame ceremony, events honoring the late songstress include the release of Cassandra Wilson's upcoming Legacy Recordings release, *Coming Forth By Day* (April 7<sup>th</sup>) and a special concert, *Cassandra Wilson: A Celebration of Billie Holiday*, which will mark Wilson's first time headlining the Apollo (April 10<sup>th</sup>).

The Apollo Theater played a major role in the emergence of jazz and is honoring that legacy, as well as continued innovations within the genre, by inducting Ms. Holiday into the Walk of Fame. Apollo's Walk of Fame honors legendary performers who have helped shape the American music landscape and build the Apollo into one of the world's most enduring cultural institutions. Billie Holiday, born Eleanora Fagan, had a special relationship with the Apollo Theater dating back to the Theater's founding year, 1934. The then, 19-year-old performed "If the Moon Turns Green" and "The Man I Love" to a moved crowd. Over the course of her career, Lady Day would go on to perform at the iconic venue at least 23 times. In the late 1940s, after she lost her New York City cabaret card, the Apollo remained one of the few NYC venues where Ms. Holiday could perform.

Billie Holiday's plaque will be installed underneath the Apollo's marquee on 125<sup>th</sup> street, alongside plaques for numerous Apollo legends including **Ella Fitzgerald, Gladys**

**Knight & the Pips, Little Richard, James Brown, Smokey Robinson, Patti LaBelle, Quincy Jones, Aretha Franklin, Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Lionel Richie, Etta James, Chaka Khan, Chuck Jackson, Celia Cruz, The Isley Brothers and Louis Armstrong.**

“It is an honor to celebrate Billie Holiday and her many contributions to the jazz and blues world, on her centennial birthday,” said **Mikki Shepard**, Executive Producer for the Apollo Theater. “The Walk of Fame is our way of paying tribute to the Apollo Legends who have transformed the American entertainment landscape. Billie Holiday without a doubt is the personification of this. Her voice and presence permeated mainstream culture which led to her becoming the most influential jazz singer of her day and among the most esteemed vocalist of the century. These initiatives serve as part of the Apollo’s mission to use its legacy to inform and support contemporary artists.”

Coinciding with the Theater’s Walk of Fame induction, Cassandra Wilson will release her new album *Coming Forth By Day* (Legacy Recordings), on April 7<sup>th</sup>, which would have been Ms. Holiday’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The album features wholly original interpretations of 11 songs that Billie Holiday recorded over the course of her career and an original by Cassandra called “Last Song (For Lester).”

“*Coming Forth by Day* is an homage dedicated to the beauty, power, and genius of Billie Holiday. A collection of musical spells, prescriptions for navigating the dubious myths surrounding her life and times, this record is a vehicle for the re-emergence of Billie's songbook in the 21st century," said Cassandra Wilson.

On March 31, Legacy Recordings will also release *The Centennial Collection* -- a newly curated single disc anthology showcasing 20 of Billie Holiday’s finest recordings.

The Billie Holiday Walk of Fame induction is the start of Apollo’s 2015 celebration of jazz. In May, the Apollo Theater, in collaboration with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, will present two special evenings of jazz with **Harlem Nights/U Street Lights** curated by Grammy- nominated pianist/composer and Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz - **Jason Moran**. This unique program, to be held at the Apollo Theater on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, as part of the Harlem Jazz Shrines Festival, and then at the Kennedy Center on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, brings together some of today’s leading jazz musicians in an exploration of the deep musical connection between the Harlem and D.C. Jazz scenes.

### **Ticket Information**

Tickets for Cassandra Wilson: A Celebration of Billie Holiday are \$48.50, \$63.50 and \$78.50. Tickets 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](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

### **Apollo Theater Information**

Box Office Hours:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri – 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Wednesday – 10:00 am - 8:30 pm  
Saturday – 12:00 pm - 6:00pm

### **About the Apollo Theater**

The Apollo is a national treasure that has had significant impact on the development of American culture and its popularity around the world. Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has played a major role in cultivating artists and in the emergence of innovative musical genres including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Sammy Davis, Jr., James Brown, Michael Jackson, Bill Cosby, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, and countless others began their road to stardom on the Apollo's stage.

The Apollo is a presenting organization that also produces original, groundbreaking programs at its legendary home and makes them available to audiences nationally and globally through touring projects and digital media. Through its civic, educational and public programs, the Apollo also serves as a community gathering place and resource by building knowledge, providing career development opportunities, and addressing issues that affect its community and American society and culture.

The Apollo will continue to present historically relevant presentations, as well as more forward-looking, contemporary work. The Apollo Theater's new artistic vision - music is our foundation and our programs build upon our living legacy to nourish its ongoing development. Music also drives our work in dance, theater, and performance art events.

The Apollo's programming celebrates and re-envision the Theater's legacy in creative and contemporary ways and provides an unparalleled resource for the nurturing of emerging artists and curators, promoting intimate and engaging experiences that dynamically connect both artists and audiences. Also central to the Theater's mission is: to encourage experimentation and new artistic directions by mid-career and established artists; developing and presenting new and cutting edge multi-disciplinary work and to nurture culturally diverse artists and audiences.

Based on its cultural significance and architecture, the Apollo Theater received state and city landmark designation in 1983 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, visit [www.apollotheater.org](http://www.apollotheater.org).

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