



NEW YORK CITY
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

APOLLO | 75TH
ANNIVERSARY

For Immediate Release

**IN CELEBRATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY
NYC MEDIA AND NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE APOLLO THEATER EDUCATION PROGRAM, PRESENT
*FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE: NEW YORK VOICES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT***

Free Screening and Panel Discussion Open to the Public at the Apollo Theater

On Thursday, January 14, 2010, at 6pm NYC Media and the New York City Commission on Human Rights, in collaboration with the Apollo Theater Education Program, will present a free screening of *Fighting for Justice: New York Voices of the Civil Rights Movement* followed by a panel discussion at the legendary Apollo Theater in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Fighting for Justice Screening

Description: *Fighting for Justice* profiles two New Yorkers, Esther Cooper Jackson and Clifford Alexander, whose contributions helped pave the way toward progress for equal justice for African-Americans, and whose stories begin to tell about New York City's formative place in the national Civil Rights movement.

Panel discussion

Opening remarks: *Patricia L. Gatling* (Commissioner and Chair, NYC Commission on Human Rights), *Katherine Oliver* (President, NYC Media), *Jonelle Procope* (President, Apollo Theater), and *Howard Dodson* (Director, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture)

Moderator: *Keith Brown* (senior vice president of news and public affairs, BET Networks)

Panelists:

Esther Cooper Jackson – Civil Rights activist, former managing editor and co-founder *Freedomways*
Clifford L. Alexander, Jr. – Counsel to President Lyndon B. Johnson during passage of Civil Rights legislation

Dr. Clarence Taylor – Professor of History, Black and Hispanic Studies Department, Baruch College and the Graduate Center, CUNY

Dr. Martha Biondi – Associate Professor of African American Studies and History, Northwestern University

Shola Lynch – Filmmaker, *Chisholm '72: Unbought & Unbossed*

The evening will also include a special performance by the C3 Youth Choir from the Christian Cultural Center (Rev. A. R. Bernard, pastor).

“*Fighting for Justice* explores the important issues of racism and discrimination and the Civil Rights Movement that fought them,” said NYC Human Rights Commissioner Patricia L. Gatling. “On the eve of Dr. King’s birthday, the Commission is launching an online Civil Rights museum with short films and various supporting materials. The films are available on the City’s website www.nyc.gov and preserve stories of individuals whose efforts contributed to NYC’s central role

in the Civil Rights Movement. We are extremely grateful to our partner, NYC Media, and also to the Apollo Theater and Tiger Baron Foundation for their financial support.”

“NYC Media is committed to bringing New Yorkers content that is relevant and informative to their lives as well as showcasing our City’s rich and diverse history,” said President of NYC Media Group Katherine Oliver. “We’re thrilled to partner with the NYC Commission on Human Rights for this noteworthy project and are grateful to the Apollo Theater for their support in this effort.”

“We are proud to collaborate with NYC Media and the New York City Commission on Human Rights on this project,” said President & CEO of the Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc., Jonelle Procope. “Aside from the Apollo’s rich history as a cultural icon, it is also a treasured resource in Harlem and remains dedicated to serving the surrounding community in various capacities, including as a town hall. The Apollo stage is the perfect platform through which people can receive information about issues important to their lives.”

Fighting for Justice will air on NYC life (Channel 25) on Friday, January 15 at 8pm. Check your local listings. Additional interviews will also be available online in January at www.nyc.gov/media and www.nyc.gov/cchr.

Location: The Apollo Theater, located at 253 West 125th Street between Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd and Frederick Douglass Blvd. Nearby subways include the A, B, C, D, 2 and 3. Nearby buses include the M10, M2, M100, and M60.

Note: Doors open at 5:15pm. Seating is limited and available on a first come, first served basis. Program is subject to change. The advance screening and panel is free of charge and open to the public. The Apollo Theater is fully wheelchair accessible.

RSVP: By email (events@tv.nyc.gov) or phone (212-531-5363) by Tuesday, January 12.

About NYC Media

NYC Media, the official TV, radio and online network of New York City, informs, educates and entertains New Yorkers about the City’s diverse people and neighborhoods, government, services, attractions and activities. As a unique public media entity, NYC Media produces award winning content that is accountable, useful and compelling and serves as the quintessential source of information about New York City. Visit www.nyc.gov/media to learn more.

About NYC Commission on Human Rights

The NYC Commission on Human Rights enforces the City’s Human Rights Law, one of the most comprehensive civil rights laws in the nation. The Law prohibits discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations based on race, color, creed, age, national origin, alienage or citizenship status, gender (including gender identity and sexual harassment), sexual orientation, disability, marital status, and partnership status. In addition, the Law affords protection against discrimination in employment based on arrest or conviction record and status as a victim of domestic violence, stalking and sex offenses. In housing, the Law affords additional protections based on lawful occupation, family status, and any lawful source of income. The City Human Rights Law also prohibits retaliation and bias-related harassment. To learn more, visit www.nyc.gov/cchr.

About the Apollo Theater

Celebrating 75 years as the Soul of American Culture, the Apollo Theater is one of Harlem’s, New York City’s, and America’s most iconic and enduring cultural institutions. The Apollo was one of the first theaters in New York, and the country, to fully integrate, welcoming traditionally African-American and Hispanic populations in the audience. 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, Bill Cosby, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, and countless others began their road to stardom on the Apollo's stage. 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.

About the Panelists

ESTHER COOPER JACKSON – Civil Rights activist, managing editor and one of the founders of the political and cultural quarterly *Freedomways*; headed the Southern Negro Youth Congress; subject of *Fighting for Justice: New York Voices of the Civil Rights Movement*.

CLIFFORD L. ALEXANDER, JR. – President of Alexander and Associates, attorney, businessman, and former public servant under four US Presidents; counsel to LBJ during passage of Civil Rights legislation; subject of *Fighting for Justice: New York Voices of the Civil Rights Movement*.

DR. CLARENCE TAYLOR – Professor of History, Baruch College and the Graduate Center, CUNY and Professor of the Black and Hispanic Studies Department at Baruch; author: *The Black Churches of Brooklyn, Knocking At Our Own Door: Milton A. Galamison and the Struggle to Integrate New York City Schools*, and *Black Religious Intellectuals: The Fight for Equality from Jim Crow to the 21st Century*.

DR. MARTHA BIONDI – Associate Professor of African American Studies and History, Northwestern University; author: *To Stand and Fight: the Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City*.

SHOLA LYNCH – Filmmaker; director and producer of *Chisholm '72: Unbought & Unbossed*; producer: *Lessons from Little Rock: A National Report Card*, *American Gangster* (2 episodes), *Do You Believe in Miracles? The Story of the 1980 US Hockey Team*; co-producer: *Matters of Race*.

If you are a member of the press and would like to cover the event, please RSVP to:

NYC Media

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Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc

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