



BAM hosts the 2020 Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Jan 20

Free community event features prominent civic leaders and a keynote address by “The 1619 Project” creator Nikole Hannah-Jones

Music performances by The Brooklyn Interdenominational Choir and Son Little

Presented by BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music), Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, and Medgar Evers College of The City University of New York

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave)

Jan 20 at 10:30am

Free (tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-seated basis starting at 8am)

Dec 18, 2019/Brooklyn, NY—BAM will host the annual Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday, January 20 at 10:30am in the Howard Gilman Opera House (Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave). The celebration brings together artists and civic leaders to commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. King. The 34th annual celebration will feature the creator of *New York Times Magazine*'s acclaimed *1619 Project* **Nikole Hannah-Jones** as keynote speaker. Additional free film, art, and music events are also scheduled on the BAM campus over the preceding weekend.

“Many of the sources of uncertainty and instability that we feel as a nation were addressed by Dr. King,” said **BAM President Katy Clark**. “His legacy continually inspires our own work at BAM toward anti-oppression. As does the work of Nikole Hannah-Jones, who marries her broad analysis of structural racism and civil rights with an advocacy for public education—not to mention a strong commitment to Brooklyn.”

The keynote speaker this year is the award-winning investigative reporter covering racial justice for *The New York Times Magazine*, Nikole Hannah-Jones. With her unvarnished look at the role of slavery and its legacy on the making of our nation, Hannah-Jones tells us that “without the idealistic, strenuous, and patriotic efforts of Black Americans, our democracy today would most likely look very different—it might not be a democracy at all.” The award-winning journalist created *The New York Times Magazine*'s *1619 Project*, a multi-media initiative marking the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Black people in Jamestown, VA, the system of slavery that followed, and its enduring legacy in America.

The tribute features music performances by **Son Little** and **The Brooklyn Interdenominational Choir**. Participating civic leaders to be announced.

The day's events include a film screening of Aretha Franklin's revelatory concert film *Amazing Grace* and the annual community art exhibition, “Picture the Dream,”

featuring works by students from the New York City Housing Authority. The preceding weekend features BAMcafé Live performances by **Blak Emoji** with **Starchild & The New Romantic** and **The 1865** with **Major Taylor**. Performances are curated by **Black Rock Coalition**, a New York-based artists' collective and non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the creative freedom and works of Black musicians.

All events are free. The tribute tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-seated basis starting at 8am in the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House lobby. For further information, please call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100 or visit BAM.org.

For media access to the event (including interview requests), please contact Cynthia Tate at ctate@BAM.org or 718.724.8022.

Additional Events

BAMcafé Live (30 Lafayette Ave, 2nd fl)

Blak Emoji with **Starchild & The New Romantic**

Curated by Black Rock Coalition

Jan 17 at 9pm

The electro-funk group **Blak Emoji** is fronted by singer-songwriter **Kelsey Warren** and joined by musicians **Bryan Percivall** on bass, **Max Tholenaar-Maples** on drums, and **Sylvana Joyce** on keys. The New York City-based outfit is hypnotic and penetrating, navigating electronica and funkadelic soul. They will be joined by **Starchild & The New Romantic**, a Brooklyn-based artist who has collaborated with the likes of Solange and Dev Hynes.

BAMcafé Live (30 Lafayette Ave, 2nd fl)

The 1865 with **Major Taylor**

Curated by Black Rock Coalition

Jan 18 at 9pm

The 1865 are a blues-punk supergroup whose music is inspired by 1865 America, post Emancipation. The group is composed of musicians **Chuck Treece** (McRad) on drums, **Sacha Jenkins** (The White Mandingos), **Carolyn "Honeychild" Coleman** (Apollo Heights) on lead vocals/baritone guitar, Afro-Brazilian bassist **Flora Lucini** (Maafa), and drummer **Jason "Biz" Lucas** (Dragonz of Zynth). The group will be joined by **Major Taylor**.

Film: *Amazing Grace*, directed by Alan Elliott & Sydney Pollack, 2018 (BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave)

Jan 20 at 1pm

Shot over two days in 1972 in Los Angeles at the New Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Watts, but never before released, *Amazing Grace* captures Aretha Franklin, "the Queen of Soul," at the height of her powers as she brings down the house with rousing renditions of "How I Got Over," "Never Grow Old," Marvin Gaye's "Wholy Holy," the miraculous title song, and more. A rapturous, awe-inspiring experience, this lost masterpiece offers "the most lovely gaze a professional camera's ever laid upon Aretha Franklin and some of the mightiest singing she's ever laid on you" (*The New York Times*).

Art exhibition (Devitre Lounge, 30 Lafayette Ave)

Picture the Dream

For the 12th consecutive year, BAM partners with NYCHA to offer free art workshops to children living in Brooklyn public housing residences. Students will create original artwork inspired by Dr. King's dream of freedom and equality.

About the speakers and artists

Nikole Hannah-Jones is an award-winning investigative reporter who covers civil rights and racial injustice for *The New York Times Magazine* and creator of the acclaimed 1619 Project. She started writing in high school when she joined her school's newspaper and began writing about students like herself, who were bused across town as part of a voluntary school desegregation program. Her heroes are the race beat reporters, such as Ida B. Wells, Ethel Payne, Simeon Booker, and Claude Sitton, whose fearless coverage helped move the nation closer to its promise.

Prior to joining *The New York Times*, Hannah-Jones worked as an investigative reporter at ProPublica in New York City, where she spent three years chronicling the way official policy created and maintains segregation in housing and schools. She started her journalism career covering the majority-Black Durham Public Schools for *The News & Observer* in Raleigh, NC. Hannah-Jones also has written extensively about school resegregation across the country and chronicled the decades-long failure of the federal government to enforce the landmark 1968 Fair Housing Act. Her reporting for both print and radio has earned a National Magazine Award, a Peabody, and a Polk Award.

In 2016, Hannah-Jones co-founded the Ida B. Wells Society for Investigative Reporting, a training and mentorship organization dedicated to increasing the ranks of investigative reporters of color.

In 2019 Hannah-Jones spearheaded the creation of the landmark 1619 Project for *The New York Times*. The acclaimed multimedia project commemorates the 400th year of slavery in what would become the United States by examining slavery's modern legacy and reframing the way we understand this history and the contributions of Black Americans to the nation.

Son Little, the son of a preacher, is the easygoing musical alchemist of our time. Much like his heroes Stevie Wonder and Jimi Hendrix, his songs are deconstructions of American R&B, deft weavings of different eras—blues, soul, gospel, rock 'n' roll—through his own unique vision, which is beautifully exemplified on his second full-length album, *New Magic*. In addition to his own headlining runs, he has toured with Leon Bridges, Kelis, Mumford & Sons, and Shakey Graves. He also produced Mavis Staples' Grammy Award-winning version of the song "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean."

The Brooklyn Interdenominational Choir (BIC) is an ensemble committed to bringing people together through artistic expression. Members are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate the diverse cultures which make our world great. Founder Frank A. Haye, conductor, choral director, flutist, composer, and producer, says, "BIC is a group of performing ambassadors that will spread the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ through song in the tri-state area, as well as throughout the US and abroad." BIC records and ministers in different venues, including churches, temples, festivals, concert halls, convention centers, clubs, street fairs, and private functions. All members of BIC receive world-class musical training and opportunities for fellowship with artists from diverse ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds. Its motto is simple: "One Great City, One Great Choir to the Glory of God."

Contemporary and traditional songs are included in BIC's musical repertoire. Community outreach has included vocal performance, music theory, ear training, master classes, and private music lessons. BIC has sung for worship services; interfaith/peace gatherings; concerts; community events; yoga, ecology, and green festivals; philanthropic groups;

fraternal associations; and artistic organizations such as Celebrate Brooklyn!, Mark Morris Dance Group, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic. In addition, BIC performed on televised shows for CBS, NBC, TBN, and HBO. As members of the May 2016 cast of *Hope and a Future* at the BRIC Arts Media House, BIC appeared in a play about creating self-sufficient communities in Haiti. BIC was a featured artist in We Care for Humanity's Global Officials of Dignity Awards Gala at the United Nations in August 2016, and in September 2016's Central Park Vigil for Peace and Ecology.

Credits

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. Harvey Theater at BAM Strong is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, houses the Judith

and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas features first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St. for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For more information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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