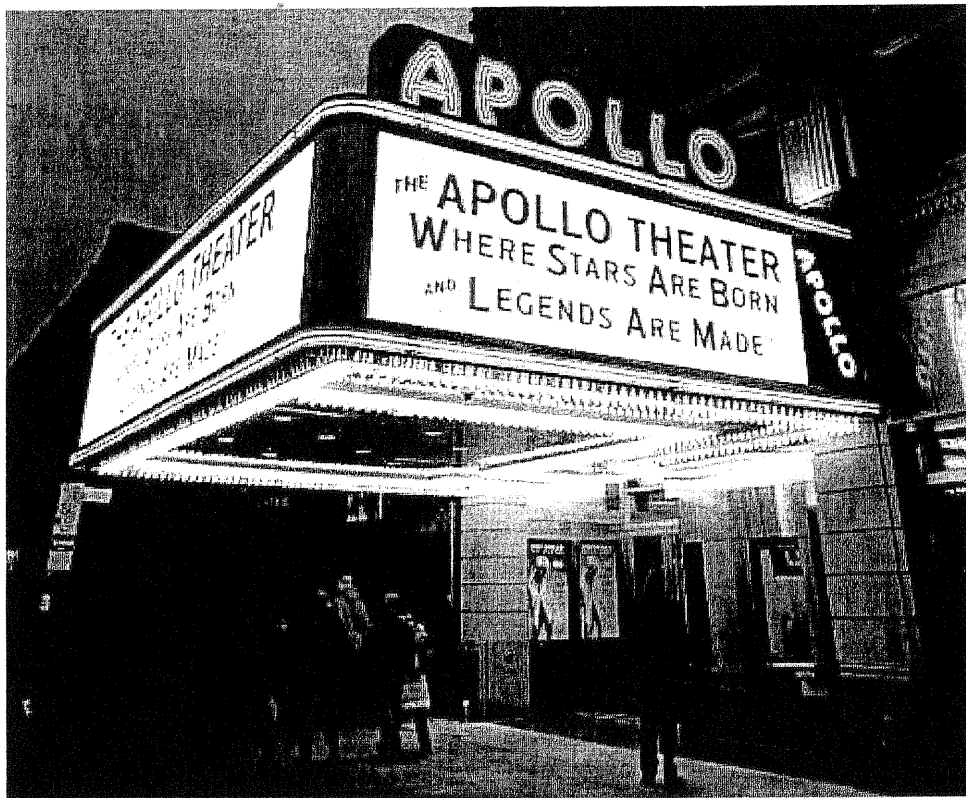


DAILY NEWS

It's showtime for Brooklyn as Apollo Theater seeks new talent from borough

BY Elizabeth Lazarowitz
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Friday, October 1st 2010, 4:00 AM



Apollo Theater alumni from Brooklyn include Lauryn Hill, Billie Holiday and James Brown.

Brooklyn is getting its turn in the Apollo Theater's spotlight.

Singers, dancers, rappers, comedians and acrobats from the borough will get to compete tomorrow for spots in the famed Harlem theater's first Brooklyn-themed Amateur Night.

"It'll really be a hometown night for Brooklynites," said Marion Caffey, executive producer of Amateur Night at the Apollo.

"And I think shining our light on the borough just increases the chance of digging out a gold nugget or a diamond in the rough."

The Apollo's signature live show is holding Brooklyn-based auditions tomorrow at Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corp. headquarters on Fulton St., where as many as 300 contestants will get a chance to strut their stuff.

About 15 acts will be picked to take the stage for the Brooklyn-only show on Feb. 9, 2011.

Three will go on to compete for the 2011 season's top \$10,000 prize.

Young people ages 5 to 15 will compete in the "Child Star of Tomorrow" category.

The borough-themed event is joint effort of the theater and the Brooklyn Arts Council, which proposed the show as part of its year-long Black Brooklyn Renaissance program.

"There are lots of artists in Brooklyn - especially in the areas of dance and music, and particularly jazz - who maintain a cross-fertilization with Harlem, and we wanted to make that point," said the program's director, Kay Turner.

Turner expects the audition to draw plenty of talented Brooklynites who are hoping to join famous Amateur Night alumni such as Lauryn Hill, Billie Holiday, Stevie Wonder and James Brown.

They'll also have to have nerves steely enough to face a tough crowd with the license to boo them off the stage.

Frequent Apollo audience member and Bedford-Stuyvesant resident Richard Pegram, 43, said he won't be lining up to perform, but he'll trek to Harlem to cheer - or jeer - his fellow Brooklynites.

"I'll definitely go," Pegram said. "I love sitting down there and criticizing and laughing."

Auditions for "Amateur Night at the Apollo: Brooklyn Night" will be held 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Oct. 2 at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp., Community Room 2, 1368 Fulton St. Call (718) 625-0080 or visit the website Brooklynartscouncil.org.

With Vinnie Rotondaro

elazarowitz@nydailynews.com