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Brooklyn in Harlem: Locals to Perform at the Apollo

By [GRETCHEN YOUNG](#), Community Contributor



Kay Turner is happy to have had such a strong turn-out for her Black Brooklyn Renaissance programs.

As part of the Black Brooklyn Renaissance, a year-long cultural program produced by the [Brooklyn Arts Council](#), the [Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation](#) and a host of other

Brooklyn organizations, The Apollo Theater is hosting [the first-ever Brooklyn Amateur Night](#) this evening, featuring local hip hop artist Talib Kweli.

Dr. Kay Turner, Brooklyn Arts Council's folk arts director, said she hopes the event that will help the community explore the many facets of Brooklyn's emergence as a world-class artist's hub since the 1960s.

"This project came out of irritation," she said. "I had met a lot of black artists and never felt, overall, the world got that artists came out of Brooklyn...except Jay-Z."

Harlem has been going through its own resurgence for decades. But really, "it all began with Brooklyn," said Dr. Turner.

She noted that, much like the artists of 1920s Harlem, quite a few black artists live in Bed-Stuy, Fort Greene and Clinton Hill, and many know each other and are familiar with each others' work. To make sure artists' lives are cataloged, she has used her expertise as a folklorist and ability to encourage people to do research, initiating a digital recording project in which she interviews Brooklyn artists of all genres to create a snapshot of black art in the community.

"The Harlem Renaissance was so well documented, right down to the handkerchief Paul Robeson blew his nose on," Dr. Turner said. "The history really needed to be put down."

On completion of the archive, she said the public will be able to access it through [Brooklyn Libraries](#), [the Brooklyn Historical Society](#) and the Brooklyn Arts Council. Approximately 50 interviews have already been conducted.

"There's so much more to do; we've just scratched the surface of a rich arena of presentation and historical value," Dr. Turner said. "This project could go on and on."

[The Brooklyn Amateur Night](#) starts tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Apollo Theater on 125th Street in Harlem. For more information on tickets call (800) 745-3000, or visit [Ticketmaster online](#).