



# THE HEARTBEAT IS HARLEM

The **harlem is...THEATER** exhibit is an ongoing community conversation about the history of Black Theater in New York City and beyond, but the heartbeat is Harlem...

The purpose of the exhibit is to create a living archive, one that is engaged in collecting history, writing history, correcting history and enlivening history,

To bridge generations and to keep our understanding of this history as a fluid and present understanding, one that we all should carry in our hearts, minds, souls, bodies... embedded in our DNA.

It is a continuous deepening of that living history—

From the classics to the classical, from the groundbreaking to the profound,

From within our communities to Broadway and the world.

Through the lens and experiences of the people who lived to tell the tale, from 1821 to NOW, we can witness the struggles and triumphs of a people, and celebrate the pioneers of this illustrious legacy, phenomenal men and women carrying the torch that *Black Culture Matters!*

What they have endured and how they have triumphed would fill volumes of testimony and testifying... But this exhibit is expected to be catalytic, not static, something to tantalize, interrogate and instigate.

Reflecting on the past...

Riffing on the present...

And pondering what is to come, what we strive to see and achieve...

That is what **harlem is...THEATER** is, heartbeat, heartbeat...

—**Talvin Wilks**, playwright, director & dramaturg