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PHILADELPHIA CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH
Exhibitions, Performances and Special Program Highlight Philly's Month of Activities

PHILADELPHIA, January 30, 2018 – **Black History Month** celebrates its 42nd anniversary this year, and Philadelphia honors the occasion with special events, exhibitions, film screenings and family activities. Philadelphia's Black History Month features the nation's longest running **African American Children's Book Fair; Black Pulp!**, a new exhibition at The African American Museum in Philadelphia, and **Henry "Box" Brown: The Musical**, starring Dice Raw. Here are highlights of Philly's Black History Month:

Museum Happenings:

- **The African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP)** hosts the regional debut of ***Black Pulp!***, curated by William Villalongo and Mark Thomas Gibson. This visual overview offers up printed works by artists, graphic designers, writer and publishers—including comic books—to examine perspectives on Black identity from 1912 to 2016. **February 2-April 29.** 701 Arch Street, (215) 574-0380, aampmuseum.org
- The **Art Sanctuary** exhibition ***Philadelphia Renaissance***, curated by Noah Smalls, is an intergenerational showcase of area artists. The month-long display is in keeping with the gallery's mission to "use power of Black art to transform individuals, create and build community and foster cultural understanding." **February.** 628 S. 16th Street, (215) 232-4485, artsanctuary.org
- African-American history is American history, and the **National Constitution Center** celebrates Black History Month with programming that includes *Breaking Barriers*, a show about the lives of Bessie Coleman, Jackie Robinson, Thurgood Marshall and other pioneering African-Americans. The center has planned also a workshop to take a closer look at the *Emancipation Proclamation* and self-guided tours highlighting African-American history. **February 2018.** 525 Arch Street, (215) 409-6600, constitutioncenter.org
- **Penn Museum's** 29th annual ***Celebration of African Cultures*** features storytellers, artists, puppetry, art making, modern African dance, traditional African music and an African market. The setting for this activity: the African Gallery, with its rich collection of textiles, sculpture and masks, with statuary and tomb materials from 5,000 years of Egyptian culture in the Egyptian Galleries. **February 24.** 3260 South Street, (215) 898-4000, penn.museum
- Last year, City Hall unveiled a new statue of Civil Rights hero Octavius V. Catto. This year, the **Philadelphia History Museum** exhibit ***Taking a Stand for Equity: Octavius V. Catto*** continues to celebrate the life and many achievements of the brave 19th-century Philadelphian. **Through March 31.** 15 S. 7th Street, (215) 685-4830, philadelphiahistory.org

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- Niamia Safia Sandy makes her Philadelphia curatorial debut at **Rush Arts Philadelphia** with the multi-artist, multidisciplinary exhibition ***Giving Up The Ghost: Artifacts/A Study of Power and Solidarity Against White Violence in Modernity***. The diverse artists and pieces in the show offer varying messages of individual and cultural truths—American aversion to recognizing Black women’s labor; commentary on the treatment of Muslim Americans, for example—in an effort to clear the air and move the nation forward. **January 27-February 24**. 4954 Old York Road, rushphilanthropic.org

Music & Dance:

- ***Henry Box Brown: The Musical*** stars The Roots’ own hip hop legend Karl “Dice Raw” Jenkins in the title role of a Virginia slave who escaped to freedom in Philadelphia by mailing himself in a wooden crate. This true theatrical treat is directed by Phill Brown and also stars Minister Jamie Knight and Gina Zo. **February 1-17**. Community College, Bonnell Auditorium, 1700 Spring Garden Street, henryboxbrownmusical.com
- Visitors can enjoy free, live, no reservations-required world music as presented by Temple University students during ***Drumming Traditions of Brazil, West Africa, and India***. **February 6**. Temple Performing Arts Center, 1837 N. Broad Street, (215) 204-9860, templeperformingartscenter.org
- In the 1930s, over 2,300 first-person accounts by former slaves—*The Slave Narratives*—helped create the Federal Writers’ Project (FWP). This Manayunk performance of six of these documents—also entitled ***The Slave Narratives***—brings their experiences to life onstage. Venice Island Performing Arts & Recreation Center. **February 9**. 7 Lock Street, (215) 685-3583, veniceisland.org
- Vocalist Beverly Owens and pianist Diane Goldsmith join in a “Sundays on Stage” concert of ***The Art of Sarah Vaughan***, a tribute to one of the first singers to fully incorporate bop phrasing in her singing. Vaughan’s influence is still evident in contemporary jazz, Soul and R&B. **February 11**. Free Library of Philadelphia, Parkway Central Branch, 1901 Vine Street, (215) 686-5322, freelibrary.org

Children and Young Adults:

- The 26th **Annual African American Children’s Book Fair** is one of the oldest and largest single-day events for African-American children’s books in the country. The free, open-to-the-public fair features nationally known, bestselling authors, illustrators and author-illustrators, many who have won some of the most prestigious American Library Association awards, including the Coretta Scott King Award. Guests can expect an afternoon filled with workshops, giveaways and affordable books for purchase. **February 3**. Community College of Philadelphia, 17th & Spring Garden Streets, theafricanamericanchildrensbookproject.org
- As the first stop for many visitors to Independence National Historical Park, the **Independence Visitor Center** is more than an information center: It’s a gathering spot. During Black History Month, historical figures appear to tell their stories. 6th & Market Streets, (800) 537-7676, nps.gov/inde; phlvisitorcenter.com
 - A historical re-enactor portrays **Ned Hector**, free Black patriot who refused to surrender his horses, wagons and armaments in the Battle of the Brandywine. **February 10**.
 - Storytellers from summer’s Once Upon a Nation program return for **Winter Storytelling**, with true tales of barrier-breaking African-Americans. **February 16, 17, 19**.
 - **Harriet Tubman**, American hero and icon, makes this one-time appearance to tell of her life and bravery in leading hundreds of people to freedom. **February 24**.

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- The **Lucien E. Blackwell West Philadelphia Regional Library** Children's Department will offer family-friendly events covering African-American heritage. 125 S. 52nd Street, (215) 685-7422, freelibrary.org
 - Based on the book by Christopher Paul Curtis, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* is the film adaptation of the story of an African-American family's road trip from Flint, Michigan to Birmingham, Alabama in 1963—and the tragic events that take place. For children ages 12 and under and their families. **February 24.**
 - **The Art of Jean-Michel Basquiat: Share Your Creativity** invites visitors to enjoy a reading of *Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat* by Javaka Steptoe and *Life Doesn't Frighten Me* by Maya Angelou, illustrated by Jean-Michel Basquiat. Inspired participants can add their creations to the Young Artists' Wall. For ages 12 and under. **February 28.**

Movies, Stories, Talks & Tours:

- Murray Dubin and Daniel Biddle, co-authors of *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America*, present and sign copies of their book chronicling the life of this charismatic Black leader—a “free” man whose freedom was in name only. **February 6.** Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia City Institute Branch, 1905 Locust Street, (215) 685-6621, freelibrary.org
- Lauded by the *New York Times* for his “ferocious moral vision and astute intellect,” educator and philosopher **Dr. Cornel West** returns to Philadelphia on the 25th anniversary of the National Book Award-winning *Race Matters*. **February 10.** Sold out; simulcast tickets are available for purchase. Free Library of Philadelphia, Parkway Central Branch, 1901 Vine Street, (215) 686-5404, freelibrary.org
- The Blackwell Regional Library will screen *Paul Robeson*, a documentary about the internationally acclaimed singer, actor and Civil Rights activist. Despite his talent, his political views lead to blacklisting; while unemployed, he moved to the West Philadelphia home of his sister Marian, who tended him until his death in 1976. **February 17.** 125 S. 52nd Street, (215) 685-7433, freelibrary.org
- As part of Black History Month and Philly Theatre Week, 202-year-old Mother Bethel AME screens *Black Theatre: The Making of a Movement*, Woodie King Jr.'s documentary highlighting accomplishments of Black men and women in theater, the importance of the Black Arts Movement and the funding crisis of Black theaters. **February 18.** 419 S. 6th Street, theatrephiladelphia.org
- Praised by Michael Eric Dyson as “the boldest young feminist writing today,” **Brittney Cooper** will join in conversation with Melanye Price, associate professor of Africana Studies at Rutgers University, to discuss Cooper's new book, *Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower*. **February 22.** Free. Free Library of Philadelphia, Parkway Central Branch, 1901 Vine Street, (215) 686-5404, freelibrary.org
- Now in its 22nd year, the **Schomburg Symposium** is an annual Taller Puertorriqueño conference dedicated to Afro-Latino history and culture. This year's symposium theme: *Does Violence Have Color?* **February 24.** 2600 N. 5th Street, (215) 426-3311, tallerpr.org
- The William Way LGBT Community Center's second annual *Philly Black Trans History: A Multigenerational Panel Discussion* will feature some of the city's most influential trans pioneers. **February 28.** 1315 Spruce Street, (215) 732-2220, waygay.org

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Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of visitphilly.com/pressroom.