

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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*"LOOKING FOR MARTIN: Are Dr. King and His 'Dream' Still Relevant?"*

**KEVIN POWELL and AKILA WORKSONGS, Inc.**

**Host a Multicultural Tribute to the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King**

**Sunday, January 20, 2008, 3:30 pm**

**at The Kumble Theater for The Performing Arts in Brooklyn**

On Sunday, January 20, 2008, Kevin Powell and AKILA WORKSONGS will bring together a multicultural group of leaders, artists and activists to celebrate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This day of conversation, poetry and song will explore how King's message translates to people of all ages and races in the 21st century. For the past twenty years, Powell, a Generation X social activist, writer and author of seven books has worked to carry out the legacy and promise of the civil rights era within today's society. This event represents Powell's support for New York City's diverse communities as they work to keep Dr. King's dream alive and embark upon new dreams for the future.

Powell conceived the celebration to truly reflect New York City's diverse cultures and ideas, while acknowledging the importance of Dr. King's work for social justice in our current era. "Given the many social, political and civic challenges that we face in this country, Dr. King's life and work are as relevant now as they have ever been," said Powell, "As a person who came of age in post-Civil Rights America and a member of the hip hop generation, I want to honor the multiple generations of people from all racial backgrounds who, following King's lead, have fought and continue to fight for civil rights in this country."

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

- The landmark 2008 presidential election in a nation that still struggles with the race, gender and religion of our elected officials.
- The state of race relations as we contend with the Jena 6 case and the ongoing saga of Katrina and attempt to put the Don Imus remarks behind us.
- What would Dr. King say about the war in Iraq, immigration, global warming, the rise of violence against women and girls, the struggles for gay rights, and other pressing social issues of these times?

**HOST: Dominic Carter**, of NY1's "Inside City Hall," author of the critically acclaimed book *No Mama's Boy*.

**KEYNOTE: Kevin Powell**, Brooklyn-based activist, public speaker and author of seven books including the most recent *Someday We'll All Be Free*.

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**PANEL:** A multi-ethnic, cross-generational group of leaders and thinkers including:

- **Jose Lopez:** Organizer, **Bushwick Research and Action on Gentrification**
- **John Buffalo Mailer:** Playwright, journalist, magazine editor and co-author of *The Big Empty* with his father Norman Mailer
- **AI-Jen Poo:** Lead organizer for **Domestic Workers United** and associate director of **CAAV Organizing Asian Communities**
- **Tahani Salah:** Poet, member of the **Nuyorican Poets Café Slam Team**, activist, Columbia University student, and Outreach Coordinator for **Urban Word NYC**
- **Dara Silverman:** Executive Director, **Jews for Racial and Economic Justice**

**LIVE PERFORMANCES BY:** **Toni Blackman**, Hip Hop Emcee; **Yako**, Beatboxer/Vocal Percussionist; **Marne Bruckner**, poet; **Lacresha Berry**, vocalist; and **DJ Reborn**, hip-hop theater musical director, and featured deejay on the national tour of Russell Simmons' Tony Award-winning Broadway show *Def Poetry Jam*.

**ABOUT KEVIN POWELL:** Kevin Powell is a social activist, writer, hip hop historian, public speaker, and 2008 democratic candidate for congress in Brooklyn's 10th congressional district. He has been heralded by legendary feminist **Gloria Steinem** who said, "as a charismatic speaker, leader, and a very good writer, Kevin Powell has the courage...to be fully human, and this will bring the deepest revolution of all." Powell's activism merges his love for popular culture and entertainment with his commitment to social justice. He has most recently been a cofounder of "Katrina on the Ground," an initiative that sent over 700 college students to work in the devastated region, and has dedicated himself to redefining American manhood and eliminating violence against women. A long-time resident of Brooklyn, New York, Powell has published seven books including his current title, *Someday We'll All Be Free* (Soft Skull Press). This latest book is a collection of essays on freedom, democracy, justice, and race in America, as inspired by Hurricane Katrina, the 2004 presidential election, and September 11th. Powell is currently at work on his childhood memoir, *homeboy alone*, slated for 2008; his second volume of poetry, *No Sleep 'Til Brooklyn*; and *The Kevin Powell Anthology* a collection of essays, articles and reviews written for publications such as *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, *Essence*, *Code*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Amsterdam News*, and *Vibe* during the first 25 years of his literary career.

**About AKILA WORKSONGS:** AKILA WORKSONGS specializes in artist management, public relations, and consulting. Social entrepreneur, activist, and writer April R. Silver founded the company to connect the arts, activism, education, and community. Emerging and established individuals and organizations from the creative, community-based, and corporate sectors make up the client roster. Over the years, AKILA has presented, publicized, or managed some of today's most respected thinkers and artists: Sonia Sanchez, Sister Souljah, Amiri and Amina Baraka, Doug E. Fresh, The Last Poets, Chuck D., KRS-One, Mos Def, Talib Kweli, Nana Camille Yarbrough, Ras Baraka, William Jelani Cobb, Erica Ford, Jessica Care Moore, Toni Blackman, Rha Goddess, Yvonne Bynoe, Byron Hurt, Kevin Powell, and many others. Non-individual clients range from the Center for Black Literature to The Ford Foundation, among others. Silver, a former host of BETJ's *My Two Cents*, has been featured in *Essence*, *Ms.*, *Ebony*, *CNN*, and many other national and international outlets. Please visit [www.akilaworksongs.com](http://www.akilaworksongs.com) or [myspace.com/akilaworksongs](http://myspace.com/akilaworksongs) for more information.

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