




# HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC

Saturday, May 9, 2026



**Brown Skin Showgirls:**  
A Harlem in Havana  
Tribute Show



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# HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC

Welcome

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the legacy of the Harlem in Havana Revue through film, conversation, music, and dance.

This special multimedia documentary experience honors my grandfather, Leon Claxton, and the extraordinary Black and Cuban artists—like my foremothers, the Bates Sisters—whose brilliance, resilience, and creativity helped shape American entertainment history.

As you take in the artistry shared today, I invite you to reflect on the power of remembrance—and on the Black and Latine communities who continue to carry these legacies forward.

My deepest thanks to our cast, crew, partners, sponsors, donors, venues, and supporters who made bringing this project to New York City possible.

With gratitude,

**Leslie Cunningham**, Artist & Filmmaker  
Creator of The Harlem in Havana Project  
& Brown Skin Showgirls



# HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC

About

**One Epic Day. Two Legendary Venues. Two Unforgettable Events.**

**STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS!**

On Saturday, May 9, 2026, **Harlem in Havana NYC** invites you into a world of history, glamour, and live performance—an immersive, one-day cultural experience spanning two iconic New York stages.

Begin with the New York premiere of **JIG SHOW | Leon Claxton's Harlem in Havana**, a powerful documentary by Leslie Cunningham that brings the legendary Harlem in Havana revue to life on screen at the *New York Public Library for the Performing Arts*.

Then, as the evening unfolds, step into the dazzling **Brown Skin Showgirls: A Harlem in Havana Tribute Show**—a vibrant live celebration of the music, dance, and showmanship that defined a legacy—at the *David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center*.

From film to stage, past to present, this unforgettable experience honors the brilliance, resilience, and rhythm of the artists who transformed American entertainment - and those who carry that legacy forward today.

Visit [harleminhavana.com/nyc](http://harleminhavana.com/nyc)

**HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC**  
SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2026

Event I:  
**JIG SHOW**  
**LEON CLAXTON'S HARLEM IN HAVANA**  
Film Screening & Art Talk

A documentary film by Leslie Cunningham

Special Performance by Bebe Bardeaux

Leslie Cunningham | Bebe Bardeaux | Chantel Campbell | Gigi Hurlbut

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

1:00p-3:30p | Free  
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Ganner Center, Bruce Walter Auditorium, 41 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

**BURLESQUE** **CHOCOLATE** **PHIL & RAY**

A Spectacular Production of *The Harlem in Havana Project™* | Brown Skin Showgirls With Appreciation to Our Supporters, Artists & Collaborators  
Special Thanks to Metro Cultural Club for Consultation & Guidance

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**HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC**  
SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2026

Event II:  
**BROWN SKIN SHOWGIRLS**  
**A HARLEM IN HAVANA TRIBUTE SHOW**

Featuring a cast of Glamorous Performers

Headlined by Miss Exotic World Jessabelle Thunder

Hosted by the MC of Melody J. The Artist

Lincoln Center

7:30PM | Free | 18+  
David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center  
1687 Broadway, New York, NY 10023

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# HARLEM IN HAVANA NYC

## Brown Skin Showgirls Cast & Crew



*In order of appearance*

### J. THE ARTIST \*Host



**J. The Artist** is a soulful R&B and hip-hop storyteller, known for captivating performances. Fresh from igniting the Millennial Center, he now brings his magnetic energy to New York's Harlem in Havana tribute, infusing every moment with passion.

### QUEERLY FEMMETASTIC



**Queerly Femmetastic** is a fearless, sensual force inspired by Black dance legacies. Crowned 2025 Entertainer of the Year and Miss Coney Island 2026, she delivers smart, seductive performances that celebrate power, pleasure, and unapologetic Blackness.

### MISS AURORABOOBREALIS



An award-winning interdisciplinary artist, **Miss AuroraBoobRealis** blends burlesque, dance, and theater. Co-founder of Boombox Burlesque and brASS, she's a visionary leader and Executive Director of BurlyCon, shaping the global future of burlesque.

### ZONYA LOVE *Accompanied by Aijalon Williams-Brown*



Broadway powerhouse **Zonya Love** (*The Color Purple*) delivers soul-stirring vocals rooted in gospel, jazz, and R&B. Having shared stages with legends, she now channels her artistry into original work that uplifts, heals, and inspires.



*Small group Art*  
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May 16th - June 27th, 2026

Opening Reception May 16th  
12-5pm

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## POISON IVORY



A classic burlesque artist, **Poison Ivory's** style blends sultry expression, sensual movement, and sharp musicality. Known as "Brown Sugar and Spice," she balances sweet and bold with effortless contrast. Hailing from Brooklyn, she was crowned Miss Exotic World 2016 at the Burlesque Hall of Fame.

## JESSABELLE THUNDER \*Headliner



Miss Exotic World 2025, **Jessabelle Thunder** is an international burlesque icon. Known for her fierce, high-glamour style, she has headlined worldwide and starred in Dita Von Teese productions. Electrifying, commanding, unforgettable, *Thunder has arrived.*

## STORM MARRERO



**Storm Marrero** is a powerhouse vocalist blending soul, R&B, and Latin sound. With decades of international performance experience, this Brooklyn-born artist commands the stage with rich vocals, dynamic energy, and undeniable presence.

## BRYONA ASHLY



"The Centerfold of Burlesque," **Bryona Ashly** fuses vintage pin-up glamour with modern sensuality. A Penthouse Pet and international performer, she channels classic showgirl elegance with a bold, contemporary edge that dazzles audiences worldwide.

## GIGI HOLLIDAY



**GiGi Holliday** is a world-ranked burlesque powerhouse known for bold glamour, sharp wit, and undeniable presence. A multi-time Top 50 performer, she produces and teaches through Gi Squared Productions, lighting up stages with confidence, charisma, and pure star power. unforgettable "Chocolate City" flair.

## SUSIE DAHL - Stage Manager



Known as “The Babydoll Femme Fatale,” **Susie Dahl** is an NYC burlesque performer and pin-up model blending vintage glamour with fearless sensuality. A decade-long presence in the scene, she also produces the romance-fueled show *Heaving Bosom*.

## CASHLEE BANKS - Stage Kitten



Bronx-born and bold, **Cashlee Banks** is a rising NYC burlesque star bringing hip-hop swagger and sharp wit to the stage. From Lincoln Center to House of Yes, she celebrates Blackness unapologetically—equal parts boardroom baddie and burlesque firecracker.

## Special Thanks to Our Volunteers:

Tanya Orr, Vivienne Kitt and Jourdan Artis



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The poster features a central illustration of a Black woman with a large, voluminous pink and red afro, wearing a blue bra and a yellow skirt, holding a purple boombox. She is framed by two gold chains. The background is dark with large, circular speaker-like patterns.



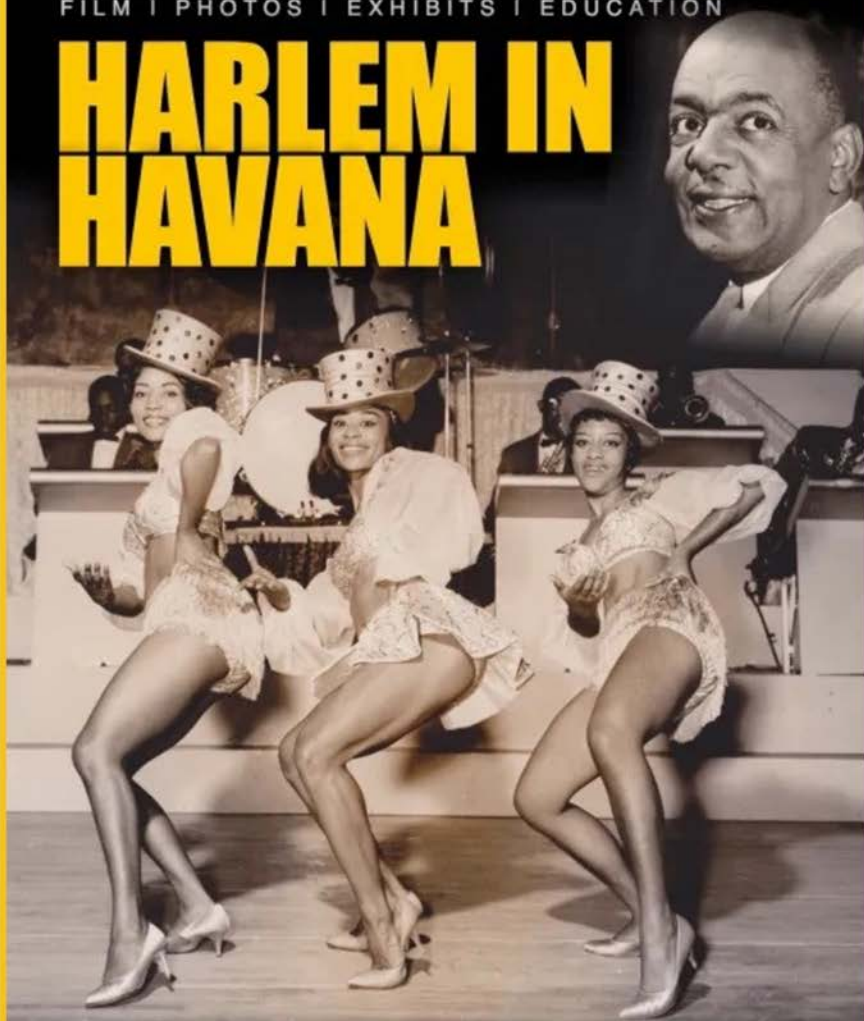
CHOCOLATE  
*BOX*  
BURLESQUE  
ARIZONA'S 1ST & ONLY ALL  
BLACK BURLESQUE PRODUCTION



The poster has a dark brown background. The word 'CHOCOLATE' is in large white letters, with a strawberry on the 'O'. 'BOX' is written in a white cursive font, also with a strawberry on the 'O'. 'BURLESQUE' is in large red letters, with a strawberry on the 'O'. At the bottom, the text 'ARIZONA'S 1ST & ONLY ALL BLACK BURLESQUE PRODUCTION' is in red. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

FILM | PHOTOS | EXHIBITS | EDUCATION

# HARLEM IN HAVANA



**A multimedia documentary work exploring the legacy of Leon Claxton's ground breaking Black and Cuban traveling show that redefined entertainment ad broke racial barriers.**

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*Black Pinups*

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