



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LINCOLN THEATRE TO CELEBRATE FIRST BIRTHDAY WITH INAUGURAL WALK OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY

### ***Columbus Native and Award-Winning Author and Journalist Wil Haygood to Be Honored***

The Lincoln Theatre Association (LTA) will celebrate the first birthday of the renovated and reopened Lincoln Theatre on Monday, May 31, with an open house and an induction ceremony to debut the first honoree on its Walk of Fame. Author and *Washington Post* reporter Wil Haygood, a Columbus native and former King-Lincoln District resident, will be the first name engraved in the tribute walk, honoring his international literary and journalistic contributions.

"Wil Haygood grew up in the King-Lincoln District so it seems particularly appropriate that he should be the first name on the Walk of Fame," stated LTA Board President Larry James. "Columbus is very proud of this Pulitzer Prize finalist, award-winning reporter, and celebrated author, and this is our way of honoring his talents and accomplishments for generations to come."

The Lincoln Theatre open house will run from 12-4 pm, and visitors can take a self-guided tour of all three floors of the building. The main floor theatre will run a short video presentation about the 2008-09 renovation. Several of the Lincoln's resident arts groups will have tables in the second-floor Cardinal Health Ballroom, offering information on the various programs and classes offered by each organization. Groups in attendance will be the Alfred Dove Dance Studio, Judah Performing Arts Center, Leap of Faith Dance Company, Ministry in Motion, and Thioassane West African Dance Institute. The Jazz Arts Group's Jazz Academy on the top floor of the building will also be open for tours of its facilities and will offer information on upcoming programs and classes.

The Walk of Fame induction ceremony will begin at 1 pm, followed by the cutting of the Lincoln Theatre's first birthday cake by Mayor Michael B. Coleman.

#### **About Wil Haygood**

Wil Haygood, a native of Columbus, Ohio, began his journalism career at the *Columbus Call & Post*, in the days when it was located around the corner from the Lincoln Theatre. Haygood dreamed of a basketball career, but started in only one game for the junior varsity at East High School. He wisely refocused his ambitions. He began a career of words, of telling stories. Haygood went on to a career as an acclaimed author and globe-trotting journalist.

Upon publication of his first book, *Two on the River*, about a journey down the Mississippi River, Haygood was called "perhaps America's best young reporter." His memoir, *The Haygoods of Columbus*, received the Great Lakes Book Award.

His trilogy of prizewinning biographies—*King of the Cats: The Life and Times of Adam Clayton Powell Jr.*, *In Black and White: The Life of Sammy Davis Jr.*, and *Sweet Thunder: The Life and Times of Sugar Ray Robinson*—have been proclaimed essential reading about the African-American experience in pre- and post-World War II America.

As a journalist, Haygood, now a national reporter at the *Washington Post*, has covered the release of Nelson Mandela in South Africa, wars in both Liberia and Somalia, Hurricane Katrina, the campaign of Barack Obama, the life of White House butler Eugene Allen, the Iowa farm crisis, and land struggles among the Inuit tribe in the Canadian Arctic, among many other assignments.

For his journalism work, Haygood, who has also been a Pulitzer Prize finalist and an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellow, has received the National Headliners Award, the New England Associated Press Award, the Sunday Magazine Editors Award, the Missouri Journalism Award, and the National Association of Black Journalists Award for both feature writing and international reporting.

### **About the Lincoln Theatre**

First opened in 1928, the Lincoln Theatre is a landmark in African-American and jazz history. After undergoing a \$13.5 million renovation funded by a partnership of public and private support, the Lincoln reopened in May 2009 as a multi-use, state-of-the-art performing arts and education center serving the diversity of the Columbus and central Ohio community and ten resident Columbus arts organizations. The restoration is the foundation of revitalization plans for the King-Lincoln District, providing a bustling hub of activity 365 days a year with performances, rehearsals, and classes in the performing arts, as well as a wide variety of community events such as film festivals, meetings, and receptions.

[www.lincolntheatrecolumbus.com](http://www.lincolntheatrecolumbus.com)

### **CALENDAR LISTING**

**THE LINCOLN THEATRE ASSOCIATION presents THE LINCOLN THEATRE'S FIRST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION & WALK OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY**

**Monday, May 31, 12-4 pm**

**Lincoln Theatre (769 E. Long St.)**

Celebrate the first anniversary of the reopening of the historic Lincoln Theatre with free, self-guided tours of all three floors of the building. At 1pm, an induction ceremony will dedicate the first name on the Walk of Fame to Columbus native and award-winning author and journalist Wil Haygood, followed by the cutting of the Lincoln Theatre's birthday cake by Mayor Michael B. Coleman. Resident arts groups will be on hand with information about upcoming programs and classes. Admission is free. [www.lincolntheatrecolumbus.com](http://www.lincolntheatrecolumbus.com)

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