

# Apollo Theater to screen 'Shaft' with live score performance, half-priced tickets for Harlem residents

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SNYDE



Richard Roundtree walks past the Apollo Theater in a scene from the 1971 film, "Shaft." (Everett Collection)

Can ya dig it?

The iconic blaxploitation film “Shaft” will get a new look (and feel) when it plays at the Apollo Theater accompanied by a live performance of Isaac Hayes’ Academy Award-nominated score on Feb. 29.

On Wednesday, the world’s famous venue announced that its special screening of the 1971 MGM classic will feature live music by Burnt Sugar the Arkestra Chamber, a sprawling band of musicians led by founder and cultural critic Greg Tate.

Producers for the event are encouraging audience members to wear urban-inspired fashion, building on the 1970s Harlem style that the Gordon Parks’ trailblazing film brought to the masses.

"Gordon Park's Shaft sparked a shift in the way mainstream America viewed African Americans in film. For the first time ever, we were the heroes fighting for and maintaining justice for people that looked just like us," Apollo Theater's Executive Producer Kamilah Forbes said in a statement.

“Shaft” marked a milestone in Hollywood with an African American director at the helm, and the main character, portrayed by Richard Roundtree, acting as a heroic black detective taking on the mob and corrupt police force.

Hayes' won the Academy Award for Best Original Song for the theme song, becoming the first African American to win in the category.

“The body of erotic and exhilarating music Hayes composed for the film brought the genre-exploding innovations of early '70s R&B to the big screen with a blues-saturated intensity that embraced psychedelic soul, Ellingtonian sophistication, and the polyrhythmic élan of Afro-Cuban jazz,” Tate commented. “The Burnt Sugar live scoring of Shaft will be faithful to the funk and sensuality of Hayes score while teasing out the experimental potential of its seductive, frothy themes.”