



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

Tara Dorabji, *Communications Director*

[tdorabji@youthspeaks.org](mailto:tdorabji@youthspeaks.org)

**ON JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup> YOUTH SPEAKS PRESENTS  
THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BRINGING THE NOISE FOR DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.  
YOUNG AND SEASONED POETS TO BRING MLK'S TEACHINGS TO LIFE**

San Francisco, January 4, 2017 – Youth Speaks, the country's leading spoken word and literary arts organization for young people, presents **the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Bringing Noise for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** at the historic Nourse Theater on **Monday, January 16, 2017, at 7pm**. Tickets are on sale now.

This year's event is inspired by Dr. King's seminal speech and text, "Where Do We Go From Here?" Youth Speaks Poetry Slam Champions, alumni, veterans, and other special guests will hit the stage in the 20th year of this landmark event.

"As we enter this new phase of United States history," says Founder and Executive Director James Kass, "it is important that we celebrate and honor those who have acted from love. This event has always been about loving the passion and potential of young people as key participants in social justice movements."

In the tradition of Dr. King, who said "I have also decided to stick with love, for I know that love is ultimately the only answer to mankind's problems," Youth Speaks will lead by once again profoundly believing in—and loving—the young people among us.

"Bringing the Noise for Dr. King exists at the intersection of celebration and examination," explains Co-Director of Programs, Brandon Santiago. "If we are measuring ourselves against the freedom of our people, we still have a long way to go. In 20 years, we have effectively combatted silence and illiteracy but now we take pause to ask, 'Where do we go from here?' There is always more work to do."

This year's event features performances by Youth Speaks Grand Slam Champions from 2015 and 2016 (Aleah Bradshaw & Shivani Narang), the 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate Tova Ricardo, alumni Tongo Eisen-Martin with Peck the Town Crier, and

special guests Rico Pabon and Jeff Chang, among many others. The night will be hosted by Queen Nyabingha Zianni.

"We have to celebrate and continue this work because it's not finished," says Senior Poet Mentor, MC K~Swift. "If it were done, it would be a different kind of conversation."

Here's a [newly released video](#) from last year's Bringing the Noise event in January 2016.

**About Youth Speaks:**

Founded in 1996, Youth Speaks is one of the leading nonprofit presenters of spoken word performance, education, and youth development programs in the country. Recently, The Ford Foundation named Youth Speaks as one of the ten most important arts organizations in the nation's future, and the Wallace Foundation named Youth Speaks one of the 8 exemplary arts education organizations in the nation. Youth Speaks first produced **Bringing the Noise for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** in 1997.

**ATTENTION CALENDAR EDITORS**

**WHO:**

Youth Speaks

**WHAT:**

THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL [BRINGING THE NOISE FOR DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.](#) – *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE: CHAOS OR COMMUNITY?* Youth Speaks celebrates the ongoing legacy of Dr. King and the lives of young people during the 20th annual *Bringing the Noise for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* Generations of poets will come together in an incredible night of poetry and performance as we look towards a better collective future.

**WHERE:**

[The Nourse Auditorium](#)

275 Hayes Street (between Van Ness & Franklin)  
San Francisco, CA 94117

**WHEN:**

January 16, 2017  
7pm

**TICKETS**

[\\$5 for Youth | \\$10 for Adults](#)

Purchase at <http://youthspeaks.org/mlk/>

###