



March 11, 2016

## Tracee Ellis Ross Returns as Host of "BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" 2016 to Celebrate an Extraordinary Night of Black Girl Magic™!

**Shonda Rhimes, Gladys Knight, Danai Gurira, Amandla Stenberg, and Black Lives Matter Founders Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi to Be Honored at This Year's "BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™" Awards on BET**

**"[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" 2016 Will Tape Friday, April 1, 2016 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, New Jersey**

**#BLACKGIRLSROCK**

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- BET Networks and Beverly Bond, CEO, founder and Creator of "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)", are excited to announce the return of **Tracee Ellis Ross** as the host of "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" 2016 and the star studded line up of celebrants which include ShondaLand producer and writer **Shonda Rhimes** (Shot Caller Award), R&B legend **Gladys Knight** (Living Legend Award), *The Walking Dead* actress and *Eclipsed* playwright **Danai Gurira** (Star Power Award), award-winning actress and activist **Amandla Stenberg** (Young Gifted and Black Award), and Black Lives Matter founders **Patrisse Cullors**, **Alicia Garza**, and **Opal Tometi** (Community Change Agent Award). [BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#) acknowledges the achievements of African-American women who have broken barriers in the areas of art, music, philanthropy and community service. This year's [BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#) will tape on Friday, April 1, 2016 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, NJ and the broadcast will premiere on **Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 8:00 P.M. ET/PT.**

"I am so proud to once again host "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)"! What an incredible night celebrating Black women in a show dedicated to Black Girl Magic. Powerhouses Debra Lee, CEO and Chairman of BET Networks and Beverly Bond, CEO of 'Black Girls Rock!™' are true examples of Black Girls who Rock. I've proudly hosted this show since before it was televised, and it's been an honor to be connected to this show for so long. In its 10th year, this show is of utmost importance in today's times as it highlights positive reinforcement and representation for young black women. I am looking forward to once again being a part of such a wonderful night celebrating the beauty, talents, and accomplishments of black women - it will be a show to remember!" - Tracee Ellis Ross

This year the dynamic "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" movement, founded by Beverly Bond, celebrates its 10 year anniversary and its sixth televised broadcast on BET Networks. The NAACP Award winning "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" on BET continues to represent a revolutionary landmark in media as it delivers edifying, entertaining and inspiring content honoring the nexus of achievements made by powerful Black women and girls. "Over the last ten years, **BLACK GIRLS ROCK!** has reaffirmed the spectrum of brilliance that Black women possess and has helped forge a cultural paradigm shift regarding the ways that Black women and girls are depicted in media," said Beverly Bond. "I am proud that **BLACK GIRLS ROCK!** is at the forefront of a new women's empowerment movement inspiring women of color to define ourselves, to own our magic, to share our truth, to elevate our own narratives, to celebrate our brilliance and resilience, and to love ourselves fiercely."

The 2015 "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" celebrants included: Jada Pinkett Smith (Star Power Award), Erykah Badu (Rock Star Award), Ava DuVernay (Shot Caller Award), Cicely Tyson (Living Legend Award), Dr. Helene D. Gayle (Social Humanitarian Award), and Nadia Lopez (Change Agent Award) with a special appearance and speech from First Lady Michelle Obama and memorable performances from Ciara, Estelle, Jill Scott, Fantasia, Sheila E, Lalah Hathaway, Cheryl Lynn, Alicia Myers, and Kathy Sledge who ended the night with a surprise throwback medley.

The televised special, "[BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#)" on BET is a BET Networks and B.G.R. Enterprises Inc./BONDVISION MEDIA production. The executive producers are Beverly Bond, CEO, Founder and Creator of **BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™**, Stephen Hill, BET President of Programming, Connie Orlando, BET Senior Vice President of Specials, Music and News, and Jeannae Rouzan of Jesse Collins ENT.

For updates or more information about [BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™](#) visit <http://www.BET.com/blackgirlsrock> and [www.blackgirlsrock.com](http://www.blackgirlsrock.com).

Join the conversation on social media by logging on to our social media platforms:

┆ On Twitter by using hashtag: #BlackGirlsRock; follow us @BET and @BLACKGIRLSROCK

- ┆ On Facebook by liking the fan pages at [facebook.com/BET](https://facebook.com/BET) and [facebook.com/BLACKGIRLSROCK](https://facebook.com/BLACKGIRLSROCK)
- ┆ On Instagram @betnetworks and @BLACKGIRLSROCK

### **ABOUT BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™:**

Founded by celebrity DJ, model and executive producer, Beverly Bond, BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™ is a multifaceted movement dedicated to shifting the culture of media images depicting Black women and girls. Since 2006, BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™ has been committed to empowering women through media and enriching girls through leadership, education, and positive identity development programs. For additional information on BLACK GIRLS ROCK!™, visit <http://www.blackgirlsrock.com>.

### **ABOUT BET NETWORKS:**

BET Networks, a subsidiary of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIA.B), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 90 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of business extensions: [BET.com](https://BET.com), a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; CENTRIC, a 24-hour entertainment network targeting the 25- to 54-year-old African-American audience; BET Digital Networks - BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Event Productions, a full-scale event management and production company with festivals and live events spanning the globe; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

### **ABOUT NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER:**

New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), located in downtown Newark, New Jersey, is among the largest performing arts centers in the United States. It is the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey -- where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. As New Jersey's Town Square, NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the State's and the world's best artists, while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city. Through its extensive Arts Education programs, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted over seven million visitors (including more than one million children) since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents. Visit <http://www.njpac.org> or call 1-888-GO-NJPAC for more information.

### **ABOUT TRACEE ELLIS ROSS:**

Tracee Ellis Ross is the star of the hit ABC comedy series "Black-ish." For her role, Ross won the 2015 and 2016 NAACP Image Award for "Best Actress in a Comedy Series." Ross was recently honored at the 2016 ESSENCE Black Women in Hollywood luncheon receiving the "Fierce and Fearless" award. Ross is best known for her starring role on the hit sitcom "Girlfriends" which ran for eight seasons on The UPN/CW network. Her role earned her eight NAACP Image Award nominations including two wins in the category of "Outstanding Actress in a Comedy Series". She also starred in and produced the BET series "Reed Between the Lines," which won her a third NAACP Image Award. Ross is a dedicated and passionate motivational speaker. She created and teaches "Taping Into Your Creative Well," a workshop that encourages participants to discover and utilize their inner joy to keep their lives on course. She is also works closely with teenage girls by volunteering with Aviva Family and Children Services in Los Angeles and The Big Brother Big Sister Program where she has held self-esteem workshops nationwide. Ross was honored by The Los Angeles Urban League as "Volunteer of the Year" in 2004, and was the 2009 recipient of the Impact Award from the Aviva Organization. In 2012, the fashion influencer expanded her vast digital influence by launching her official website [Traceeellisross.com](https://Traceeellisross.com). The lifestyle site utilizes Ross' unique cross-cultural and joyful point of view to inspire the soul, body and mind of her followers.

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