Professor Nettleford speaks ‘Caribbean diversity’ in Harlem

New York:
Cultural historian and Vice Chancellor Emeritus at the University of the West Indies Professor Rex Nettleford delivered a riveting discourse on “Caribbean Diversity — A Defining Point in the History of the Americas” to a capacity crowd at the second annual CIN TV Caribbean lecture series, held at the Schomburg Center for Research In Black Culture in Harlem recently.

In his 75-minute presentation, Professor Nettleford told the gathering, “An appreciation of the history of this region is critical to a fuller understanding of contemporary realities and future challenges.”

He suggested that “the Caribbean shares in the great drama of the Americas of which it is an integral part, whereby new societies are shaped, new and delicately tuned sensibilities are honed, and appropriate designs for social living are crafted through the cross-fertilization of disparate elements. The process has resulted in a distinguishable and distinctive entity called ‘Caribbean’.

“We continue to speak of this region of some 30 million people as Hispanic Caribbean, the Francophone Caribbean, the Dutch-speaking Caribbean and so on. Such hyphenated fragmentation emphasizes the legacy of a heritage of separation and shuttered identities. Yet none of this deprived us in our separate dispensations of that awesome process of becoming.”

CIN TV boss Stephen Hill who spoke briefly, reminded the gathering of CIN’s impressive performance in the recent Nielsen Telephone Coincidental, which targeted Caribbean residents in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. Hill noted that “when measured against seven major broadcast channels including major networks ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox, CIN had the second highest ratings among Caribbean nationals.”

CIN currently offers 16 hours of programming weekly and beams to approximately five million viewers in NYC.

Among the dignitaries who attended the annual lecture series were Dr. Basil Bryan, Jamaica’s consul general to New York; Howard Dodson, chief, Schomburg Center; Bob Gore, CIN NY; Noel Mignott, the former JTB deputy director; Una Clarke, former council member and Michelle Williams, Capital & Credit Financial Group who travelled from Jamaica for the event.

The inaugural Caribbean lecture series was launched last year and featured Marcus Garvey historian Robert A. Hill, professor of History at the University of California, Los Angeles.