~ Woodie King Jr.

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Woodie King Jr., the pioneering theater director and producer who devoted his career to amplifying Black voices in the performing arts, died Jan. 29 at 88. Founder of New York City’s New Federal Theatre, he produced and directed more than 400 works and helped launch the early careers of artists including Morgan Freeman, Denzel Washington, and Phylicia Rashad. He later received an Obie, NAACP Image Award, and Tony Honors for Excellence.

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