

Monday, May 6, 2024

## Celebrating Duke Ellington's 125th Birthday in the City of Jazz

Company: Duke Ellington Center for the Arts & the American Tap Dance Foundation  
Venue: Symphony Space - Peter Jay Sharp Theatre  
Location: New York, NY

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Duke Ellington. Courtesy of Duke Ellington Center for the Arts

A celebration of the 125th birthday of jazz great Duke Ellington will take place Monday, May 6 at Symphony Space, Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, in NYC. The festivities kick off at 8pm with the Duke Ellington Center Big Band under the musical direction of Eli Yamin. Special guest artist and eight-time Grammy Award winner Arturo O'Farrill will be featured in the evening's lineup of DANCERS, vocalists, and surprise guests, including drummer Bobby Sanabria, Broadway veteran Ty Stephens, top tapper DeWitt Fleming Jr., and jazz singers Antoinette Montague and Marion Cowings. The multiple award-winning icon of New York City cabaret, Sidney Myer, will be narrator for this special event.

Presented by the Duke Ellington Center for the Arts in association with the American Tap Dance Foundation, *Celebrating Duke Ellington's 125th Birthday in the City of Jazz* will be co-hosted by Duke Ellington's granddaughter, Mercedes Ellington, and ATDF Founding Director Tony Waag. "We're looking forward to a fun family birthday party to celebrate my grandfather and his remarkable legacy – we are pulling out all the stops for this milestone event!" said Ms. Ellington.

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington was born on April 29, 1899, and is considered the greatest jazz composer and band leader of his time. An American jazz pianist, composer, and leader of his eponymous jazz orchestra from 1923 through the rest of his life, Ellington was one of the originators of big-band jazz. For more than half a century Ellington composed thousands of scores, creating one of the most distinctive ensemble sounds in all of Western music.

The title "City of Jazz" was inspired and guided by a short essay Duke Ellington wrote in 1959, encapsulating his view on the all-inclusive nature of jazz, a metaphorical place with "no city limits."

Duke Ellington Center for the Arts & the American Tap Dance Foundation  
2537 Broadway at 95th Street  
New York, NY, 10025  
212-864-5400  
<https://www.symphonyspace.org/events/vp-celebrating-duke-ellingtons-125th-birthday-in-the-city-of-jazz>

Schedule  
May 6, 2024: 8:00pm

[< back](#)

[previous listing](#) • [next listing](#)