Sunday, November 3, 2019

'CRACKERJAZZ" - PERFORMANCE SERIES HONORING JAZZ GREAT DUKE ELLINGTON CONTINUES AT BIRDLAND JAZZ CLUB, NYC

Company: THE AMERICAN TAP DANCE FOUNDATION
Venue: Birdland Jazz Club
Location: New York, NY



Tap Dancer DeWitt Fleming Jr. - Photo credit Joan Marcus

PERFORMANCE SERIES HONORING JAZZ GREAT DUKE ELLINGTON CONTINUES AT BIRDLAND JAZZ CLUB, NYC

The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts and The American Tap Dance Foundation Present "CrackerJazz" With Compositions from Duke Ellington's 1960 *The Nutcracker Suite* Sunday, November 3 at 5:30pm.

The Duke Ellington Center Big Band, conducted by multi-Grammy nominated Bobby Sanabria, will perform *CrackerJazz,* the third of a monthly performance series honoring jazz icon Duke Ellington on Sunday, November 3 at Birdland Jazz Club, 315 West 44th Street, NYC. Doors open at 4:30pm; performance at 5:30pm.

The program will include special appearances by jazz vocalists Sharon K. Janda, Antoinette Montague and Ty Stevens, as well as tap dance performances by DeWitt Fleming Jr., Felipe Galganni, members of the Tap City Youth Ensemble, Karen Callaway Williamsand belly dancer Anna Pipoyan.

Hosted and presented by Mercedes Ellington, Artistic Director/Founder of the Duke Ellington Center for the Arts, Inc., and Tony Waag, Artistic Director of The American Tap Dance Foundation (ATDF), *CrackerJazz* is based on the 1960 Duke Ellington album Three Suites, a jazz interpretation of "The Nutcracker" by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The works on the album were arranged by Duke Ellington and composer and pianist Billy Strayhorn. Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" was arranged and recorded by a number of big bands, beginning in the 1930's, but the Ellington/Strayhorn version is the most often performed jazz version today.

"Tap and jazz are undeniably attached at the hip," said Mr. Waag, who is curating the tap dance portion of the Ellington performance series. Duke Ellington was inducted into the ATDF International Tap Dance Hall of Fame in 2017.

Tickets: $30- $40 - $60

Visit: https://www.birdlandjazz.com/e/the-duke-ellington-center-big-band-71394273193/

The Duke Ellington Performance Series will continue at Birdland Jazz Club monthly, on Sunday evenings.

ABOUT BOBBY SANABRIA:

Bobby Sanabria is a seven-time Grammy-nominee as a leader. He is a noted drummer, percussionist, composer, arranger, conductor, producer, educator, documentary film maker, and bandleader of Puerto Rican descent born and raised in NY's South Bronx. He was the drummer for the acknowledged creator of Afro-Cuban jazz, Mario Bauzá touring and recording three CD's with him, two of which were Grammy nominated, as well as an incredible variety of artists. From Dizzy Gillespie, Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaria (with whom he started his career) Paquito D'Rivera, Yomo Toro, Candido, The Mills Brothers, Ray Barretto, Chico O'Farrill, Francisco Aguabella, Henry Threadgill, Luis "Perico" Ortiz, Daniel Ponce, Larry Harlow, Daniel Santos, Celia Cruz, Adalberto Santiago, Xiomara Portuondo, Pedrito Martinez, Roswell Rudd, Patato, David Amram, the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, Michael Gibbs, Charles McPherson Jon Faddis, Bob Mintzer, Phil Wilson, Randy Brecker, Charles Tolliver, M'BOOM, Michelle Shocked, Marco Rizo, and many more. In addition, he has guest conducted and performed as a soloist with numerous orchestras like the WDR Big Band, The Airmen of Note, The U.S. Jazz Ambassadors, Eau Claire University Big, The University

of Calgary Big Band to name just a few. Read more>>

ABOUT DUKE ELLINGTON

Duke Ellington called his music "American Music" rather than jazz and liked to describe those who impressed him as "beyond category." He remains one of the most influential figures in jazz, if not in all American music and is widely considered as one of the twentieth century's most prolific composer and best-known African American personalities.

As both a composer and bandleader, Ellington's reputation has increased since his death, with the continuous thematic repackaging of his signature music, often becoming best sellers. Posthumous recognition of his work includes a special award citation from the Pulitzer Prize Board.

Duke Ellington Milestones include:

.President Lyndon Johnson presented Duke Ellington with the President's Gold Medal in 1966.

.President Richard M. Nixon presented Duke Ellington with the Medal of Freedom in 1969.

.Duke Ellington received 13 Grammy Awards.

.Duke Ellington received the Pulitzer Prize.

.He was awarded the French Legion of Honor in 1973.

.The United States Post Office issued a Commemorative Stamp with his image on it in 1986.

ABOUT THE DUKE ELLINGTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts (DECFA) was formed by renowned dancer, choreographer and director Mercedes Ellington, granddaughter of Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington.

The Duke Ellington Center for The Arts is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization focused on scholarship, education, and performance to celebrate and perpetuate the legacy of "Duke" Ellington who is considered one of America's greatest composers.

Through Duke Ellington's extensive international travels on behalf of the US State Department, including the Soviet Union, Middle East, and Asia, he was an Ambassador of peace and understanding. DECFA's mission is to continue his legacy by furthering understanding between peoples and nations through cultural exchange, performance and the study of music beyond category.

Among its recent accomplishments, DECFA organized, hosted and sponsored the 24th International Duke Ellington Study Group Conference in New York in May 2016. Scores of musicians and academicians from around the world convened in New York to study, discuss and perform Duke Ellington's many compositions in jazz and orchestral music, song and dance beyond category – a pioneering concept that Duke Ellington pursued throughout his illustrious career.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN TAP DANCE FOUNDATION

From 1986 – 1999 the American Tap Dance Foundation was known as the American Tap Dance Orchestra. It was created, choreographed and directed by master tap dancer Brenda Bufalino and founded by Ms. Bufalino along with Tony Waag, and the late Charles 'Honi' Coles in 1986 as a tax exempt 501c3 charitable organization. During that time the Orchestra performed in hundreds of concert, stage, and film projects and thrilled audiences around the world. From 1989 to 1995, the company also operated Woodpeckers Tap Dance Center in New York City, and presented on-going classes, performances and related activities. In 2001 with a new generation of tap dancers and enthusiasts, the Orchestra was renamed under the artistic direction and leadership of Tony Waag.

THE AMERICAN TAP DANCE FOUNDATION
315 West 44th Street
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Schedule
November 3, 2019: 5:30pm

< back

previous listing • next listing