

Sunday, May 21, 2023

## CELEBRATING DUKE ELLINGTON'S BIRTHDAY AND NATIONAL TAP DANCE DAY

Company: The American Tap Dance Foundation and The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts at the Duke Ellington Statue [► Share](#) | [Print](#) | [Download](#)  
 Venue: Duke Ellington Statue  
 Location: New York, NY



CELEBRATING DUKE ELLINGTON'S BIRTHDAY AND NATIONAL TAP DANCE DAY

Duke Ellington will be celebrated on Sunday, May 21 from 2-4pm with the return of a FREE, annual outdoor concert commemorating the jazz great's birthday. This year's event, at the [Duke Ellington Statue](#), 5th Avenue and 110th Street in Manhattan's Harlem neighborhood, will also celebrate National Tap Dance Day, which takes place yearly on May 25, the birthday of tap legend [Bill Bojangles Robinson](#).

Produced by Tony Waag, Executive Director of [The American Tap Dance Foundation](#) (ATDF) and Mercedes Ellington, CEO/Artistic Director of [The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts](#), the afternoon concert will include performances by The Duke Ellington Center Big Band (musical director Eli Yamin) and a host of musicians, dancers and vocalists.

This year's lineup includes the [Harlem Samba](#), a Brazilian percussion ensemble whose members are students, alumni and friends of the Frederick Douglass Academy, a public high school in Harlem. Vocalists Marion Cowings, Sharon K. Janda, Antoinette Montague and Nicholas King will perform, as well as tap dancers Michela Marino Lerman, Max Pollak and A.C. Lincoln. Two students from ATDF's American Tap Dance Center, Shareef Coll and Kyleigh Vickers, will complete the program. Mark Mindek will appear on stilts.

*"We're excited to be back celebrating 'The Duke' at his famed statue in Manhattan's Harlem neighborhood. Duke Ellington was a key figure in perpetuating the idea that tap dance IS music, and tap dancers are musicians that create music with their feet. Tap grew up next to its kissing cousin jazz. Tap and jazz are undeniably attached at the hip,"* said Mr. Waag. Duke Ellington was inducted into the ATDF International Tap Dance Hall of Fame in 2017.

### ABOUT THE AMERICAN TAP DANCE FOUNDATION

The American Tap Dance Foundation (ATDF) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization committed to establishing and legitimizing tap as a vital component of American dance through creation, presentation, education, and preservation. ATDF is recognized as a local, national, and international leader in the field and continues to further three main objectives: to perpetuate tap dance as a flourishing contemporary art form on a National and International level; to provide a basis for the growth of tap dance by teaching new generations through comprehensive educational programs; and to preserve the artistry of the early generations of tap masters.

### ABOUT THE DUKE ELLINGTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which honors and preserves the legacy of Duke Ellington through performance and educational outreach. The Center focuses on scholarship, education, and documentation of accurate Ellington history, through performances connected to the legacy of Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974). Considered one of America's greatest composers with over 3,000 compositions, Duke Ellington is a seminal figure in the history of American music, renowned the world over.

### 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 composers 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.

The American Tap Dance Foundation and The Duke Ellington Center  
 for the Arts at the Duke Ellington Statue  
 5th Avenue and 110th Street - Duke Ellington Circle  
 New York, NY, 10029

Schedule  
 May 21, 2023: 2:00pm