Welcome to the Center for the Art of Performance

The Center for the Art of Performance is not a place. It’s more of a state of mind that embraces experimentation, encourages a culture of the curious, champions disruptors and dreamers and supports the commitment and courage of artists. We promote rigor, craft and excellence in all facets of the performing arts.

2017–18 SEASON VENUES

Royce Hall, UCLA  Freud Playhouse, UCLA
The Theatre at Ace Hotel  Little Theater, UCLA
Will Rogers State Historic Park

UCLA’s Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) is dedicated to the advancement of the contemporary performing arts in all disciplines—dance, music, spoken word and theater—as well as emerging digital, collaborative and cross-platforms utilized by today’s leading artists. Part of UCLA’s School of the Arts and Architecture, CAP UCLA curates and facilitates direct exposure to contemporary performance from around the globe, supporting artists who are creating extraordinary works of art and fostering a vibrant learning community both on and off the UCLA campus. The organization invests in the creative process by providing artists with financial backing and time to experiment and expand their practices through strategic partnerships, residencies and collaborations. As an influential voice within the local, national, and global arts community, CAP UCLA serves to connect audiences across generations in order to galvanize a living archive of our culture.

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Center for the Art of Performance presents

Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya

*Tribute to the Jazz Epistles*

Sat, Mar 3 at 8pm | Royce Hall
Running Time: Approx. 90 mins. | Plus intermission

Abdullah Ibrahim | Piano
Noah Jackson | Cello, bass
Will Terrill | Drums
Cleave Guyton, Jr. | Alto saxophone, flute, clarinet
Lance Bryant | Tenor saxophone
Andrae Murchison | Trombone, trumpet
Marshall McDonald | Baritone saxophone

with special guest
Freddie Hendrix | Trumpet, flugelhorn

Funds provided by the Royce Gala Endowment.
MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER

South African jazz legend Abdullah Ibrahim first heard the call of modern jazz in the late 1950s, and along with Hugh Masekela, founded the pioneering Jazz Epistles—a hard bop ensemble modeled on Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers that was first black jazz combo to record in South Africa.

We are deeply saddened by the passing of beloved South African trumpeter and Anti-Apartheid activist Hugh Masekela, who died on January 23 in Johannesburg after a long battle with prostate cancer, at age 78. After a move to the United States in 1960, he won international acclaim and carried the mantle of his country’s freedom struggle.

Mr. Masekela graced the stage at Royce Hall on numerous occasions, most recently on his 2012 Jabulani tour. Thank you for joining us tonight in celebration of his pioneering spirit, generosity and musical genius. We dedicate this performance by Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya, with special guest Freddie Hendrix in the trumpet chair, in tribute to the life and legacy of Hugh Masekela and the legendary Jazz Epistles.

Hugh Masekela was a cultural icon and a symbol of inclusiveness and joy. His enormous contributions to art and humanitarian causes will live on.
The concert repertoire will feature Abdullah Ibrahim’s classic compositions plus new arrangements of the Jazz Epistles’ compositions from their 1959 recording, *Jazz Epistle, Verse 1*.

**ABOUT ABDULLAH IBRAHIM**

Abdullah Ibrahim, South Africa’s most distinguished pianist and a world-respected master musician, was born in 1934 in Cape Town and baptized Adolph Johannes Brand. His early musical memories were of traditional African Khoi-san songs and the Christian hymns, gospel tunes and spirituals that he heard from his grandmother, who was pianist for the local African Methodist Episcopal church, and his mother, who led the choir. The Cape Town of his childhood was a melting-pot of cultural influences, and the young Dollar Brand, as he became known, was exposed to American jazz, township jive, Cape Malay music, as well as to classical music. Out of this blend of the secular and the religious, the traditional and the modern, developed the distinctive style, harmonies and musical vocabulary that are inimitably his own.

He began piano lessons at the age of seven and made his professional debut at 15, playing and later recording with such local groups as the Tuxedo Slickers. He was in the forefront of playing bebop with a Cape Town flavor and 1958 saw the formation of the Dollar Brand Trio. His groundbreaking septet the Jazz Epistles, formed in 1959 (with saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi, trumpeter Hugh Masekela, trombonist Jonas Gwanga, bassist Johnny Gertze and drummer Makaya Ntshoko), recorded the first jazz album by South
African musicians. That same year, he met and first performed with vocalist Sathima Bea Benjamin; they were to marry six years later.

After the notorious Sharpeville massacre of 1960, mixed-race bands and audiences were defying the increasingly strict apartheid laws, and jazz symbolized resistance, so the government closed a number of clubs and harassed the musicians. Some members of the Jazz Epistles went to England with the musical King Kong and stayed in exile. These were difficult times in which to sustain musical development in South Africa. In 1962, with Nelson Mandela imprisoned and the ANC banned, Dollar Brand and Sathima Bea Benjamin left the country, joined later by the other trio members Gertze and Ntshoko, and took up a three-year contract at the Club Africana in Zürich. There, in 1963, Sathima persuaded Duke Ellington to listen to them play, which led to a recording session in Paris—Duke Ellington presents the Dollar Brand Trio—and invitations to perform at key European festivals, and on television and radio during the next two years.

In 1965, the now married couple moved to New York. After appearing that year at the Newport Jazz Festival and Carnegie Hall, Dollar Brand was called upon in 1966 to substitute as leader of the Ellington Orchestra in five concerts. Then followed a six-month tour with the Elvin Jones Quartet. In 1967 he received a Rockefeller Foundation grant to attend the Juilliard School of Music. Being in the USA also afforded him the opportunity to interact with many progressive musicians, including Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Pharaoh Sanders, Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp.

The year 1968 was a turning point. Searching for spiritual harmony in an increasingly fractured life, Dollar Brand went back to Cape Town, where he converted to Islam, taking the name Abdullah Ibrahim, and in 1970 he made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Music and martial arts further reinforced the spiritual discipline he found. After a couple of years based in Swaziland, where he founded a music school, Abdullah and his young family returned in 1973 to Cape Town, though he still toured internationally with his own large and small groups. In 1974 he recorded “Mannenberg—‘Is where it’s happening’”, which
soon became an unofficial national anthem for black South Africans. After the Soweto student uprising, in 1976, he organized an illegal ANC benefit concert; before long, he and his family left for America, to settle once again in New York.

Determined to manage his own affairs in America, he founded with Sathima, the record company Ekapa in 1981. The 1980s saw him involved with a range of artistic projects that depended on his music: Garth Fagan’s ballet Prelude (first performed 1981), the Kalahari Liberation Opera (Vienna, 1982), and in 1983 a musical, Cape Town, South Africa, featuring the septet he formed that year, Ekaya. In 1987, he played a memorial concert for Marcus Garvey in London’s Westminster Cathedral, and the following year he played at the concert in Central Park, New York, commemorating the seventieth birthday of Nelson Mandela.

In 1990 Mandela, freed from prison, invited him to come home to South Africa. The fraught emotions of reacclimatizing there are reflected in Mantra Modes (1991), the first recording with South African musicians since 1976, and in Knysna Blue (1993). He memorably performed at Mandela’s inauguration in 1994.

Abdullah Ibrahim has been the subject of several documentaries, including Chris Austin’s 1986 BBC film A Brother with Perfect Timing and A Struggle for Love, by Ciro Cappellari (2004). He has also composed scores for film, including the award-winning soundtrack for Claire Denis’s Chocolat (1988), as well as for No Fear, No Die (1990) and Idrissa Ouedraogo’s Tilai (1990), and he was featured in the 2002 production Amandla: A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony.

For more than a quarter-century he has toured the world extensively, appearing at major concert halls, clubs and festivals, giving sell-out performances, as solo artist or with other renowned artists (notably, Max Roach, Carlos Ward and Randy Weston). His collaborations with classical orchestras have resulted in acclaimed recordings, such as African Suite (1999, with members of the European Union Youth Orchestra) and the Munich Radio Philharmonic orchestra symphonic version, African Symphony (2001), which also featured the trio and the NDR Jazz Big Band.

Abdullah Ibrahim celebrated his 70th birthday in October 2004, which occasion was marked by the release of two CDs by Enja Records (the Munich-based label with whom he has recorded for three decades): the compilation A Celebration, and Re:Brahim, his music remixed. His discography runs to well over a hundred album credits.

When not touring, he now divides his time between Cape Town and New York. In addition to composing and performing, he has started a South African production company, Masingita (Miracle), and established a music academy,
M7, offering courses in seven disciplines to educate young minds and bodies. In 2006, he spearheaded the historic creation (backed by the South African Ministry of Arts and Culture) of the Cape Town Jazz Orchestra, an eighteen-piece big band, which is set to further strengthen the standing of South African music on the global stage.

A martial arts Black Belt with a lifelong interest in zen philosophy, he takes every opportunity to visit his master in private trips to Japan. In 2003 he performed charity concerts at temples in Kyoto and Shizuoka, the proceeds going to the M7 academy.

Abdullah Ibrahim remains at his zenith, as a musician and a tireless initiator of new projects. In his own words:

“some do it because they have to do it
we do it because we want to....so we do not require much sleep...
so we have to do it “

The recipient of many awards and honorary doctorates, spiritually strong as both teacher and disciple, Professor Abdullah Ibrahim is a true inheritor of the ancestral name SENZO. SENZO means “Ancestor” in both Chinese and Japanese. SENZO also echoes the name of Abdullah Ibrahim’s Sotho father, in whose language the word translates as “Creator.” Abdullah Ibrahim’s new solo program, SENZO, transcends category, combining the intimate and the universal in a unique way that is hinted at in its title.

abdullahibrahim.co.za

SELECT DISCOGRAPHY

2014: The Song is My Story
2013: Mukashi. Once Upon A Time
2010: Sotho Blue
2009: Bombella
2008: Senzo
2005: Re; Brahim – Abdullah Ibrahim Remixed
2004: Celebration
2003: Cape Town Songs
2002: African Magic
2001: African Symphony
2001: Ekapa Lodumo – Abdullah Ibrahim with the NDR Big Band
2000: Mannenberg – Is Where It’s Happening
1999: African Suite
1998: Made in South Africa – Township One More Time
1997: Cape Town Flowers
1997: Cape Town Revisited
1997: South African Ambassador
1995: Yarona
1993: Knysna Blue
1991: Mantra Mode
1991: Desert Flowers
1991: Anthem for the New Nations
1990: No Fear, No Die
1989: AfricanRiver
1989: African Sun
1989: Blues For a Hip King
1988: Mindif
1988: Round Midnight at the Montmartre
1986: South Africa
1985: Water From an Ancient Well
1983: Zimbabwe
1983: Ekaya (Home)
1983: Live at Sweet Basil (with Carlos Ward)
1982: African Dawn
1981: Duke’s Memories
1980: African Marketplace
1980: Dollar Brand at Montreux
1980: South African Sunshine
1980: Piano Solo
1980: Matsidiso
1979: African Marketplace
1979: Africa – Tears and Laughter
1979: Echoes from Africa
1978: Autobiography
1978: Anthem for the New Nations
1977: Streams of Consciousness
1977: The Journey
1976: Banyana – The Children of Africa
1973: African Space Program
1973: Ancient Africa
1973: Good News from Africa
1973: Fats, Duke & the Monk
1973: African Portraits
1973: Sangoma
1969: African Piano
1969: African Sketchbook
1965: Anatomy of a South African Village
1963: The Dream
1960: Jazz Epistle, Verse 1
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Late seating will be subject to company approval and will occur only at a suitable time at the discretion of the house staff. Latecomers may not be able to be seated in their assigned seats to avoid disruption or distractions during the performance. Some events have no late seating by request of the artist, and refunds on parking and tickets for latecomers will not be accommodated.

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In addition to wheelchair spaces, The Theatre at Ace Hotel is equipped with select aisle seats that have folding armrests on the aisle side to make transfer easier for those with mobility limitations. For such seating, please request a “transfer seat.”

If you need accessible seating the night of the event and don’t have a special ticket, we’ll do our best to accommodate you once you arrive at the theater.

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