



BAM 2018 Winter/Spring Season

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC PETER JAY SHARP BUILDING 30 LAFAYETTE AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11217—1486

Abdullah Ibrahim and his band Ekaya celebrate the pioneering legacy of The Jazz Epistles, South Africa's first black jazz band, April 18 & 19

Special guests Ravi Coltrane (Apr 19) & Freddie Hendrix (Apr 18 & 19)

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

BAM and World Music Institute present

The Jazz Epistles

Featuring Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya

With special guests Ravi Coltrane and Freddie Hendrix

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave)

Apr 18 & 19 at 8pm

Tickets start at \$35

Brooklyn, NY/Feb 21, 2018—The Jazz Epistles were South Africa's first black jazz band, pioneering a new musical form influenced by bebop and traditional South African music. Inspired by Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, The Jazz Epistles formed when the Dollar Brand Trio from Capetown—which included pianist Abdullah Ibrahim, bassist Johnny Gertze, and drummer Makaya Ntshoko—combined talents with alto saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi, the late great trumpeter Hugh Masekela, and trombonist Jonas Gwangwa. Their first and only album, *Jazz Epistle, Verse 1*, released in 1959, brought them international acclaim. Following the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre and the increasing oppression of the apartheid government—including the prohibition of jazz music—band members emigrated to Europe and North America. Two of them, Ibrahim and Masekela, would go on to become jazz stars in their own right.

In June 2016, Ibrahim and Masekela reunited for two sold-out concerts at the Emperor's Palace in Johannesburg, performing together in South Africa for the first time in over 50 years. These historic performances inspired the duo to embark on a world tour in tribute to the Epistles legacy. The recent passing of Masekela reaffirms the imperative of these concerts as not only cultural celebration, but cultural preservation. Saxophonist Ravi Coltrane (Apr 19) and trumpeter Freddie Hendrix (Apr 18 & 19) join Abdullah Ibrahim and his band Ekaya for this two-night run, which will include new arrangements of The Jazz Epistles' original compositions—including

“Blues for Huey,” “Scullery Department,” and “Dollars Moods”—along with Ibrahim’s classic catalogue.

Abdullah Ibrahim, South Africa’s most distinguished pianist and jazz pioneer, was born in 1934 in Cape Town. 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 in 1958 founded 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—and recorded the first jazz album by South African musicians, *Jazz Epistle Verse 1*. Ibrahim has been the subject of several documentaries and has also composed scores for film, including the award-winning soundtrack for Claire Denis’ *Chocolat* (1988), as well as for *No Fear, No Die* (1990) and Idrissa Ouedraogo’s *Tilai* (1990). Ibrahim was also featured in the 2002 documentary *Amandla: A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*, which depicted the struggle against apartheid. He has toured the world extensively, appearing at major concert halls, clubs and festivals as both a solo artist and with other renowned artists, notably Max Roach, Carlos Ward, and Randy Weston.

BAMcafé Live curated by Darrell McNeill

Apr 20 & 21 at 9pm

BAM Lepercq Space (30 Lafayette Ave, 2nd floor)

Free admission

In conjunction with The Jazz Epistles concerts, Digital Diaspora, an electro-funk band with Afrobeat influences, will perform at BAMcafé on Apr 20 & 21.

For press information, contact Christian Barclay at cbarclay@BAM.org or 718.724.8044.

Credits

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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