

Newport News Strikes a High Note with The Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Celebration—A Star-Studded Series of Performances in Honor of the First Lady of Song

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWPORT NEWS, VA, April 3, 2025 – This spring, the City of Newport News will once again be the stage for an extraordinary series of jazz concerts as the *Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Celebration* expands this year. Spanning five dates and multiple venues, this star-studded event honors the enduring legacy of Newport News' own Ella Fitzgerald while advancing the mission of Hampton Roads Jazz Incorporated (HR Jazz)—to bring world-class jazz experiences to the region through performance, education, and community engagement. *To compliment this Celebration, music lovers can also enjoy Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center's 27th Annual Ella Fitzgerald Music Festival with acts on April 7, 12, 25 and 26. More information and tickets can be found at: <https://downinggross.org/newport-news-events>.*

Each performance in the Jazz Celebration series reflects HR Jazz's commitment to showcasing elite talent, enriching the cultural fabric of Hampton Roads, and preserving the profound heritage of jazz music. With performances from Grammy nominees, nationally recognized vocalists, and rising stars, the celebration offers both inspiration and entertainment to jazz lovers across generations.

After a fun filled night, wind down at the Newport News Marriott at City Center with their exclusive “*Take the Ella-vator Home*” rate available April 29 through May 11, for \$149 per night plus taxes. Subject to availability. [Book your rate for Take the Ella-Vator Home.](#)

The 2025 Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Celebration Lineup April 30

Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center | 8:00 p.m.

Jason Marsalis Quintet with Special Guests

Featuring Allyn Johnson (piano), Rashaan Barber (saxophone), Michael Hawkins (bass), and Jae Sinnett (drums)

An exhilarating opening night blending technical brilliance and vibrant energy.

May 3

Ferguson Center for the Arts – Peebles Theatre, CNU | 8:00 p.m.

The Yellowjackets and Vocalist Kenny Washington

A fusion of jazz, R&B, and soul from this legendary ensemble, joined by a masterful vocalist.

May 8

Ferguson Center for the Arts – Peebles Theatre, CNU | 8:00 p.m.

The Ella Fitzgerald Vocal Jazz Summit

Featuring Vanessa Rubin, Tierney Sutton, and René Marie
Three powerhouse vocalists come together for a dynamic evening celebrating the vocal tradition in jazz.

May 9

Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center | 8:00 p.m.

Roberta Gambarini and Brittany Burrell

Internationally acclaimed vocalist Roberta Gambarini headlines with local standout and *Ladies of Song Contest* winner Brittany Burrell opening.

May 10

Reformation Lutheran Church – Warwick Blvd | 7:30 p.m.

Liz Terrell Brydge Quartet

With Allen Farnham (piano), Chris Brydge (bass), and Jae Sinnett (drums)
A swinging closing performance in an intimate setting, led by one of the region's most expressive jazz vocalists.

As a nonprofit organization, HR Jazz is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and presenting jazz not only through performance but through robust educational programming. From masterclasses and lectures to clinics and showcases for student musicians, HR Jazz fosters both appreciation and participation in jazz throughout the seven cities of Hampton Roads. For more information about the concert series, ticketing, or HR Jazz's educational programs, visit <https://hrjazz.org/events/>.

NOTE to Media: Interested in covering the Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Celebration? Contact Jae Sinnett at jaejazz@yahoo.com or call 757-646-3315 for interviews and press credentials.

