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## Welcome back to BroadStage, and thank you for joining us this month!

This April, we are thrilled to showcase an extraordinary lineup of performances that celebrate a rich variety of musical genres and feature some of our most cherished series here at BroadStage.

We kick off the month with the **Emmet Cohen Trio (April 4)**, led by the remarkable Emmet Cohen, who was hailed by *All About Jazz* as “one of the finest piano players to emerge in decades.” You will be dancing in your seat—prepare to be captivated by the trio’s charisma, energy, and world-class talent. Next, we bring you our second blackbox installment of the year: **Ellis Hall, “The Ambassador of Soul” (April 26)**. With his incredible five-octave range and memorable tenure as lead vocalist for Tower of Power, Ellis will have us dancing on The Plaza as part of our joyful blackbox series curated by The Reverend Shawn Amos. We close the month with Sunday Morning Music / Santa Monica featuring **Salastina (April 27)**, a visionary ensemble that celebrates the rich heritage of chamber music while embracing its exciting future. We look forward to seeing you before the show on The Plaza for coffee, pastries, and live music from SOL-LA Music Academy.

Music is what moves us, and we look forward to sharing these incredible concerts in great company with you. As we continue through 2025 and beyond, our commitment to making every event special remains stronger than ever. Please stay tuned for exciting news and announcements, including that of our 2025/26 Season – more coming soon!

Thank you for joining us now and in the future; we look forward to seeing you often!



**Rob Bailis**

Artistic and Executive Director

**blackbox:**  
**Ellis Hall: “The Ambassador of Soul”**

**Curated by**  
**The Reverend Shawn Amos**

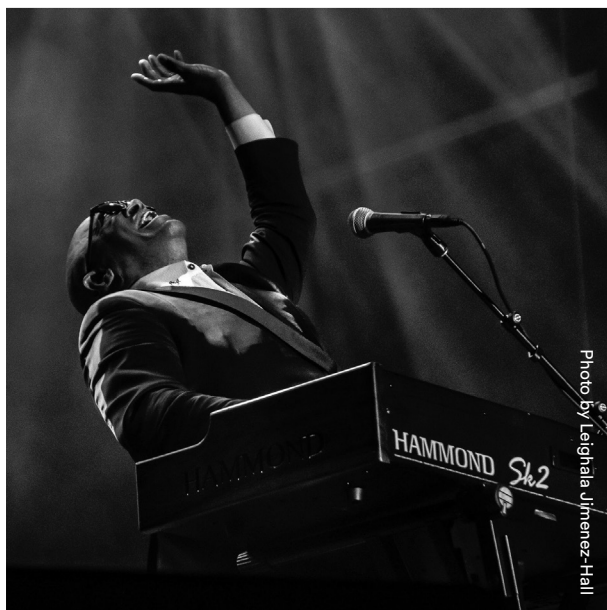
**Saturday**  
**Apr 26**  
**8 p.m.**  
**The Plaza**

*Jazz & Blues Sponsor:*  
*Richard and Lisa Kendall*

*blackbox Sponsor:*  
*Ann Petersen and Leslie Pam*

*Media Sponsor: KCRW*

*This program runs 75 minutes with  
no intermission.*



**Ellis Hall:**  
**“The Ambassador**  
**of Soul”**

# About the Artists

## About Ellis Hall

Ellis Hall, “The Ambassador of Soul” known for singing, songwriting and as a musician playing every instrument with a strong 5 octave vocal range and the lead vocalist and keyboardist for the soul-funk band Tower of Power. He performs with most elite symphony orchestras worldwide including: His first being the Hollywood Bowl under the direction of his mentor Ray Charles. Since then he has performed with prestigious 81-piece orchestras including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra with Marvin Hamlisch conducting to playing with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Hartford Symphony Orchestra and more.

Ellis is currently performing two orchestra concept shows “Ray, Motown and Beyond” features such hits as Motown’s Heard It Through the Grapevine and Tower of Power’s Some Days Were Meant for Rain, with the second half of the show paying tribute to Ray Charles featuring hit songs like, I Can’t Stop Loving You, Unchain My Heart, Hit the Road Jack, and Georgia on My Mind. Additionally, “Soul Unlimited” is where he “Ellis-izes” songs from David Bowie’s Let’s Dance to Something by George Harrison along with Motown and other Soul hits.

Born in Savannah, Georgia and raised partly in Claxton, GA. Ellis has been blind since he was 18 years old, but that doesn’t stop him from his mission in life. In fact, it has been the driving force behind the creation of a 3,800 songs catalog full of Soul, Gospel, Blues and Pop compositions. Among these works is the official song for his hometown. He has worked alongside other greats such as Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, James Taylor, Natalie Cole, Michael McDonald, Toby Keith, Herbie Hancock, George Benson, Emmy Lou Harris, Kenny G and many more. In addition, he was one of the lead vocalists of the California Raisins.

Ellis has also successfully had his hand in Hollywood, recording and performing songs for live action and animated films such as “The Lion King 2,” “Shrek 2,” “Chicken Run,” “Invincible” and “Bruce Almighty”. The Ambassador has even taken acting roles in “Big Momma’s House” (Martin Lawrence) and the crime drama “Catch Me If You Can” (Leonardo DiCaprio). Along with these amazing films, Mr. Hall was nominated for an Ovation Theater Award as “Best Lead Actor in a Musical” for his first stage role in “The Gospel at Colonus.” As a dedicated philanthropist, Ellis has donated his time and talents to the eradication of human Trafficking through several organizations including his partnership with the United Nations, “Artists United Against Human Trafficking,” having donated proceeds from his song, “Be The Change” which is featured on the 3 disc compilation “Music To Inspire.” November 2019, he joined Guitar Legends 3 tour which also featured Billy Gibbons (ZZ

Top) Steve Lukather (Toto) Warren Haynes (The Allman Brothers) and Nancy Wilson (Heart.) September 2021, Hall released his first studio album in more than 20 years “Doc Kupka Presents Let’s Make An Arrangement” which was considered for Grammy nomination.

Most recently, Hall joined forces with 3x Grammy winner, George Whitty on the song “Hug Me,” a reimaged version of native Ukrainian artist Slava Varkachuk’s hit song “Obiymy,” with all proceeds going aide the Ukrainian people as they struggle to rebuild in the wake of the ongoing war with Russia. Ellis continue to sell out shows nationally and internationally.

## About The Reverend Shawn Amos

Celebrated recording artist and NAACP Image Award-winning author Shawn Amos, best known as joyful bluesman The Reverend Shawn Amos, is an astute storyteller of multiple mediums. Shawn invests his unique creative vision and business savvy in both his own work and the endeavors of countless collaborators. He honed these skills—and a restless entrepreneurial spirit—as a child of 1970s Hollywood, helping his father Wally “Famous” Amos launch a now-iconic cookie brand on then-gritty Sunset Boulevard.

Following a stint at NYU film school, Shawn wrote scripts for A & M films by day, recording and performing original music focusing on race and identity by night. As a record company executive, he conceived and produced multiple releases for both Rhino Entertainment and Shout! Factory, including Grammy-nominated box set *Rhapsodies in Black: Music & Words From the Harlem Renaissance* and *Q: The Musical Biography of Quincy Jones*. The legendary Jones subsequently enlisted Shawn to oversee his Listen Up Foundation.

The new millennium saw Shawn unexpectedly pioneer content marketing for companies seeking a potent online voice. This fruitful path led to his current position with communications agency Hudson Cutler, where Shawn counsels executives on everything from media appearances to change management. He is executive producer of the animated series, *Cookies & Milk* (based upon his debut book), in development at Disney, and author of middle-grade novel, *Franklin and the Fabulous Five* (2026 publication). *The Reverend Shawn Amos Dance Party*, an album of originals and 1960s dance classics, is forthcoming. Blackbox, the jazz and blues series he curates for Santa Monica performing arts center BroadStage, is in its sixth year.

# May & June at BroadStage



**May 8**  
**National Geographic Live:**  
**Earth After Dark**

**June 11**  
**Celebrity Opera:**  
**Gerald Finley**

**May 10**  
**Chanticleer**

**June 21**  
**blackbox:**  
**Sing The Story:**  
**Celebrating**  
**Black Artistry from**  
**Gospel to Soul**

**June 7**  
**Future Sounds of Jazz:**  
**Julius Rodriguez**



**broadstage**  
Santa Monica

**Tickets available at [broadstage.org](https://broadstage.org)!**



# BroadStage Activations

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## Experience and Explore

Engage with the artists and each other beyond the stage. As part of our community, we invite you to experience our interactive workshops, open talks, festive gatherings, community field trips and more, to discover your own connection to the arts.

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## Everyone's Here

Our **In Community** programs welcome participants that are intergenerational, encompass gender identities, include varied socioeconomic, racial, and cultural backgrounds, and strive to accommodate people of all abilities.

Learn more about the upcoming Artist Workshops & Residencies and Community Field Trips by visiting **[broadstage.org/activations](https://broadstage.org/activations)**.



Photo by Andrew Boone

# Become a Member!

Benefit from your impact: your Membership not only supports the performing arts in our community, it also enables you to receive a range of exciting benefits.

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## Skip the line

Get first access to the best seats in the house.

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## Celebrate with us

From our annual holiday soiree, to other gatherings and receptions, your social calendar will be full!

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## Get to know the artists

Keep an eye on your inbox for exclusive invitations to artist workshops and behind-the-scenes events.

For a full listing of Membership benefits and to become a Member, visit [broadstage.org/membership](http://broadstage.org/membership), email [development@broadstage.org](mailto:development@broadstage.org), or call 310.434.3590.



**broadstage**

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Your support helps keep the performing arts thriving here on the Westside.

*This list is updated quarterly.*

*Special thanks to our board members. We are so grateful to them for their leadership and unwavering support. Board member households are indicated with an \*.*

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**We thank Designs by David for providing flowers at each performance.**



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**Future Sounds of Jazz Festival:** BroadStage gratefully acknowledges the generous support of: Richard and Lisa Kendall, Barbara Herman, Garland and Angela Campbell, and Third District, LA County Board of Supervisors.

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The presentation of *Is It Thursday Yet?* In Association with **La Jolla Playhouse** was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation.

**Future Sounds of Jazz Series:** Richard and Lisa Kendall. This project was also funded (in part) by a grant from Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts.

BroadStage thanks Sacred River Wines for donating wine for Future Sounds of Jazz Festival and for our food pairing series.



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