

Accra Marks Jazz Day With Ella Fitzgerald Tribute and TV Launch

By News Ghana
May 3, 2026



Ghana placed itself on the global jazz map on April 30, 2026, as Accra hosted multiple events marking International Jazz Day, including a concert and tribute to legendary vocalist Ella Fitzgerald organised by Maximum Jazz at the Accra Marriott Hotel.

The evening, themed "International Jazz Day and Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald," was headlined by Yomi Sower and Friends, bringing together a lineup that included Nicholas Mettle on keyboards, Seth Sax on saxophone, and Niyi, a Nigerian talking drum virtuoso. Sower, who founded and hosts the Maximum Jazz brand, said the concert was designed to build lasting collaborations among

Jazz Day

Accra's jazz musicians while positioning Ghana within global jazz structures recognised by the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The event was formally registered on JazzDay.com, ensuring Ghana's inclusion in the official global calendar for the occasion.

Separately, the Ghana Jazz Orchestra made its first public appearance at the +233 Jazz Bar and Grill in North Ridge, Accra, also on April 30, in a concert organised with UNESCO participation. The orchestra, conducted by pianist Victor Dey Jr., performed a five-song set spanning compositions by Pat Metheny, Marcus Wyatt, and Weather Report, among others, drawing one of the more notable jazz audiences of the year in Accra.

The Maximum Jazz evening carried additional milestones. Sower used the occasion to pre-launch Maximum Jazz Television, which is expected to become Ghana's first dedicated jazz television programme. The night also marked the 14th anniversary of the Maximum Jazz radio show, which has broadcast on Ghanaian airwaves since 2012 under the tagline "Ghana's No.1 Drive Time Jazz Show." The date carried personal significance as well, coinciding with Sower's birthday.

The tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, who was born on April 25, 1917, and remains one of the defining voices in jazz history, drew an audience that included diplomats, business executives, luxury brand representatives, and jazz enthusiasts.

International Jazz Day was established by UNESCO in 2011 and is celebrated annually on April 30. The 2026 global host city is Chicago. Herbie Hancock, the renowned jazz pianist who serves as UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, chairs the worldwide celebration alongside the UNESCO Director-General.