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Jazz at Lincoln Center is dedicated to inspiring and growing audiences for jazz. Founded in 1987, it produces more than 2,000 events each season at its home in New York City and around the world. The center organizes education and broadcast events for audiences of all ages; national and international tours; a jazz hall of fame and concert series; radio programs; TV broadcasts; recordings; and publications.

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra has been the resident orchestra since 1988.

The Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts has 11 resident organizations which include the Metropolitan Opera, New York Philharmonic and New York City Ballet, as well as Jazz at Lincoln Center. It is based in a complex of buildings in New York City's Upper West Side, developed under an urban renewal program that began in the 1950s and transformed the area into a cultural hub.

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WYNTON MARSALIS: MANDATE TO SWING

The legendary jazzman and Artistic Director at New York City's Jazz at Lincoln Center talks about jazz's role in communicating complex ideas – like democracy, freedom of expression and good manners – with Brunswick's **Mike France**



“Jazz is the art of communication, because it requires a deep empathy. When you are a jazz musician, you are listening constantly”

“In the history of art there has never been anything like the rhythm section ...

... they are inventing background music for a foreground that's being made up while they are inventing it. Think about the reflexes they have to have ...

... the rhythm section could teach our country and businesses and people all over the world a very powerful lesson, because they don't just follow you. When you're lost, they lead you ...

... that's why a great rhythm section is very hard to find; a great rhythm section is something, let me tell you; a great rhythm section is not to be underestimated. It's probably the greatest of all inventions”

All photographs courtesy of Jazz at Lincoln Center

“Our main priority is that there will be a time in our country when jazz is a part of the curriculum that every school kid learns and that the democratic identity of jazz is recognized”

“At Lincoln Center, our goal is to see this music in its rightful place in the culture, the place it has earned”

“With jazz, there’s a component that’s always amendable, like our constitution”

“People say that all politics is local. That’s how jazz instruments are arranged – the background instrument is the most significant. That would be the bass or guitar in a traditional swing band; the instrument that you hear the least is the foundation of everything you’re playing”

“The bass line moves in jazz, it is not the same thing repeated over and over again ...

... it encourages you to create stories that develop in time. That’s what connects jazz to Western music, classical music”

“Jazz is the best way to teach American culture and democracy, because jazz is the democratic process in action. Better than any other art form, it can show you how we can negotiate with each other”

Who are your artistic heroes?

1. Duke Ellington, just because of the range and the sophistication – and the distance that his music travels over his 50-year career. He called his music “American music” rather than jazz, by the way.

2. Henri Matisse, because he was modern and lyrical and he never fell into any 20th century fads. He was just himself. He struggled in his life, but kept his belief in his vision of art.



“In swing, you are constantly encouraged to give way, because the act of swinging demands that. It gives you an objective that is not you or the other person, it is the thing you are both working towards”

“Jazz is a celebration of the individual. But when you play in a group, the group has the mandate to swing”

“Swing teaches you manners: that other people have their individual identity – and that should be respected”

“Because you have freedom with jazz, you are required to know more, not less. I have to know more to play on rhythm changes than to play the trumpet part in Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, because Beethoven wrote the music out and so all I have to know is how to count and play my instrument”

“I have lived the music since I was a little kid, even before I liked it”

“A great storyteller has the integrity to want to communicate something of value to you”



3. **Shakespeare**, because of his legacy and his language. His stories and the way he told them left an indelible imprint on our conception of the possible. So I’ve got to go with the Bard.

WYNTON MARSALIS

Wynton Marsalis is the Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1961, Marsalis began his classical training on trumpet at the age of 12. He entered The Juilliard School at 17 and joined Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers a year later. Marsalis made his recording debut as a leader in 1982, and has since recorded more than 70 jazz and classical albums which have garnered him nine Grammy Awards. In 1983, he became the first and only artist to win both classical and jazz Grammys in the same year; a feat repeated in 1984. In 1997, Marsalis became the first jazz artist to be awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize in music for his oratorio *Blood on the Fields*, which was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center. He is also an internationally respected teacher and spokesman for music education, and has received honors too numerous to mention.

Mike France is a Partner in Brunswick’s New York office. His jazz heroes are Monk, Mingus and Miles.