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## WorldTraveler



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## CULINARY BARCELONA

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## Wynton Marsalis

New York's jazz maestro

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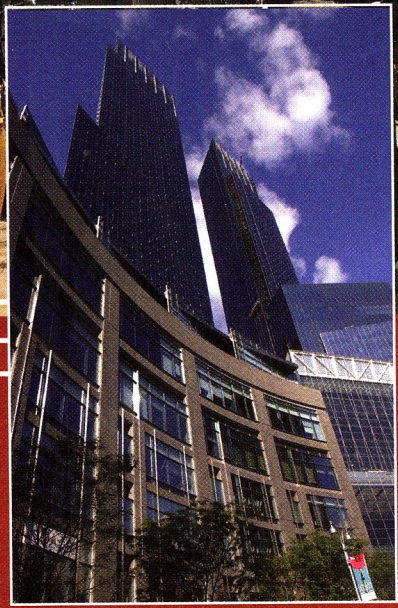


**Wynton Marsalis leads New York's  
Lincoln Center beyond the 'A Train.'**

*By Tamara Warren*







# Lincoln Center Lowdown

Jazz at Lincoln Center's three venues host regular performances. January highlights include:

- Willie Nelson Sings the Blues, Fri—Sat, Jan. 12—13, 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., The Allen Room.
- Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra with Arturo O'Farrill, Fri—Sat, Jan. 12—13, 8 p.m., The Rose Theater.

*Jazz at Lincoln Center is located at Broadway and 60th Street. For more information and tickets, call 212-721-6500 or go to [jalc.org](http://jalc.org).*

Catch the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra on the road in January:

- The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis performs "All Rise," with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) at Symphony Hall, Jan. 18—21.

*For more information and tickets to the Chicago show, call the CSO at 312-294-3000 or go to [cso.org](http://cso.org). —T. W.*

Marsalis started playing trumpet when he was 8 years old, and he was an accomplished performer by the time he entered Julliard School in 1979—which brought him to New York City. He soon joined master drummer Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, and he cut his chops performing with jazz greats such as Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie and Sonny Rollins.

Renowned jazz critic and close

friend Stanley Crouch met Marsalis in the early 1980s. "He could play trumpet in a different way, using a lower register, jump these octaves, and he could articulate these notes with speed and accuracy," Crouch says, declaring Marsalis a real thinker and an original. "I think that's one of the great gifts Marsalis has as a musician. He acknowledges the many different kinds of nuances that are true in our lives, and that's why

people like him so much."

For musicians to connect with engaged audiences, constant touring is par for the course. The road has been Marsalis' home away from home—aboard tour buses, vans and airplanes, playing music in every corner of the world. He wrote two books about the road: "To A Young Jazz Musician: Letters from the Road" and a collaboration with photographer Frank Stewart, "Sweet



**U**nderneath the glow of indigo lights, Wynton Marsalis sat on the edge of a chair with his fellow trumpet players in big-band formation, the bell of his horn perched on his right knee. Engrossed in Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra saxophonist Victor Goines' arrangement of John Coltrane's "Harmonique," Marsalis made frequent, knowing eye contact with the other musicians on stage. While Goines soloed, Marsalis' look said, 'Yeah, that's it right there, that's the sound they want to hear.' Then, Marsalis took up the melody. With perfect timing, the orchestra hit familiar notes, evoking a wistful sigh throughout the room as "Naima" sailed through the air.

This past fall, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra performed a retrospective of Coltrane's work from 1957 to 1963, to sold-out crowds in the large auditorium of The Rose Theater, one of the orchestra's three performance spaces. In each concert, Marsalis made it apparent why he is the face, ears and voice of Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC), as both music and artistic director: The 45-year-old trumpet player has a commanding presence that feels like everything he creates is exactly where it belongs.

"That's what I'm talking about," Marsalis told the audience, after the orchestra finished their performance of "Naima." "That's why we built this concert hall, to let it out," he said with a flourish, clad in a double-breasted suit the color of sand. Marsalis shared jazz lore about Coltrane with the crowd, referring to him as "Trane," in a sentimental

manner that was unrehearsed and intimate. "We're starting a whole movement redefining American greatness through swing," he said, addressing the orchestra's mission in the continuum of contemporary jazz, following the thread of tradition.

During the performance's final song, Marsalis strolled to the front of the stage while keeping time. He wailed on his own rendition of "Africa," his brow furrowed as he blew his horn, taking the audience

"Blood On the Fields," an epic composition about American slavery, rich with subtext about historical African American culture. He has scored music for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, for the New York City Ballet and for award-winning, modern-dance choreographer Twyla Tharp at the American Ballet Theater. His discography is dizzying, including more than 40 albums for Sony Classical and Columbia Jazz that have garnered him nine Grammy awards, both in jazz and classical

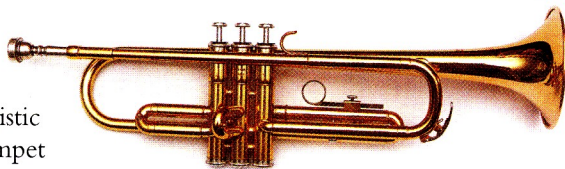
categories. Marsalis, who signed with Blue Note Records in 2003, makes music on a massive scale, such as 1999's "All Rise," a sweeping piece for big band, gospel choir and orchestra. But he also makes intimate music, such as his most recent release, 2005's "Live at the House of Tribes" with his sextet.

Goines met Marsalis in the 1960s when they attended the same New Orleans kindergarten, three years before the boys picked up instruments. "As a trumpeter, he is one of the only people in modern times who can depict the actual mood he is in through his instrument," Goines says, describing Marsalis as a Renaissance man. "If he wants to create the sound of turmoil, there's a certain sound he uses on his instrument. He takes things that occur in everyday life, and they become a part of his whole way of playing."

### Life of a Jazz Man

Marsalis was born in New Orleans to a family steeped in the art of jazz. (His older brother Branford is also a Grammy award-winning saxophonist.)

**He has a commanding presence that feels like everything he creates is exactly where it belongs.**



there and back on the band's Coltrane expedition.

Marsalis is, by default, a natural leader—he knows when to step up and when to step back and let others shine, in jazz and in life, which is why U.S. News & World Report named him one of "America's Best Leaders in 2006."

But first, he is a musician—the first musician to win the Pulitzer Prize, awarded in 1997 for his work