



WYNTON MARSALIS, Artistic Director
ADRIAN ELLIS, Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 24, 2010

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15 HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR 15TH ANNUAL *ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON*

**HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND COMPETITION & FESTIVAL IN NEW YORK CITY
MAY 8-10, 2010**

**JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER CELEBRATES 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF
*ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON***

WINNERS OF COMMUNITY BAND CATEGORY AND WRITING CONTEST CHOSEN

Albany High School, *Albany, CA*
Rio Americano High School, *Sacramento, CA*
Dillard Center for the Arts, *Fort Lauderdale, FL*
New World School of the Arts, *Miami, FL*
The Lovett School, *Atlanta, GA*
Foxboro High School, *Foxboro, MA*
King Philip Regional High School, *Wrentham, MA*
F. H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, *New York, NY*
Plano Senior High School, *Plano, TX*
Carroll Senior High School, *Southlake, TX*
Edmonds-Woodway High School, *Edmonds, WA*
Garfield High School, *Seattle, WA*
Roosevelt High School, *Seattle, WA*
Eau Claire Memorial High School, *Eau Claire, WI*
Wauwatosa East High School, *Wauwatosa, WI*

Winner of Community Band Category:

Tucson Jazz Institute, *Tucson, AZ*

Winners of Annual Writing Contest:

First Place: Katie Johnston, Eau Claire Memorial High School, *Eau Claire, WI*

Second Place: Jack Chelgren, Edmonds-Woodway High School, *Edmonds, WA*

Third Place: Rachel M. Cantrell, West Ranch High School, *Stevenson Ranch, CA*

Who/What:

Jazz at Lincoln Center announces the **15 finalist bands and winning community band** for its prestigious **15th Annual *Essentially Ellington*** High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival. The bands will compete and participate in workshops, jam sessions, and more, during a three-day **Competition & Festival** in New York City. The three top-placing bands perform with Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, Wynton Marsalis, as guest soloist, followed by a performance by the 15-piece Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra – whose members serve as mentors for the finalist bands throughout the weekend. The Festival's finale is an awards ceremony honoring outstanding soloists, sections and the top three bands. The Competition & Festival is the culmination of the annual *Essentially Ellington* High School Jazz Band Program (*EE*), which also includes regional festivals, curriculum resources, a summer Band Director Academy, monthly newsletters, and more.

Judges: WYNTON MARSALIS, DAVID BERGER, TED BUEHRER,
JIMMY HEATH, and RODNEY WHITAKER

In-School Clinicians: WALTER BLANDING, RONALD CARTER, VINCENT GARDNER, WYCLIFFE GORDON, DANA HALL, SHERMAN IRBY, LOREN SCHOENBERG, and REGINALD THOMAS

Mentors: members of the JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA

Jazz at Lincoln Center also announces the winners of the annual ***Essentially Ellington* Writing Contest**. **Katie Johnston**, who wrote the winning short story, "No Words Needed," will receive a trip to New York City to attend the Competition & Festival where her piece will be shared and printed in the Festival's playbill. First, second, and third place winners will also receive a collection of prizes - including a certificate, recordings, literature, subscription to a jazz publication, Jazz at Lincoln Center merchandise, and new charts for their school band directors. The submissions were reviewed by Jazz at Lincoln Center staff and special guest judge Robert G. O'Meally, Founding Director of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University and Zora Neale Hurston Professor for English and Comparative Literature.

To celebrate the **15th anniversary** of *EE*, Jazz at Lincoln Center has launched a national search to reconnect with its community and adding new program initiatives:

- The winner of the *EE* Community Band category will play in exhibition and attend all activities during the annual Competition & Festival.
- A short story component was added to *EE*'s annual Writing Contest
- A fifth regional festival at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana will take place April 24, 2010.
- Jazz at Lincoln Center continues to support the promotion of screening events featuring the acclaimed documentary CHOPS that follows a finalist band through their *EE* experience. Visit chopsthemovie.com for more information.
- Students, band directors, parents, and general fans are encouraged to share their experiences and favorite stories via an online survey to reflect and document the

impact of the program. Responses will be compiled and presented during the Competition & Festival, May 8-10, 2010.

- Visit jalc.org/ee15 to take the survey, open until March 15, and for more information on all 15th anniversary initiatives.

When/Where:

Competition & Festival: May 8-10 at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Final Concert: May 10 at Avery Fisher Hall, 7:30pm

How:

Free tickets for each Competition Part will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis, one hour before the start of each concert on May 9 and May 10.

Tickets for the Concert and Awards Ceremony are \$20 or \$25 and **available now** at the Avery Fisher Hall Box Office, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Box Office, by calling CenterCharge at 212-721-6500 or at jalc.org.

For more information or a schedule of events, visit: jalc.org/essentiallyellington.

Background/Statistics:

Throughout March and April, Jazz at Lincoln Center will send, free of charge, a professional musician to each of the 15 finalist and winning community band schools to lead an intensive day-long workshop of rehearsals, lessons and master classes. The free clinics are part of the rich 15-year history of this unique music education program, which has **reached more than 300,000 students in more than 3,000 high schools** across all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Australia and American schools abroad. *Essentially Ellington* has produced and distributed more than **90,000 copies of 86 previously unavailable scores** and **207 finalist bands have traveled to New York City to participate in the annual Competition & Festival.**

- This year Jazz at Lincoln Center distributed more than **9,600 newly transcribed scores**, reference recordings and additional educational materials.
- While the music of Duke Ellington continues to be central to *Essentially Ellington*, in 2008, Jazz at Lincoln Center expanded *Essentially Ellington* repertoire to include other seminal big band composers beginning with “The King” Benny Carter. This season’s repertoire features the music of Mary Lou Williams in conjunction with the centennial celebration of her birth (May 8, 1910) including arrangements that she wrote for the Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman Orchestras. This year’s repertoire includes compositions by Duke Ellington, “Feet Bone,” “Lady Mac;” by Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, “After All;” and by Mary Lou Williams, “New Musical Express,” “Roll ‘Em,” and “Walkin’ and Swingin’.”
- This year **1,550 high schools** in the United States, Canada, and American schools in Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, and Switzerland received *Essentially Ellington* materials.
- **96 bands entered** the competition by submitting a recorded performance of three compositions.
- The entries were evaluated in a blind screening by jazz education experts RONALD CARTER, CHRIS CRENSHAW, TED NASH, and LOREN SCHOENBERG.
- **15 finalists and one community band** were selected.

- Alfred Publishing is the commercial distributor of the *Essentially Ellington* print music library. View the 2010 *EE* titles and the entire JALC print music catalog at alfred.com/jalc.

Quotes:

"It is extremely gratifying to see the results of the seeds we sowed 15 years ago when we started *Essentially Ellington*. The improvement in the quality of the bands down through the years attests to the artistic substance of Duke Ellington's music. The enthusiasm and dedication of students, families, band directors, judges, and alumni testify to the timeless American values that define this competition and festival. I'm looking forward to hearing this year's finalists; it is my favorite time of year."

Wynton Marsalis, Artistic Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center

"This is an exciting time for *Essentially Ellington* as we celebrate our 15 years – honoring Mary Lou Williams in her centennial year, welcoming the winner of the Community Band category back to the festival, reaching out to find program alumni through a national search and survey, broadening our writing contest and adding a new regional festival in Louisiana – it all expands the breadth and reach of our mission. As we announce this year's 15 finalists we see both familiar and new schools – and look forward to welcoming the students, teachers, and parents to the House of Swing in May."

Erika Floreska, Director of Education, Jazz at Lincoln Center

Contact:

Bridget Wilson
Associate • Public Relations
Phone 212-258-9868
Email bwilson@jalc.org

Sponsorship:

Founding leadership support for the *Essentially Ellington* High School Jazz Band Program is provided by The Jack and Susan Rudin Educational and Scholarship Fund. Major support is provided by the Surdna Foundation, The Irene Diamond Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the United States Congress.

Additional support is provided by Alfred and Gail Engelberg, the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, The Heckscher Foundation for Children, The Charles Evans Hughes Memorial Foundation, The Mericos Foundation, The New York Times Company Foundation, and other generous funders.

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