

JALC Radio: Essentially Ellington 09 Air (From '08 Event), version 1.1

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**Essentially Ellington
JALC Season 16
Program #31, Airdate 4/30/09**

1) Music: Ellington

1a) Vox: Garfield Boy

"It's exciting every year because there are new bands, new competition and it's just great to see the bands that are out here and always have a great time."

2) Vox: Medfield girl

"It's so welcoming, like just walking down the stairs, and everyone's screaming. It's a nice environment, and I feel it's a good place to learn."

3) Vox: Clarence Acox:

"We're getting ready to go through what I call the gauntlet of love, when you come down the stairs and everybody cheers and makes the kids feel very very special. It's a very exciting time for us."

4) Sfx: Garfield cheers

5) Vox: Medfield girl

"We got the pieces in November and we've been working on them ever since. It's been a long haul, but definitely worth it."

6) Vox: 2nd Medfield girl:

"It's exciting it's a reality now, we've been working for it so long."

7) Pierce:

THE ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL -- THE INSISTENTLY SWINGING HEART OF JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION -- SPRANG TO LIFE FIFTEEN YEARS AGO. IT WAS DESIGNED TO PLACE PROFESSIONAL QUALITY ARRANGEMENTS ONTO THE MUSIC STANDS OF HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BANDS.

BEGINNING WITH SIX ELLINGTON CHARTS DISTRIBUTED TO HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE NEW YORK CITY AREA DURING THE 1995-96 SCHOOL YEAR, THE PROGRAM HAS EXPANDED TO SCHOOLS ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES, CANADA AND ABROAD.

AND NOW, EIGHTY TWO CHARTS, AND ALMOST THREE-HUNDRED-THOUSAND STUDENTS LATER, THE BUDS NURTURED BY "ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON" BLOOM EACH

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MAY: AFTER A LONG WINTER "IN THE SHED" AND COMPETITION BY DEMO RECORDINGS, THE TOP FIFTEEN BANDS MAKE THE JOURNEY TO NEW YORK CITY, ITCHING TO SHOW THEIR STUFF.

AND HERE AT JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER, WE GET PRETTY EXCITED ABOUT IT TOO. EDUCATION ASSOCIATE AMELIA STANLEY.

8) Vox: Amelia Stanley

"Essentially Ellington is the program that made me want to work for Jazz at Lincoln Center. It's really inspiring. It brings in kids from across the country and really puts them together in a big love fest of jazz. They collaborate they chat they hang out, they jam and they also get a chance to work with the greatest artists in the industry. It's one of the most unique and amazing music education programs in the world."

9) Pierce:

FROM THE ROSE THEATER, A JOYOUS GATHERING OF CREATIVE, YOUNG PLAYERS WHO ARE MAKING JAZZ IN HIGH SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY -- IN OUR COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL -- "ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON."

IT IS JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE.

10) Garfield warming up

11) Vox: Clarence Acox

"All right, We're ready to roll!"

12) Vox: Clarence Acox

"I'm Clarence Acox from Garfield high school in Seattle Washington. I'm the band director here and we're very happy to be here. It' never gets old. We come all the time and we just love it. It's the highlight of the year for us. It's one hell of an experience. There's no other festival on earth like it EE and you can quote me on that."

13) Vox: Matthew Long Middleton

"Is it a busy time?"

14) Vox: Clarence Acox

"Oh, it's busy, but it's a good busy. That's the general idea, you want to keep young people busy all the time. It's perfect for us, it works within everything we're doing."

15) Pierce:

EACH YEAR, THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA RECORDS SIX TUNES BY DUKE ELLINGTON AND OTHER SEMINAL BIG BAND COMPOSERS AND ARRANGERS. THESE

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ARE SENT OUT WITH WRITTEN ARRANGEMENTS AND THE ORIGINAL RECORDINGS TO ABOUT 1,500 HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BANDS.

WYNTON MARSALIS SAYS: ALL THE ELEMENTS OF JAZZ ARE THERE: HOW TO SWING, HOW TO PLAY WITH AN ENSEMBLE, HOW TO EXPRESS YOUR OWN VOICE.”

EACH BAND CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE CURRICULUM AT ANY LEVEL THEY WANT TO. SOME JUST WORK ON THE MUSIC. OTHERS RECORD THEIR PERFORMANCES AND SUBMIT THEM FOR AN EXPERT CRITIQUE FROM OUR SCREENERS,

AND THEN SOME TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL. IN 2008, 82 BANDS VIED TO COMPETE ONSTAGE AT ROSE HALL. 15 WERE CHOSEN TO COME TO NEW YORK IN MAY. WHEN THEY ARRIVED EACH PLAYER HAD A MEMBER OF THE JAZZ LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA ASSIGNED AS A MENTOR.

16) Vox: Joanna Massey

"Each guy in the band approaches it differently, but they are a mentor in every sense of the word for the entire weekend.

17) Pierce:

JOANNA MASSEY DIRECTS ‘ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON’

18) Vox: Joanna Massey

"So they may get questions about brush technique from a drummer or what jazz club the kids should hit later on in the night. it really runs the gamut.

They're there to help shape the bands performance. they're not there to change anything or to correct anything. They're there to add their final say. and in addition to really help shape what's the band's doing musically. They're also there as emotional support and kind of the love factor of just really supporting these kids and being their cheerleader...”

19) Pierce:

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA MEMBERS AND OTHER INSTRUCTORS TRAVEL TO THE COMPETING HIGH SCHOOLS DURING THE YEAR TO WORK WITH THE YOUNG PLAYERS. RON CARTER, THE VETERAN JAZZ EDUCATOR (NOT THE BASSIST) WAS THE CLINICIAN FOR SEATTLE’S GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL -- AND HE MET UP WITH THEM AGAIN AS THEIR MENTOR AT ROSE HALL. THE BAND WAS SQUEEZING IN ONE MORE REHEARSAL BEFORE GOING ONSTAGE.

20) Ron Carter interacting with Garfield**21) Pierce:**

GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS DIRECTOR CLARENCE ACOX HAVE BATTLED IT OUT ON THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER STAGE NINE TIMES, OFTEN PLACING IN THE TOP THREE. IN 2008 THEY TOOK SECOND PLACE.

22) Vox: Clarence Acox

"Thank you very much. We are Garfield High School from Seattle Washington. And I want to say we are very, very happy to be here today. We are going to open up with a Duke Ellington Classic. This is "In a Mellowtone. It' starts off with Ben Hamadji on piano, Riley Mulherica on trumpet, Carl Majeau on Saxophone. Zubin Henslaw on trumpet, and Robert Strothers on alto saxophone...on In a Mellowtone."

23) Music: In a Mellowtone 6:16**24) Vox: Clarence Acox**

"Thank you!" "In a Mellowtone." At this time we'd like to do Blue Serge and it features Tomo Berry on trumpet, Jake Lindy on trombone, Jonas Meyers on piano, and Paul Wagner on tenor saxophone. "Blue Serge."

25) Music: Blue Serge 4:03**26) Pierce:**

DUKE ELLINGTON'S "BLUE SERGE," THE GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND FROM SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. BLUE SERGE WAS NEW TO THE ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON REPERTOIRE IN 2008, AS WAS THE FINAL PIECE IN GARFIELD'S SET. "JAM-A-DITTY."

27) Vox: Joanna Massey

"Wynton was concerned...it's a very very difficult piece."

28) Pierce:

JOANNA MASSEY

29) Vox: Joanna Massey

"We have a category every year called virtuosic and those are some of the most difficult pieces, and so we each pick, if one, only one from that category. Wynton and I had some back and forth and I felt, Jam a Ditty...let's do it, let's give it to them...it's a challenge, it's very difficult...it has a quartet, a small group out front that's playing some back and forth with the band,...it's classical in its writing very difficult melodic lines, and lots back forth between the quartet, then with the rest of the band as well. So we put it out there. it was a little bit of a gamble. And the bands stepped up to the challenge. it was so great to see."

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30) Pierce:

FROM THE STAGE OF THE ROSE THEATER, THE GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND WITH DUKE ELLINGTON'S "JAM-A-DITTY."

31) Music: Jam a Ditty 3:00

31A) Pierce:

"JAM-A-DITTY." THE GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND FROM SEATTLE WASHINGTON, -- SECOND PLACE WINNERS IN THE 13TH ANNUAL ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL. THEY WERE LED BY CLARENCE ACOX.

32) Sfx: Rose Theater Amb

33) Pierce:

NEXT UP FROM SUN PRAIRIE-- (IN THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF WISCONSIN) -- IS SUN PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE ONE. THEY'VE MADE OUR FINALS FOUR TIMES, AND HAVE EVEN TOURED IN GERMANY. TO KICK OFF **THEIR** SET, SUN PRARIE REACHED DEEP INTO THE ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON ARCHIVE.

34) Vox: Joanna Massey

"They had decided to play Rocka Bye River, which is a fairly obscure title in the EE library...//

35) Pierce:

AGAIN, JOANNA MASSEY

36) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...It was published ten years ago and not picked up by a lot of bands...so it was wonderful to hear that it has a very different feel than a lot of the other tunes. I think hearing their programming as well as ~~the skill with~~ how they played it really, really caught the ear of the judges for sure."

37) Sfx: music starts

38) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...It's a groove piece, it has a really nice groove to it, the rhythm section was really in the pocket. Our judges are always listening to the rhythm section. I would say that's one of the foundations. When the rhythm section is really in the groove, it drives the rest of the band. With our top bands and with Sun Prairie the strength of the rhythm section was definitely outstanding.

39) Pierce:

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LED BY BAND DIRECTOR STEVEN SVEUM <SVEE-um) SUN PRAIRIE TAKES THE STAGE WITH "ROCKABYE RIVER."

40) Music: Rockabye River 2:47

41) Vox: Director

"Thank you, that featured Jacob Sveum on the trumpet, and Michael Dante on the Alto Saxophone. We're going to next feature Jacob once again on the trumpet, Greta Saganski on the piano, Trey Titus on the trombone, and Michael Dante on the tenor. This is "Blue Serge."

42) Music: Blue Serge 3:39

43) Vox: Director

"Thank you we're going to conclude our performance today, by performing "The Mooche." This will feature Ben Acton on the banjo, Ryan Carlson Michael Dante on the clarinet. Kevin Jefferson on the trombone, and Tray Titus also on the trombone. Thanks to Jazz at Lincoln Center. To keep this thing growing and going for over 10 years is absolutely amazing and helps us very much. I appreciate that long haul for what you're able to do."

44) Music: The Mooche 4:38

45) Pierce:

DUKE ELLINGTON'S "THE MOOCHE," CAPPING THE SET BY SUN PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL IN THE 2008 ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL.

IT'S JUST A TASTE OF THE REMARKABLE JAZZ BEING COOKED UP IN HIGH SCHOOL BAND ROOMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THIS IS A TRIBUTE TO THE SKILL AND DETERMINATION OF THE STUDENTS, THE DRIVE AND INGENUITY OF THEIR BAND DIRECTORS, AND THE INITIATIVE AND SUPPORT OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

46) Vox: Clarence Acox:

"It's almost a massive operation, we're very very fortunate to have a parent group that is really on top of things. They're very enthusiastic and they find out how much money we need, and they go out and get it."

47) Pierce:

YOU CAN HEAR THE MUSIC OF ALL FIFTEEN OF THE BANDS THAT CAME TO NEW YORK FOR ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON -- AT J A L C DOT ORG. WHILE YOU'RE THERE, CHECK OUT ALL OUR JAZZ EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND BRING HOME THE SWING.

IT'S ALL JUST A CLICK AWAY AT J A L C DOT ORG --

OUR FIRST PLACE WINNERS COMING UP IN JUST A MOMENT, IT'S JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

48) Music :60 break w/ music Vintage Duke**49) Vox: Joanna Massey**

"There are so many things that the judges are listening for..."

50) Pierce:

JOANNA MASSEY, JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER'S ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

51) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...soulfulness, improvisation, technique, musicality interpretation, // and I think the bands that really make the music their own are the ones that succeed the most."

52) Pierce:

IN 2008, OUR JUDGES WERE DAVID BERGER, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA, WHO TRANSCRIBED THE ELLINGTON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BANDS, JALC ARTISTIC DIRECTOR WYNTON MARSALIS, PIANIST AND EDUCATOR REGGIE THOMAS, AND SAXOPHONIST AND CLARINETIST BOB WILBER.

53) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...it's serious business back in the judges room. there's not a lot joking going on... Wynton leads the judges, but what's great about our judging panel is that they are very different. they're different in what they here, they're diff in their own experiences and musical backgrounds, and so the four of them really create a team that's bringing really varied viewpoints. So it's kind of tense back there I have to say, and this year was no exception. You're rooting for a band. you believe firmly in something, and someone else may hear something different. Wynton always say that the experience of judging at the festival is kind of like trying to pick between your own kids."

54) Pierce:

AT THE 2008 ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON FESTIVAL, THE BATTLE FOR THE TOP SPOT WAS INCREDIBLY CLOSE; THE COMPETITION BETWEEN SEATTLE'S TWO STAR HIGH SCHOOLS – GARFIELD WHICH WE HEARD EARLIER AND ROOSEVELT -- IS NOT YOUR ORDINARY RAH-RAH RIVALRY.THERE'S SOMETHING UNUSUAL HAPPENING IN WASHINGTON STATE. IN 2008, FIVE WASHINGTON BANDS MADE THE FINALS -- THE MOST EVER FROM ONE STATE. THE OLD JOKE SAYS "IT'S IN THE WATER," MEANING THE FREQUENT RAINS THAT KEEPS THE STUDENTS INSIDE TO PRACTICE. BUT JOANNA MASSEY SEES SOMETHING ELSE AT PLAY.

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55) Massey:

"... I don't think it's the water I think it's the classrooms. I think it's the connections between the directors, and I think it's the lack of isolation.

We hear in a lot of other parts of the country, there might be a great director doing something in his school or her school, but they're isolated. they're kind of doing it in a vacuum. What's unique about Washington is that directors are attending other director's rehearsals, students in other schools are getting together for jam sessions and playing together. So that interconnection that lack of isolation is naturally driving everyone to be stronger. There's a connection and a sharing of ideas that while competitive, because there's certainly some competition there, it's a healthy competition and it's raising the level of all the players in all the schools and I think that's unique to Washington, -- and it's something that we would love to see replicated elsewhere.

56) Pierce: THE ROOSEVELT JAZZ BAND BEGINS THEIR FIRST PLACE SET IN HIGH GEAR. THIS IS DUKE ELLINGTON'S "BALLAD FROM THE ASPHALT JUNGLE."

57) Music: Asphalt Jungle 5:40

58) Music: Blue Serge 5:11

59) Pierce:

"BLUE SERGE," AND BEFORE THAT, "BALLAD OF THE ASPHALT JUNGLE."

THE ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND DIRECTED BY SCOTT BROWN.

BROWN IS A TROMBONIST WHO SOMEHOW FINDS TIME TO REMAIN ACTIVE AS A PLAYER IN THE SEATTLE JAZZ SCENE. SAXOPHONIST SHERMAN IRBY MENTORED ROOSEVELT A FEW YEARS BACK.

60) Vox: Sherman Irby

"He has a great rapport with the kids, and he's a great trombonist. So, they get a chance to hear him play, and so they can strive to play as well as he does. They're very fortunate to have that."

61) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...one of Scott's strengths for sure is taking a band and raising the level of ensemble playing, sensitivity and listening, which are so key to playing in a band, playing in an ensemble and particularly playing the music of Duke Ellington

62) Pierce:

AGAIN, JOANNA MASSEY.

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63) Vox: Joanna Massey

"...Duke wrote the music for the musicians in his band, and the nuance and level of detail within each of the individual parts, and sections in Ellington's music is unlike anyone else's. -- and Scott is really a master of teaching that. the phrasing the dynamics, the articulation, the tone. all those pieces that go into making an ensemble sound the way that Ellington's ensemble did. giving a unique sound to their band. It always has that. you always can hear the Roosevelt sound and that comes from a lot of work, blood, sweat and tears together as an ensemble to perfect your listening to each other and to perfect the group sound.

64) Pierce:

65) Music: Jam a Ditty 3:54

66) Pierce:

DUKE ELLINGTON'S "JAM A DITTY" -- ROOSEVELT HIGH OUR FIRST PLACE WINNERS --DIRECTED BY SCOTT BROWN, CLOSING OUT OUR PROGRAM OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 13TH ANNUAL ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON COMPETITION AND FESTIVAL IN PERFORMANCE AT THE ROSE THEATER IN THE HOUSE OF SWING.

WE ARE PROUD OF ALL THESE FINALISTS. AND ESPECIALLY THOSE BANDS THAT HAVE COME BACK, CONTINUING TO TAKE THE MUSIC TO A HIGHER LEVEL.

ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON IS OPEN TO ALL HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BANDS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. YOU CAN FIND DETAILS AND HEAR OUR PAST AND CURRENT FINALISTS AT J A L C (DOT) ORG.

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RADIO IS PRODUCED AT MURRAY STREET BY DAVID GOREN, WHO WROTE THIS SHOW, WITH STEPHEN RATHE AND ALEXA LIM..

THE MUSIC RECORDINGS WERE MADE BY JEFF JONES AT THE XM/EFFANEL STUDIO IN ROSE HALL. ADDITIONAL RECORDING AT NPR WEST BY LEO DELAGULA. THANKS TO JOANNA MASSEY, ERIKA FLORESKA AND MATTHEW LONG MIDDLETON.

CAT HENRY SUPERVISES OUR RECORDINGS AND BROADCASTS. WYNTON MARSALIS IS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR. AND ADRIAN ELLIS IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

I'M WENDELL PIERCE. THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US.