THE 2021 GALA INNOVATION + SOUL highlights the innovation of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra by featuring original compositions and arrangements. Each composition and each arrangement embodies our theme of Soul + Innovation. We affirm the rich orchestral tradition of Jazz, but also show how we can continue it, highlighting the massive library of new compositions and arrangements created by an array of very talented musicians.
ORDER OF PERFORMANCE

2/3's Adventure
Carlos Henriquez

Graah
Willie Nelson, arranged by Christopher Crenshaw

Yes Sir, That's My Baby
Lou Donaldson and Gus Kahn, arranged by Sherman Irby

Bougie Raq
Sean Mason, arranged by Victor Goines

Like a Snake FROM SPACES
Wynton Marsalis

Lyndon B. Johnson (*The American Promise*) FROM PRESIDENTIAL SUITE
Ted Nash

Let's Call the Whole Thing Off
George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin, arranged by Vincent Gardner

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA
WITH WYNTON MARALIS + SPECIAL GUESTS

REEDS
Sherman Irby, alto and sopranino saxophones, flute, piccolo, clarinet
Ted Nash, alto and soprano saxophones, flute, clarinet
Walter Blanding, tenor saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet
Victor Goines, tenor and soprano saxophones, clarinet, bass clarinet
Paul Nedzela, baritone and soprano saxophones, clarinet

RHYTHM SECTION
Dan Nimmer, piano
Carlos Henriquez – The Mandel Family Chair in honor of Kathleen B. Mandel, bass
Obed Calvaire, drums

SPECIAL GUESTS
Dee Dee Bridgewater, host and vocals
Anna Deavere Smith, speaker
Charles “Lil Buck” Riley, dance
Veronica Swift, vocals
Pedrito Martinez, congas and vocals
Michael Rodriguez, trumpet
Sean Mason, piano

SPECIAL APPEARANCE
President Bill Clinton, speaker

TRUMPETS
Ryan Kisor
Kenny Rampton
Marcus Printup
Wynton Marsalis

TROMBONES
Vincent Gardner
Christopher Crenshaw – The Golkin Family Chair
Elliot Mason
Charles Phillips is the Managing Partner and Co-Founder at Recognize, a technology investment and transformation company with over $1 billion in assets.

He is the former CEO and Chairman of Infor, the third largest business software applications company in the world with operations in 190 countries and 17,000 employees. During his 9-year tenure the company transformed into the first industry cloud company with over 70 million subscribers on Amazon AWS. Infor was sold in 2020 for a $13B enterprise value exit.

Prior to Infor, Phillips was President of Oracle Corporation and a member of its Board of Directors. During his eight-year tenure, the company tripled in size and market capitalization and successfully acquired 65 companies.

Before Oracle, Phillips was a Managing Director at Morgan Stanley in the Technology Group and served on its Board of Directors and was an Institutional Investor All Star for 10 consecutive years.

Phillips served as a Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps in the 2nd Battalion, 10th Marines at Camp Lejeune in a line of three generations of military service.

Phillips holds a B.S. in Computer Science from the U.S. Air Force Academy, a J.D. from New York Law School, and an MBA from Hampton University and is a member of the Georgia State Bar Association.

Phillips serves on the Boards of ViacomCBS Corporation, American Express, the Apollo Theater, and the Council of Foreign Relations. Phillips also served on President Obama’s Economic Recovery Board and board of the Federal Reserve of New York. He is also the co-founder and Co-Chairman of the Black Economic Alliance, a policy organization focused on economic growth in Black communities and co-founder of OneTen, a job training network for Black workers and large employers.

Karen C. Phillips has an extensive background in the non-profit community through her career and voluntary contributions. She has worked at universities in Virginia and New York and managed the Instructor of Trainers Program at the national headquarters of the Girl Scouts of the USA.

Karen serves on the board of the Phillips Charitable Organization (“PCO”) and is also one of its founding members. PCO is a non-profit organization that provides timely financial aid for single parents, disadvantaged engineering students and wounded veterans.

She also serves on the board of the American Ballet Theater (“ABT”), and is involved in Dance Theatre of Harlem and Habitat for Humanity. She is also a founding member of Black Economic Alliance and currently sits on the advisory board.

Previously, Karen has served on the boards of the following organizations: Loyola School (New York City), The Browning School (New York City), Schools of the Sacred Heart (San Francisco), Counseling in Schools (New York City), Grace Cathedral (San Francisco), and SFJazz (San Francisco).

Karen received her BA in Sociology from Grinnell College, Iowa, and her MS in Counseling and Development from Long Island University, New York.

The Phillips have one son, Chaz.
Jon Batiste is a globally celebrated musician, educator, bandleader and television personality whose musical skill, artistic vision and exuberant charisma make him a triple threat with unlimited potential. Recognized for his originality, jaw-dropping talent and dapper sense of style, Jon transitions from commanding the piano with virtuosic skill to soulfully crooning to wailing on the “harmonaboard” (a kind of harmonica and keyboard) to curating unique “social music” experiences all over the world. Born into a long lineage of Louisiana musicians, Batiste eventually went on to receive both his undergraduate and masters degrees in piano from the Juilliard School and formed his band, Stay Human.

The Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree balances a demanding performance schedule—which often includes his signature, impromptu ‘love riot’ street parades—with his role as bandleader with The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, Artistic Director At Large of the National Jazz Museum in Harlem, public speaking engagements, master classes and occasional acting gigs. He played himself on the HBO series Treme and most recently appeared in director Spike Lee’s Red Hook Summer.

The New York City-based musician has released several self produced independent albums, including MY N.Y. which was recorded entirely on the street corners and subways of NYC and Jazz is Now featuring his singular approach to jazz standards and jazz composition in the classic piano trio format. Jon’s only label partnership to date occurred when he partnered with Razor & Tie, the small Greenwich Village based record label, for his 2013 release entitled Social Music which went on to spend over a month atop the both Billboard Jazz charts and iTunes Jazz charts as the #1 jazz album in the world. Most recently, he released a new album with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra led by Wynton Marsalis entitled The Music of John Lewis. It features material written by John Lewis, best known as the pianist and musical director of the Modern Jazz Quartet.

Jon is also a coveted artist brand ambassador–currently featured in ad campaigns for Chase Bank, the Apple Watch, Lincoln Continental and numerous fashion brands including Polo Ralph Lauren Black Label, Frye, Kate Spade, Jack Spade Barneys, Nordstrom and H&M. He has worked with, among others, Bruce Weber and Annie Leibowitz and his personal style has been profiled in numerous fashion publications including GQ, Vanity Fair, CR Fashion Book, Esquire, Interview, and Vogue.

He is strongly committed to the education and mentoring of young musicians. He has led his own Social Music Residency and Mentoring Program sponsored by Chase, as well as hundreds of master classes throughout the world. He has also led several cultural exchanges beginning in 2006 when he led a cultural exchange program with the Netherlands Trust bringing students from the USA and Holland to perform with him at both The Royal Concertgebouw and Carnegie Hall.

For all of his work, both as a pianist and as a humanitarian, Jon has received numerous awards, such as the inaugural Benny Golson Award from the city of Philadelphia and the American Jazz Museum Lifetime Achievement Award. He is also the recipient of the Gordon Parks Award and received an honorary degree from Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island this last May.
Dee Dee Bridgewater is a daring performer of great depth whose singing talents have earned her three Grammy Awards as well as a Tony Award. In addition, her commanding personality made her a natural for hosting the award-winning National Public Radio syndicated radio show JazzSet with Dee Dee Bridgewater from 2001 to 2014.

Bridgewater was born Denise Eileen Garrett in Memphis, Tennessee, and raised in Flint, Michigan, in a music-filled home. Her mother introduced her to Ella Fitzgerald's music, which became an inspiration to Bridgewater throughout her career, and her father was a jazz trumpeter who taught music at Memphis' famed Manassas High School. While attending the University of Illinois, she joined the University of Illinois jazz band for a U.S. State Department tour of the Soviet Union in 1969. In 1970, she wed her first husband, trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater. They moved to New York City where she found her first professional gig with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra as lead vocalist. Bridgewater’s career then took off and she soon performed and recorded with some of the giants of the music: Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, and Clark Terry. In 1974, she recorded her first album as a leader, Afro Blue.

Bridgewater was also drawn to musical theater. Her portrayal of Glinda the Good Witch in the Broadway musical The Wiz garnered her a Tony Award in 1975. When the international touring company of Sophisticated Ladies (in which she was the female lead performer) ended in Paris, France, Bridgewater decided to stay. During her time in Paris from 1986 to 2007, she starred in Stephen Stahl’s musical Lady Day in Paris and London (for which she earned a Lawrence Olivier Award nomination), and continued to perform in musicals such as Black Ballad (with Archie Shepp) and Cabaret (being the first black actress to star as Sally Bowles) while concurrently performing and recording her jazz material.

The vocalist has created a diverse collection of recordings, including tribute albums to Horace Silver, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Kurt Weill; an album of French love songs, J’ai Deux Amours, spurred by a Kennedy Center Valentine’s Day concert; and an album born out of Bridgewater’s search for her African ancestry, Red Earth, recorded in Bamako, Mali, and featuring Malian, U.S., and European musicians. Bridgewater has produced all her recordings since 1993 and has had her own label, DDB Records, since 2006.

Anna Deavere Smith is an actress, playwright, teacher, and author. She is credited with creating a new form of theater. Her most recent original work, Notes from the Field, looks at the vulnerability of youth, the criminal justice system, and contemporary activism. The New York Times named the stage version among The Best Theater of 2016 and TIME Magazine called it one of the Top 10 Plays of the Year. HBO premiered the film version in February 2018. It was nominated for a Critics’ Choice Award.

By looking at current events from multiple points of view, Smith’s theater combines the journalistic technique of interviewing her subjects with the art of interpreting their words through performance. Plays include Fires In the Mirror, Twilight: Los Angeles, House Arrest, and Let Me Down Easy. Twilight: Los Angeles was nominated for two Tony Awards. Fires in the Mirror was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize.

In 2012, President Barack Obama awarded Smith the National Endowment for the Humanities Medal. She is a recipient of the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. Other awards include the prestigious 2013 Dorothy and Lilian Gish Prize for achievement in the arts, the George Polk Career Award in Journalism, and the Ridenhour Courage Award. In 2015, she was named the Jefferson Lecturer, the nation’s highest honor in the humanities. She has been given several honorary degrees including those from Yale, Juilliard, University of Pennsylvania, Smith College, and Spelman.

Smith is also a television and film actress. Credits include such shows as Shonda Rhimes’s new “untitled project,” ABC’s series For the People and Blackish. She also co-starred on Showtime’s Nurse Jackie and was featured on the long running series, The West Wing. Films include The American President, Rachel Getting Married, Philadelphia, Dave, Rent, and Human Stain.

Smith is a Full Professor at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts where she founded the former Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue.
LIL BUCK

International phenomenon Lil Buck began jookin’—a street dance that originated in Memphis—at age 13 alongside mentors Marico Flake and Daniel Price. After receiving early hip-hop training from Teran Garry and ballet training on scholarship at the New Ballet Ensemble, he performed and choreographed until relocating to Los Angeles in 2009.

Named one of Dance Magazine’s “25 to Watch,” his collaboration with Spike Jonze and Yo-Yo Ma performing “The Swan” went viral in 2011. Since then, he has collaborated with a broad spectrum of artists including JR, Damian Woetzel, the New York City Ballet, Madonna, Benjamin Millepied and Spike Lee. Buck is an avid arts education advocate, a recipient of the WSJ Innovator Award and recently launched a capsule collection with Versace.

In 2016 he co-founded with Jon Boogz Movement Art Is, an organization which seeks to inspire and change the world while elevating artistic, educational and social impact of dance.

VERONICA SWIFT

Still relatively early in her professional career, Swift has already developed an impressive repertoire. Raised in Charlottesville, Virginia by her parents—pianist Hod O’Brien and singer Stephanie Nakasian—she recorded her first album, Veronica’s House of Jazz, when she was only nine years old. In addition to performing with her parents, Swift sang and played trumpet with Dave Adams’ The Young Razzcals Jazz Project, which afforded her the opportunity to perform at the Telluride Jazz Festival.

After releasing her sophomore album, It’s Great to Be Alive, when she was only 11 years old, Swift continued performing at major venues such as Dizzy’s Club at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City. After high school, she attended the University of Miami, where she earned her bachelor’s degree in 2016.

Before college graduation, Swift competed in the 2015 Thelonious Monk International Vocal Competition, in which she placed second. Two years later, she moved to New York City to further her career and has since performed and/or toured with a host of jazz luminaries, including trumpeters Wynton Marsalis and Chris Botti, and pianists Benny Green, Michael Feinstein and Emmet Cohen.
Pedro Pablo “Pedrito” Martinez was born in Havana, Cuba, Sept. 12, 1973, in the Cayo Hueso neighborhood of Old Havana, and began his musical career at the age of 11. Since settling in New York City in the fall of 1998, Pedrito has recorded or performed with Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, Paquito D’Rivera, Chucho Valdés, Bruce Springsteen, Eddie Palmieri, Dave Matthews, Jackson Browne, Elton John, James Taylor and Sting, and has contributed to well over 100 albums. A consummate master of Afro-Cuban folkloric music and the batá drum, he is also the world’s first-call rumbero—playing, singing, and dancing with dozens of Cuban rumba groups and contributing to, or appearing in, several important films, including Calle 54 (2000) and Chico and Rita (2010).

Pedrito was a founding member of the highly successful, Afro-Cuban/Afro-Beat band, Yerba Buena, with which he recorded two albums and toured the world in the mid- to late-’90s.

Mr. Martinez’s career as a leader began in 2005 with the formation in NYC of the The Pedrito Martinez Group. The group’s first, self-titled, studio album was released October, 2013, was nominated for a Grammy, and was chosen among NPR’s Favorite Albums of 2013 and The Boston Globe Critic’s “Top Ten Albums of 2013.” Habana Dreams, their second album, recorded largely in Cuba, was released in June 10, 2016. Guests include Ruben Blades, Isaac Delgado, Wynton Marsalis, Angelique Kidjo. In February of 2019, Pedrito and Cuban pianist, Alfredo Rodriguez, released a duo album called Duologue to critical acclaim and was selected by NPR for a First Listen. Quincy Jones was Executive Producer. In July 2019, Pedrito and Eric Clapton, recorded a newly arranged version of Clapton’s song, “My Father’s Eyes,” for a new Pedrito Martinez album called Acertijos (Riddles), to be released in early 2021. And on September 22, Pedrito and Clapton performed the song together at Clapton’s Crossroads Guitar Festival in Dallas, Texas. On March 12, 2020 at the Beacon Theater in NYC, Pedrito had the honor of performing as special guest, with Dave Matthews, Jackson Browne, and The Tedeschi Trucks Band, for a benefit concert called Love Rocks NYC. In June of 2020, Pedrito began releasing singles that were recorded for album, due in early 2021, Acertijos—starting with “Yo Si Quiero,” an original by Isaac Delgado Jr, Mitchell Delgado, and Pedrito, followed by “My Father’s Eyes,” a duet with Eric Clapton.

Michael Rodriguez has performed and toured with Clark Terry, Bobby Watson, Quincy Jones, Joe Lovano, Toshiko Akiyoshi Orchestra, pop icon Jessica Simpson, the Chico O’Farrill Orchestra, Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra, Jon Faddis and the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, Carla Bley Band and Quintet, the Clayton Brothers, Kenny Baron’s Quintet, Conrad Herwig’s Latin Side Projects, Harry Connick Jr., Bob Mintzer, Eddie Palmieri Septet, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, and the Smithsonian Jazz Orchestra, among others. He is also a member of Charlie Haden’s Liberation Music Orchestra.

In December 2003, Rodriguez recorded on Charlie Haden’s Grammy Award-winning album, Land of the Sun, featuring Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Joe Lovano. He has also recorded on the Liberation Music Orchestra’s latest album, Not in Our Name. In 2008, Rodriguez became a member of the Gonzalo Rubalcaba Quintet and recorded Avatar under the Blue Note Label. He and his brother, pianist Robert Rodriguez, have recorded four albums together: Introducing the Rodriguez Brothers, Conversations, Mood Swing, and their most recent album, Impromtu, which was nominated for a Grammy for Best Latin Jazz Album 2015. In March 2013, Rodriguez released his debut solo recording under the CrissCross label entitled Reverence.

Rodriguez studied at the New World School of the Arts in Miami, Florida, at the University of Miami, and at New School University in New York where he received his B.A. He frequently travels the globe as a clinician.
As a seventeen-year-old, Sean Mason won first place in the Loonis McGlohon Young Jazz Artist Competition sponsored by the Jazz Arts Initiative (JAI) and the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte. A four-year veteran of the JAI Youth Ensembles and Workshops program, he was already a devotee of Oscar Peterson, Charlie Parker, Bill Evans, and Erroll Garner, and had made his way into Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, and Keith Jarrett.

He was a part of the JAI All Star Jazz Youth Ensemble and was the featured jazz pianist before a concert by trombonist and composer Delfeayo Marsalis at the Loonis McGlohon Theater in Charlotte’s Spirit Square. Mason was also the organist and pianist at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church.

But then it came time for him to choose a college to attend, and for a college to choose him.

From the director of the Miles Davis Jazz Studies Program at UNCG, Mason received the news that he was not only admitted to the UNCG School of Music, but also had received the Alyse Smith Cooper Music Scholarship. He was overjoyed, because it was his dream to continue playing music and earn a college degree.

**SPECIAL APPEARANCE**

**President Bill Clinton**

*Founder and Chairman of the Board, Clinton Foundation*

*42nd President of the United States*

William Jefferson Clinton, the first Democratic president in six decades to be elected twice, led the United States to the longest economic expansion in American history, including the creation of more than 22 million jobs.

After leaving the White House, President Clinton established the Clinton Foundation in order to continue working on the causes he cared about. Since its founding, the Foundation has endeavored to help build more resilient communities by developing and implementing programs that improve people’s health, strengthen local economies, and protect the environment.

In addition to his Foundation work, President Clinton served as the top United Nations envoy for the Indian Ocean tsunami recovery effort, the UN Special Envoy to Haiti—and has partnered numerous times with Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush to support relief efforts for communities devastated by natural disasters.

President Clinton was born on August 19, 1946, in Hope, Arkansas. He and his wife, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, have one daughter, Chelsea, and three grandchildren, Charlotte, Aidan and Jasper. They live in Chappaqua, New York.
WYNTON MARSALIS (Music Director and Trumpet, JLCO) is the Managing and Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center which Mr. Marsalis co-founded in 1989. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1961, Mr. Marsalis began his classical training on trumpet at age 12 and soon began playing in local bands of diverse genres. He entered The Juilliard School at age 17 and joined Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Mr. 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 GRAMMY®s in the same year; he repeated this feat in 1984. Mr. Marsalis’ rich body of compositions includes Sweet Release; Jazz: Six Syncopated Movements; Jump Start and Jazz; Citi Movement/Griot New York; At the Octofoon Balls; In This House, On This Morning, and Big Train. In 1997, Mr. 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. In 1999, he released eight new recordings in his unprecedented Swinging into the 21st series, and premiered several new compositions, including the ballet Them Twos, for a 1999 collaboration with the New York City Ballet. That same year, he premiered the monumental work All Rise, commissioned and performed by the New York Philharmonic along with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and the Morgan State University Choir.

Sony Classical released All Rise on CD in 2002. Recorded on September 14 and 15, 2001 in Los Angeles in the tense days following 9/11, All Rise features the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra along with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Morgan State University Choir, the Paul Smith Singers and the Northridge Singers. In 2004, Marsalis released The Magic Hour, his first of six albums on Blue Note Records. He followed up his Blue Note debut with Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson, the companion soundtrack recording to Ken Burns’ PBS documentary of the great African-American boxer, Wynton Marsalis: Live at The House Of Tribes (2005); From the Plantation to the Penitentiary (2007), Two Men with the Blues, featuring Willie Nelson (2008); He and She (2009); and Here We Go Again featuring Willie Nelson, Wynton Marsalis and Norah Jones (2011). To mark the 200th Anniversary of Harlem’s historical Abyssinian Baptist Church in 2008, Mr. Marsalis composed a full mass for choir and jazz orchestra. The piece premiered at Jazz at Lincoln Center and followed with performances at the celebrated church. Mr. Marsalis composed his second symphony, Blues Symphony, which was premiered in 2009 by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and performed in 2010 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In 2010, Marsalis premiered his third symphony, Swing Symphony, a Co-Commission by the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and The Barbican Centre. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis performed the piece with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Berlin and the New York Philharmonic in New York City in 2010 and with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Los Angeles in 2011. Mr. Marsalis is also an internationally respected teacher and spokesman for music education, and has received honorary doctorates from dozens of universities and colleges throughout the U.S. He conducts educational programs for students of all ages and hosts the popular Jazz for Young Peoples concerts produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center. Mr. Marsalis is also writer and host of the video series Marsalis on Music and the radio series Making the Music. He has also written six books: Sweet Swing Blues on the Road, in collaboration with photographer Frank Stewart; Jazz in the Bittersweet Blues of Life, with Carl Vigeland; To a Young Musician: Letters from the Road, with Selwyn Seyfu Hinds; Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!, illustrated by Paul Rogers published in 2012; and Moving to Higher Ground: How Jazz Can Change Your Life, with Geoffrey C. Ward, published by Random House in 2008. In October 2005, Candlewick Press released Marsalis’ Jazz ABZ: An A to Z Collection of Jazz Portraits, 26 poems celebrating jazz greats, illustrated by poster artist Paul Rogers. In 2001, Mr. Marsalis was appointed Messenger of Peace by Mr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations; he has also been designated cultural ambassador to the United States of America by the U.S. State Department through their CultureConnect program. In 2009, Mr. Marsalis was awarded France’s Legion of Honor, the highest honor bestowed by the French government. Mr. Marsalis serves on former Lieutenant Governor Landrieu’s National Advisory Board for Culture, Recreation and Tourism, a national advisory board to guide the Lieutenant Governor’s administration’s plans to rebuild Louisiana’s tourism and cultural economies. He has also been named to the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, former New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin’s initiative to help rebuild New Orleans culturally, socially, economically, and uniquely for every citizen. Mr. Marsalis was instrumental in the Higher Ground Hurricane Relief concert, produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center, which raised over $3 million for the Higher Ground Relief Fund to benefit the musicians, music industry related enterprises, and other individuals and entities from the areas in Greater New Orleans who were impacted by Hurricane Katrina. He led the effort to construct Jazz at Lincoln Center’s new home, Frederick P. Rose Hall, opened in October 2004, the first education, performance, and broadcast facility devoted to jazz.

WALTER BLANDING (Tenor Saxophone, JLCO) was born into a musical family on August 14, 1971 in Cleveland, Ohio and began playing the saxophone at age six. In 1981, he moved with his family to New York City, by age 16; he was performing regularly with his parents at the Village Gate. Blanding attended LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and continued his studies at the New School for Social Research where he earned a B.F.A. in 2005. His 1991 debut release, Tough Young Tenors, was acclaimed as one of the best jazz albums of the year, and his artistry began to impress listeners and critics alike. He has been a member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra since 1998 and has
performed, toured and/or recorded with his own groups and with such renowned artists as the Cab Calloway Orchestra, Roy Hargrove, Hilton Ruiz, Count Basie Orchestra, Illinois Jacquet Big Band, Wycliffe Gordon, Marcus Roberts, Wynton Marsalis Quintet, Isaac Hayes, and many others. Blanding lived in Israel for four years and had a major impact on the music scene while touring the country with his own ensemble and with U.S. artists such as Louis Hayes, Eric Reed, Vanessa Rubin, and others invited to perform there. He taught music in several Israeli schools and eventually opened his own private school in Tel Aviv. During this period, Newsweek International called him a “Jazz Ambassador to Israel.”

**OBED CALVAIRE (Drums, JLCO)** A native of Miami and of Haitian descent, Calvaire is a graduate with both a master and bachelor degree of music from one of America’s premiere private music conservatories in the nation, Manhattan School of Music. He received his bachelor’s degree in 2003, completing his master’s in 2005. Calvaire has performed and recorded with artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Seal, Eddie Palmeri, Vanessa Williams, Dave Holland, David Foster, Mary J. Blige, Stefon Harris, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Peter Cincotti, Music Soulchild, Nellie McKay, Yellow Jackets, Joshua Redman, Steve Turre, and Lizz Wright to name a few. He has also performed with large ensembles such as the Village Vanguard Orchestra, Metropole Orchestra, The Clayton Brothers, The Mingus Big Band, Roy Hargrove big band, and the Bob Mintzer Big Band. Currently, Obed Calvaire can be found playing with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Dave Holland, Sean Jones, Yosvany Terry, among others.

**CHRISTOPHER CRENSHAW (Trombone, JLCO)** The Golkin Family Chair was born in Augusta, Georgia on December 20, 1982. A product of Thomson High School, Valdosta State University, and The Juilliard School, Crenshaw started playing piano at three years old and started playing trombone at eleven years old. He grew up playing keyboard with his father Casper in the gospel quartet from Thomson, Georgia, the Echoes of Joy, and Mama’s Boys, an instrumental group of high school friends and cousins. Crenshaw has been with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis since 2006. He has transcribed music and written arrangements for two Tony Award nominated musicals, After Midnight, and Shuffle Along. Crenshaw appears on numerous albums including Marcus Printup’s Ballads All Night, Wynton Marsalis and Eric Clapton Play the Blues, Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis’ Live in Cuba, Big Band Holidays, The Abyssinian Mass, and Ted Nash’s The Presidential Suite. In 2012 he composed “God’s Trombones,” a spiritually focused work which was premiered by the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater.

**VINCENT GARDNER (Trombone, JLCO)** was born in Chicago in 1972 and was raised in Hampton, Virginia. After singing, playing piano, violin, saxophone, and French horn at an early age, he decided on the trombone at age 12. He attended Florida A&M University and the University of North Florida. He soon caught the ear of Mercer Ellington, who hired Gardner for his first professional job. He moved to Brooklyn, New York after graduating from college, completed a world tour with Lauryn Hill in 2000, then joined the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra that same year. Gardner has served as Instructor at The Juilliard School, as Visiting Instructor at Florida State University and Michigan State University, and as Adjunct Instructor at The New School. He has contributed many arrangements to the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and other ensembles. In 2009 he was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center to write The Jesse B. Semple Suite, a 60-minute suite inspired by the short stories of Langston Hughes. Gardner is featured on a number of notable recordings and has recorded five CDs as a leader for Steeplechase Records. He has performed with The Duke Ellington Orchestra, Bobby McFerrin, Harry Connick, Jr., The Saturday Night Live Band, Chaka Khan, A Tribe Called Quest, and many others.

**VICTOR GOINES (Tenor Saxophone, JLCO)** is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana. He has been a member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and the Wynton Marsalis Septet since 1993, he has toured throughout the world and has recorded over 20 albums. As a leader, Goines has recorded seven albums including his latest releases, Pastels of Ballads and Blues (2007) and Love Dance (2007) on Criss Cross Records. A gifted composer, Goines has more than 50 original works to his credit. He has recorded and/or performed with many noted jazz and popular artists including Ahmad Jamal, Ruth Brown, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Ray Charles, Bob Dylan, Dizzy Gillespie, Lenny Kravitz, Branford Marsalis, Ellis Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Willie Nelson, Marcus Roberts, Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, and a host of others. Currently, he is the Director of Jazz Studies and Professor of Music at Northwestern University. He received a Bachelor of Music from Loyola University in New Orleans in 1984, and a Master of Music from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond in 1990.

**CARLOS HENRIQUEZ (Bass, JLCO)** The Mandel Family Chair was born in 1970 in the Bronx, New York. He studied music at a young age, played guitar through junior high school and took up the bass while enrolled in The Juilliard School’s Music Advancement Program. He entered LaGuardia High School of Music & Arts and Performing Arts and was involved with the LaGuardia Concert Jazz Ensemble which went on to win first place in Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival in 1996. In 1998, swiftly after high school, Henriquez joined the Wynton Marsalis Septet and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. He has toured the world and is featured on more than 25 albums. Henriquez has performed with artists including Chucho Valdes, Paco De Lucia, Tito Puente, the Marsalis Family, Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan, Stevie Wonder, Lenny Kravitz, Marc Anthony, and many others. He has been a member of the music faculty at Northwestern University School of Music since 2008 and was music director of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra’s cultural exchange with the Cuban Institute of Music with Chucho Valdes in 2010.

**SHERMAN IRBY (Alto Saxophone, JLCO)** was born and raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and began playing music at the age of 12. During high school he had the opportunity to play and record with
RYAN KISOR (Trumpet, JLCO) was born on April 12, 1973 in Sioux City, Iowa, and began playing trumpet at age four. In 1990, he won first prize at the Thelonious Monk Trumpet Competition. Kisor enrolled in Manhattan School of Music in 1991 where he studied with trumpeter Lew Soloff. He has performed and/or recorded with the Mingus Big Band, the Gil Evans Orchestra, Horace Silver, Gerry Mulligan and Charlie Haden’s Liberation Music Orchestra, the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, the Philip Morris Jazz All-Stars, and others. In addition to being an active sideman, Kisor has recorded several albums as a leader including Battle Cry (1997), The Usual Suspects (1998), and Point of Arrival (2000).

ELLIOIT MASON (Trombone, JLCO) was born in England in 1977 and at age four began trumpet lessons with his father. At age seven, he switched his focus from trumpet to trombone. At 11 years old, he was performing professionally, concentrating on jazz and improvisation. By 16, Mason received a full tuition scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston. After graduating, he moved to New York City. Mason is on the jazz faculties as jazz trombone professor at New York University and the Juilliard School. Mason serves as a clinician and leads workshops and master classes worldwide. He is endorsed by B.A.C. musical instruments and plays his own co-designed custom line of trombones. Mason has performed with the Count Basie Orchestra, the Mingus Big Band, the Maria Schneider Orchestra, and the Maynard Ferguson Big Bop Nouveau, Chick Corea, Kenny Garrett, Bobby Hutcherson, Ahmad Jamal, Randy Brecker, Carl Fontana. Along with being a member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra since 2006, Mason also co-leads the Mason Brothers Quintet with his brother Brad. In 2016, the Mason Brothers released their second album Efflorescence.

TED NASH (Alto Saxophone, JLCO) was born into a musical family in Los Angeles, California. His father, Dick Nash, and uncle, the late Ted Nash, were well known jazz and studio musicians. A GRAMMY® award-winning artist, Nash has enjoyed an extraordinary career as a performer, conductor, composer, arranger and educator. He has an uncanny ability to mix freedom with substance, blues with intellect, and risk-taking with clarity. He is co-founder of the New York-based Jazz Composers Collective, an innovative musician-run, non-profit dedicated to presenting the original works of composers pushing the boundaries of their self-expression. Presidential Suite: Eight Variations on Freedom released in 2016, is Nash’s most significant work. Inspired by great political speeches of the 20th century dealing with the theme of freedom, the album is rich with social and political awareness. In 2017, Nash was awarded a GRAMMY® in the Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album category for Presidential Suite: Eight Variations on Freedom and a GRAMMY® in the Best Instrumental Composition category for his work, “Spoken At Midnight.” The Washington Post said of Nash: “Neither a poster boy for the avant-garde nor a blenders-on-traditionalist, Nash is simply his own man.”

PAUL NEDZELA (Baritone Saxophone, JLCO) has become one of today’s top baritone saxophone players. He has played with many renowned artists and ensembles including Wess Anderson, George Benson, The Birdland Big Band, Bill Charlap, Chick Corea, Paquito D’Rivera, Michael Feinstein, Benny Golson, Wyckliffe Gordon, Roy Haynes, Christian McBride, Eric Reed, Dianne Reeves, Herlin Riley, Maria Schneider, Frank Sinatra Jr, The Temptations, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Reginald Veal, and Max Weinberg. Nedzela has performed in Twyla Tharp’s Broadway show, “Come Fly Away,” and in major festivals around the world. He has studied with some of the foremost baritone saxophonists in the world including Joe Temperley, Gary Smulyan, and Roger Rosenberg. Nedzela graduated with honors from McGill University in Montreal with a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics in 2006. A recipient of the Samuel L. Jackson Scholarship Award, he continued his musical studies at The Juilliard School and graduated with a Master of Music in 2008.

DAN NIMMER (Piano, JLCO) was born in 1982 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. With prodigious technique and an innate sense of swing, his playing often recalls that of his own heroes, specifically Oscar Peterson, Wynton Kelly, Erroll Garner, and Art Tatum. As a young man, Nimmer’s family inherited a piano and he started playing by ear. He studied classical piano and eventually became interested in jazz. At the same time, he began playing gigs around Milwaukee. Upon graduation from high school, Nimmer left Milwaukee to study music at Northern Illinois University. He quickly became one of Chicago’s busiest pianists. After working consistently in Chicago, he moved to New York where he immediately emerged on the New York scene. Within a year of moving to New York, Nimmer became a member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and the Wynton Marsalis Quintet. He has worked with Norah Jones, Willie Nelson, Dianne Reeves, George Benson, Frank Wess, Clark Terry, Tom Jones, Benny Golson, Lewis Nash, Peter Washington, Ed Thigpen, Wess “Warmdaddy” Anderson, Fareed Haque, and many more. He has appeared on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, The Late Show with David Letterman, The View, The Kennedy Center
Kenny Rampton (Trumpet, JLCO) joined the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in 2010. In addition, he leads his own groups, and he performs and records other projects. Rampton has performed with The Mingus Big Band, The Mingus Orchestra, The Ray Charles Orchestra, legendary jazz drummer Panama Francis and The Savoy Sultans, The Jimmy McGriff Quartet, The Mingus Dynasty, George Gruntz’ Concert Jazz Band, and The Manhattan Jazz Orchestra under the direction of Dave Matthews. In 2010, Rampton performed with The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra at the Edinburgh International Festival as the featured soloist on the Miles Davis/Gil Evans classic version of Porgy and Bess. Since 2010, he has been the trumpet voice on “Sesame Street.” In recent years, Rampton has written and arranged the music for two plays directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson: Paradise Blue, written by award-winning playwright Dominique Morisseau in 2015 and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom written by August Wilson in 2016. Rampton produced Tynan Davis’ album Tynan in 2016. His Broadway credits include Anything Goes (lead/solo trumpet), Finian’s Rainbow, The Wiz, Chicago: The Musical, In The Heights, Hair, The Producers, The Color Purple, and Young Frankenstein.
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