

# Wynton Marsalis

Wynton Marsalis is an internationally acclaimed musician, composer, bandleader, educator and a leading advocate of American culture. He is the world's first jazz artist to perform and compose across the full jazz spectrum from its New Orleans roots to bebop to modern jazz.

By creating and performing an expansive range of brilliant new music for quartets to big bands, chamber music ensembles to symphony orchestras, tap dance to ballet, Wynton has expanded the vocabulary for jazz and created a vital body of work that places him among the world's finest musicians and composers.

Wynton was born in New Orleans, Louisiana to Ellis and Dolores Marsalis, the second of six sons. At age 17 Wynton became the youngest musician ever to be admitted to Tanglewood's Berkshire Music Center. Despite his youth, he was awarded the school's prestigious Harvey Shapiro Award for outstanding brass student. Wynton moved to New York City to attend Juilliard in 1979. When he began to pick up gigs around town, the grapevine began to buzz. In 1980 Wynton seized the opportunity to join the Jazz Messengers to study under master drummer and bandleader [Art Blakey](#). It was from Blakey that Wynton acquired his concept for bandleading and for bringing intensity to each and every performance.

Wynton's love of the music of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and others drove him to pursue a career in classical music as well. He recorded the [Haydn, Hummel and Leopold Mozart trumpet concertos](#) at age 20. His debut recording received glorious reviews and won the Grammy Award® for "Best Classical Soloist with an Orchestra." Marsalis went on to record [10 additional classical records](#), all to critical acclaim. Famed classical trumpeter Maurice André praised Wynton as "potentially the greatest trumpeter of all time."

To date Wynton has produced over [80 records](#) which have sold over seven million copies worldwide including three Gold Records. Wynton Marsalis has won nine Grammy Awards® in grand style. In 1983 he became the only artist ever to win [Grammy Awards®](#) for both jazz and classical records; and he repeated the distinction by winning jazz and classical Grammys® again in 1984. Today Wynton is the only artist ever to win Grammy Awards® in five consecutive years (1983-1987).

In 1987 Wynton Marsalis co-founded a jazz program at Lincoln Center. In July 1996, due to its significant success, [Jazz at Lincoln Center](#) was installed as new constituent of Lincoln Center, equal in stature with the New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera, and New York City Ballet – a historic moment for jazz as an art form and for Lincoln Center as a cultural institution. Wynton Marsalis has devoted his life to uplifting populations worldwide with the egalitarian spirit of jazz. And while his body of work is enough to fill two lifetimes, Wynton continues to work tirelessly to contribute even more

to our world's cultural landscape. It has been said that he is an artist for whom greatness is not just possible, but inevitable. The most extraordinary dimension of Wynton Marsalis, however, is not his accomplishments but his character. It is the lesser-known part of this man who finds endless ways to give of himself.