



WYNTON MARSALIS, Artistic Director  
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## **15 HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL *ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON***

**HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND COMPETITION & FESTIVAL IN NEW YORK CITY  
MAY 8-10, 2009**

*Agoura High School, Agoura Hills, CA*

*Calabasas High School, Calabasas, CA*

*Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, Los Angeles, CA*

*New World School of the Arts, Miami, FL*

*North Scott High School, Eldridge, IA*

*Foxboro High School, Foxboro, MA*

*Wellesley High School, Wellesley, MA*

*Kingston High School, Kingston, NY*

*State College Area High School, State College, PA*

*Newport High School, Bellevue, WA*

*Garfield High School, Seattle, WA*

*Roosevelt High School, Seattle, WA*

*Beloit Memorial High School, Beloit, WI*

*Eau Claire Memorial High School, Eau Claire, WI*

*Badger Union High School, Lake Geneva, WI*

### **Winner of Conglomerate Band Workshop:**

*American Music Program Jazz Orchestra, Portland, OR*

### **Who/What:**

Jazz at Lincoln Center announces the **15 finalist bands** for its prestigious **14<sup>th</sup> Annual *Essentially Ellington*** High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival. The bands will compete and participate in workshops, jam sessions and more, during the three-day competition and festival in New York City. The 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 – all of whom serve as mentors for the finalist bands throughout the weekend. The **festival** culminates with 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, REGINALD THOMAS, GERALD WILSON

*In-School Clinicians:* RON CARTER, JUSTIN DICIOCCIO, VINCENT GARDNER, WYCLIFFE GORDON, DANA HALL, LOREN SCHOENBERG, TERELL STAFFORD and RODNEY WHITAKER

*Mentors:* members of the JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA

### **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, 7:30 p.m.

### **How:**

**Free tickets** for the Competition can be obtained at the Jazz at Lincoln Center Box Office, Broadway at 60<sup>th</sup> Street beginning on **April 20**. 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 [www.jalc.org](http://www.jalc.org).

For more information or a schedule of events, visit: [www.EssentiallyEllington.org](http://www.EssentiallyEllington.org)

For the *Essentially Ellington* Alumni MySpace, visit: <http://profile.myspace.com/eealumni>

### **Background/Statistics:**

Throughout March and April, Jazz at Lincoln Center will send, free of charge, a professional musician to each of the 15 finalist schools to lead an intensive day-long workshop of rehearsals, lessons and master classes. The free clinics are part of the rich 14-year history of this unique music education program, which has **reached more than 275,000 students in more than 4,500 high schools** across all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Australia and American schools abroad. *Essentially Ellington* has produced and distributed more than **80,000 copies of 80 previously unavailable scores** and **192 finalist bands have come to New York City to participate in the annual Competition & Festival.**

- This year Jazz at Lincoln Center distributed more than **8,700 newly transcribed Duke Ellington and Benny Carter scores**, reference recordings and additional educational materials. The 2008-09 *Essentially Ellington* season is the first time in the history of the program that Carter's works includes in the program repertoire. This year's repertoire includes by Duke Ellington: "Jeep's Blues," "Moon Over Cuba" and "Perdido" and by Benny Carter: "Symphony in Riffs," "Again and Again" and "Movin' Uptown."
- These materials were **sent to 1,450 high schools** in the United States, Canada and American schools in Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland and Taiwan.
- **107 bands entered** the competition by submitting a recorded performance of three Ellington compositions.
- The entries were evaluated in a blind screening by jazz education experts RON CARTER and LOREN SCHOENBERG.
- **15 finalists** were selected.

**Quotes:**

"It is extremely gratifying to see the results of the seeds we sowed nearly 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**

"We've seen students' lives transformed through the *Essentially Ellington* experience and we are excited this year to see it expand to a larger group of schools. The inclusion of music by the great Benny Carter alongside of Duke Ellington has added an exciting new dimension showcasing not only another pillar of jazz composition, but also that Ellington's music is the ideal stepping stone to performing at a higher level."

**Erika Floreska, Director of Education, Jazz at Lincoln Center**

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**Sponsorship:**

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