

Wednesdays with Wynton on Instagram Live

Episode 10 – June 3, 2020

00:01 Madelyn Gardner: Hi everyone, thanks for tuning in to this Q&A with Wynton Marsalis today, Wednesdays with Wynton. Wynton will be joining us in just a second, so if you wanna go ahead and start asking your questions in the comments below. I'm gonna go ahead and not take any more of your time here and we're gonna let Wynton join us right now. We've obviously a lot to cover and talk about today.

[pause]

00:30 MG: Wynton will be joining us in just one moment. Thanks for tuning in. Here we go.

[pause]

00:43 MG: Hi, Wynton.

00:44 Wynton Marsalis: Alright, what you talking about, Maddie? How you doing?

00:47 MG: I'm doing all right. I thought maybe you can kick things off here by just talking a little bit about... Obviously, you're in New York, where many of the protests are happening right outside your door. What are you seeing, what are you hearing and just kinda kick it off.

01:01 WM: Well, I was out yesterday. I was also looking, talking with protesters and I applaud the use of civil unrest to put pressure on our politics and also to show that our citizenry is engaged with the democratic process. And every form of activism is needed to effect change. We need people rioting, we need people... Intellectuals, we need people planning, we need people in the legal system, we need people in corporations are doing what they can do to effect change in our business practices. So it's such a large problem in our nation and in the world, but in this specific case, as our nation, that no one group of people or one method or tactic would be successful, and it will not be resolved at any one time. It has to be ongoing.

01:47 WM: We need reform, this is a period where we're gonna need reforms in general, it's been coming. We need it in our religious institutions, in our businesses, of course, and in our civic, and in our cultural life, and in our practices. More in our cultural life because that's the field that I'm engaged in and that I'm most qualified to speak on. So I think in our cultural life, we need to look at the stuff that we ingest. The type of trash that's said about black people all the time, by whoever it is, and it comes from all races. Everybody loves it, everybody participates in as you all know. I've been against it for many, many years, using the N-word and all these kind of stuff and pejorative statements against people. And all of this stuff is a part of one thing. Needless to say, the political structure that we live in and the strength and resilience of the confederate narrative. I mean, it's

strong. But the two don't have to go against each other. They're one and the same. The minstrel show was popular during the Confederacy.

02:46 WM: It's just that a lot of the power is focused around maintaining a foot on black folk's neck. We know that. We live in this country, we step over homeless people every day and a majority of them, at least in New York, are black people. We have seen the gentrification of the city. It's all over the country in the places I've gone. We see it, we live with it. This moment is good to focus attention on it, but this moment is gonna be engulfed with many other moments that are coming upon us. Mainly poverty. Poverty and people not having enough to eat will come before a philosophical issue, before a social structural issue. If you can't eat, you're gonna do what you can to eat and feed your family. This wealth disparity and the inability, and the problem is so large, and there's so many components to it, it doesn't matter where you put your hand, you're gonna touch it.

03:56 WM: And one thing I wanna say in concluding what I have to say in opening the questions, is that it does not matter what you say. There's gonna be pros and cons to every step of this very charged issue. But the point I liked to make before this time when I was arguing with people, and I've engaged in this type of argument since I was literally 11 or 12 years old, is... Let's not be philosophical. Let's look around and see what's going on. We have created the country we want, so we can argue philosophically all we want, and we can go back and forth, but is education segregated? And let's not also forget that we tend to look at it as white versus black, but don't forget about a large mass of white populist that is exploited as hell, not as bad as black people, but they don't have access to agency to deny people stuff.

04:50 WM: One of the great things that you wonder about in the Civil War is, how did the South manage to get that many people to fight for the cause of a group of people for whom slavery was keeping the white people from working? So you in effect are fighting to keep a system in place that will make sure that you don't work. It still remains today. A large portion of the American populist that fights on behalf of segregation and the Confederate narrative. This narrative affects you, you don't even have to look to black folks, it's one that keeps you from enjoying the life you could enjoy. So you never know when people will wake up to the truth of things, and like I was saying, as a citizen, some things are apparent to me, but I'm mainly in the field of culture. It's what I know about. And this is the time that requires us all to use our voices as citizens, but also to use our voice in our lane. Because I spend so much of my life talking and filling up public spaces and arguing with people, I don't feel a greater sense of urgency now. I always feel urgent about it. And that's it.

05:57 WM: Let's also be mindful of the fact that protests are very hard to control. Ralph Abernathy worked with Dr. King, he always said that in the civil rights movement in the '60s, they will go when they were gonna have a protest or rally, they would go to all the pool halls and all of the places that would have people that they didn't want out on the street, who didn't have the civil rights agenda, saying, "Please keep open and if we can buy drinks for people, let us know 'cause we want them to stay in these pool halls, we don't want them out messing our protest up, with their agenda," and we're seeing that in this.

06:31 WM: But I do believe that protests are cathartic, and they've created change when there was

also leadership and focus on political and legal solutions. Don't forget that fighting is about your ability to absorb punches and to deliver yours, and that there is an infrastructure so deep in the soul of our country, and there's some really, really, really bad intentions that are armed and violent. They're being given permission by the leadership of our country to express themselves, and they also have a level of intelligent leadership, not in terms of the upper parts of our government, but think tanks and... There's a lot out here, and everybody who's just out there just to blow off some steam, be ready for what's out there, because this thing is deep, and it's for real, and just saying the slogan or not working on a day, this is not that type of problem that's gonna be solved with those type of things. It's good to do that, I am in favor of it, but laws make a difference.

07:31 WM: Lynching was a past time in America for a long time, but a new system, then at a certain point, people started to get pressed, "Okay, we can't lynch these people." A new system comes in place, it's like this virus. The virus is like this now, but when it comes back, it's not gonna be like this, it's gonna be another thing. So instead of lynching, now it's the legal system that's so corrupt that basically you're thrown in jail at a certain point and you never get out of it.

07:56 WM: We have to continue to fight in every way we can, every reiteration of the Confederate narrative in this kinda nostalgic view of an America. There's always something in the back, Ronald Reagan was gonna take you back to the '50s. Trump is Make America Great Again. It's always something that happened back in the day, that was great. "Oh, we had them on the plantations, everything was..." You know, that's why you see the emergence of the n-word and all these things. It's a re-emergence of some type of idyllic vision of when we really had our foot on people's neck, for real, and we could sell and buy people. Then America was really...

08:29 WM: Look to the future, and the future is in collective creativity and all the values that are in jazz. The future is not in segregation, the group black and white itself are fake terms invented to create this narrative, we know now about the DNA, we know where people come from. The science is in, National Geographic had a article where they had a black and a white twin on the cover and said, "This is what we know about genetics." But always remember something I read in a book about Nazism, I'm trying to remember the name of the book, it said, one sentence was, "Prejudice survives all evidence." That's a fact, doesn't matter what the evidence is, I want to believe this. And we will change it, one day it will be changed. And one day, all the human beings will be able to see with the type of distance that allows us to identify ourselves in a... Figure out how to share resources and not need narratives that force us to denigrate people or treat people...

09:42 WM: We won't need that. I know that I'm not gonna see that, but I believe in it. I believe in it, that it is the future of the world, and I also believe that jazz music has given us some keys of how to attain it. I get asked down through the years, what about something new? I always say the new thing is people are gonna listen to it. So I stand by that. The new thing in jazz, somebody's gonna actually listen to it and check out what the music is saying. But that tribalism feels so good, I just, I don't know. So that was a long riff that I went on for you all. Let me answer any questions, that you... Because we deal with serious subjects don't mean that we have to lose humor, people go to their death sometimes, they're joking, the truth of the situation you're in is what it is.

10:32 MG: Thank you for that, Wynton. I don't wanna take up too much space here, but I'd love to just try to ask you some of the questions in here, and something I thought maybe to kick it off, there's obviously, you've spent your life telling the art of storytelling and protest through music, and you explored greatly and continue to do so including The Ever Fonky Lowdown. If you could maybe talk about that a bit.

10:57 WM: The Ever Fonky Lowdown is a record that we have coming out, and it's really about these times, it's actually strange. Two years ago we premiered it. And it's a game that a man plays. His name is Mr. Game. People mistakenly thought it was President Trump, it's not him, because it starts with the right, but then it goes across to the left. And it just is a man who is playing everybody, so he's a combination of hustler, politician, snake oil salesman, con, pimp, preacher. He just puts all these characters together, and he speaks in rhyme and he sets up a narrative of us against them. And he gets you into that us or them narrative, and then once he gets you into that narrative, he says, we have to do something about them, and then we decide we're gonna destroy them.

11:45 WM: Now, The Ever Fonky Lowdown is all kind of funk grooves and stuff from New Orleans when I was growing up, which I tell everybody I played in a funk band. It's the kind of odd meter music my daddy and them would be playing, James Black, an unbelievable New Orleans composer. It uses their language. If it's one of my deepest regrets is this, at one time I used my father and them's language from the 1960s. He passed away, he heard the piece, but I wanted him to hear it really mix because he would laugh and he'd see how I'm using their themes. But in the end he teaches the people a game. And your game is you have to accept that you're greater than some other people that you mess over them and then it's natural for you to do that, then the people you mess over have to accept your definition of them and sing and dance about on your terms, how great it is that you abuse them. And that's the first half.

12:32 WM: And then in the second half, the public who have gone along with this receive their prizes, and the prizes they receive are all things you can look out into the streets now and see, segregation, battle on the domestic plane, generational conflict or racism. Problems of constantly suing in the litigious way that we deal with each other or constant surveillance of everything you do, every prize that you receive is what we all accept, and we have right now. And the final prize, and it's interesting to me because... In The Ever Fonky Lowdown, my final prize that I'm gonna give you is that you never have to do anything that is not directly pertaining to you.

13:13 WM: And the quote that I use from Abraham Lincoln's speech, not speech, a debate that he had with Mr. Douglas, the very last thing he says... The last word is self-interest. That people believe democracy is not about anything but their own self-interest. So The Ever Fonky Lowdown ends with then Mr. Game comes back and tells us how foolish we are. Because he's playing you. He doesn't have a side that he's playing. He doesn't care whether white, black, whoever. "I'm playing my... I'm making some money. I'm playing a game on you." And then, we conclude, "I know I must fight." I don't tell us how we're gonna fight, but we have to fight, and it's a constant battle.

13:56 WM: And in this country we have a certain dynamics, but, as I travel around the world, I

understood, this is a dynamic that has plagued the world. And a good outside source to read for people is Caesar's Conquest of the Gauls. He breaks it down better than anybody, but... Well, they have toga-wearing Gauls and these are the ones that we kinda like, they'll be in New Orleans like the Creole. And then there are these Gauls, way over here. Boy, when you get to them, they are the wildest people... They're gonna come here and eat everybody's babies, and they're gonna do this... We've got to go destroy them now.

14:26 WM: So The Ever Fonky is very biting, and it has a narrative, and I'm saying exactly... I work on these things for a very long time and I consider a lot of things when I work on them. It's inspired by conversations I have with my little brother, Ellis, who we've called the Oracle for a long time. And all he does is read and study, and he's been doing this his entire life. So, when he tells you or somebody who did actually read the health care bill, he read it. When he tells you stuff, you can check him. And we've gone back and forth on issues for a long time. Not always in agreement on everything, but I've learned a lot from these dialogues with him. Maybe because of the integrity he has about what he pursues. And he lives in Baltimore. He lives in the hood. He's always saying, "Man, all these experts on the hood," [laughter] "They don't... And what about expert on the hood, whose not in the hood, he don't know about it." But he also also says that a person does not have to prove their authenticity to speak. That the quality of their ideas is their authenticity.

15:31 WM: So that's The Ever Fonky, and we putting it out. And everybody worked so hard on it. All my beautiful singers, and... I mean... I don't even know what to say about just the work that they all did on it, Todd, everybody, and the orchestra, of course, they're so dedicated. And you're gonna see a lot of what's in The Ever Fonky is in what's going on right now.

15:53 WM: And it's also related to a piece that I wrote in 1999 called All Rise. But All Rise it was written at the behest of Kurt Masur, who was then the conductor of the New York Philharmonic who grew up in Nazi Germany, and was a paratrooper for the German army. And he said, "Write a piece that brings people together." This was in 1992 or '3, it took me 10 years to develop the skill to write for a symphonic orchestra. I couldn't do it. And he would start teasing me every time I saw him at Lincoln Center, "Are you still afraid to write for the New York Philharmonic, friend? Are you still afraid?" And he would always tell me, when he told me what he wanted me to write on, he said, "I grew up in Nazi Germany, a member of the Hitler Youth." He said, "If you were in Nazi Germany at that time, you were a member of Hitler Youth, because you did not have the right to say something opposite what a group of people were saying. So when you get caught up in this whole kind of group mentality and you got to follow people," he said, "you don't understand how thin the line is between civilization and barbarism. And the thing you don't understand about what was going on then was the type of cheering that went on for that agenda."

17:00 WM: And he was of course a lifelong enemy of that agenda, but he was caught in it. And he made me understand there are many, many engagements around the world. And this, in our country, is we're on the forefront of it, because our cradle is freedom and Mr. Game talks all about democratic freedoms, and what are we willing to pay to ensure those? So on and so forth. So yeah, The Ever Fonky is coming out... It's Ever Fonky. [laughter] It's funky too, it's all the way lowdown.

17:36 MG: I've heard some of it. It's truly fantastic. And another talk about protest music, Black, Brown and Beige, which was the JLCO... Very significant that the JLCO recorded it and re-released it. Can you talk a bit about that significance and that suite?

17:53 WM: Well, you know, Duke Ellington, he was always on the forefront of civil rights. It's just who he was. And you can't do anything in civil rights that Duke didn't do. He fought that battle for so long, he wrote some of the greatest pieces of music ever. And as a person who's in culture, people say, "What can I do to fight against this?" Learn the music of Duke Ellington. Listen to his music. Black, Brown and Beige is a great place to start. He was reviewed terribly for it. Too sophisticated. And when you have a certain level of sophistication, here comes that other level of prejudice and ignorance. And it's in institutions all over the country. And it's good head rubbing liberals. If you don't want to bow your head for them to rub it and tell you, "You okay with me. You're a good boy." Duke did not want his head rubbed. Now all of a sudden, all the friends of the Negro are against our greatest musician. Why? He's too uppity. He's not looking for me to tell him who he is. This still exists today.

18:53 WM: And at this point, of course, we all white, black musicians in the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, a lot of our young musicians play, we've come up under the pen of Duke Ellington. So we speak in the language of Duke. And that is a language that is universal and is so clearly against racism and a violation of rights, human rights, that when you play his music, you are doing something against him. When you listen to him, when you know it, when you understand who he was, when you know the history, and you read his writings. It's in everything. And it's hard to play. So it's an honor for us to play it, and it's an honor for us to play with our younger musicians fantastically as they played. And also, we were under the direction of Chris Crenshaw. So he did a great job working with the scores of Duke and conducting us. And I like old little Sam Chess from Arizona doing that trick with that trombone for making it sound like somebody crying. Go ahead, Sam. [laughter]

19:54 MG: And speaking of Ellington, Duke Ellington I mean, obviously it's why you started Essentially Ellington, and it's still celebrating our 25th year and doing something we've never done before. The first ever virtual international Essentially Ellington Festival June 8th through June 12th next week, if you'd like to speak on that a bit.

20:14 WM: Yeah, we have our bands, we have our alumni lineup. I want you all to join us and be a part of something historic. There's never been anything like this with the depth of intergenerational, interracial people coming together to celebrate an American master that spoke on all aspects of Americana, and Duke's... We have 25 years of alumni. Some of the greatest musicians and people in the world. And we're gonna have Skain's Domain where we're gonna talk about stuff, we're gonna have virtual jam session. I was listening to it today. We sent tapes around with our musicians playing and some of the younger musicians playing. We got some young people that can play around the world. We have five international bands. They're gonna be fantastic for you to hear and meet. I've been judging them, each band takes me like an hour and 20 minutes to write all the comments. If I could get up from here with their space, I might go get one comment sheet, so y'all could see how much work this is. But Todd just made me happy 'cause he told me I could speak my

comments into it. So you know what Mad, you keep people busy. I wanna show you all this, so you can know how seriously we take this.

21:21 MG: How fantastic. And if you're tuning in, Wynton is going to get, and we're talking about the international first ever virtual international Essentially Ellington Festival, a festival, it's a 25 years of celebrating Essentially Ellington, the Jazz Academy Center education team, and the whole organization worked so hard to put this on, to make sure these kids, we call them kids, these high school students, these young adults get their chance to really show off all the hard work, just because we couldn't have it at our hall this year, wanted to make sure that we're really able to highlight them. So what are you showing us, Wynton?

21:55 WM: Okay, this is a judge sheet. And this is a high school, a beautiful high school from Beloit Memorial High School. Okay, this is my judicature, I don't know if y'all could see it. Could you all see the writing on that?

22:10 MG: Oh yeah.

22:10 WM: When you look at this. Let me tell you something, this is a pain in the booty, and there's sheet after sheet like that, where I'm talking to the band directors and explaining what I hear on their tapes about what's wrong, and there are five of us judges, and we're all doing that, and we're all talking. And here's another good page of it, of good handiwork.

22:29 MG: Wow.

22:29 WM: It's everything from who's playing in time, how bass players play, and all this kind of stuff. And the five of us who are judging are gonna be very, very busy doing that. I wanna shout out to my man, Jeff Hamilton, who's not doing it this year. He's having a few little, slight issues with his health, but I love him, I miss him, I miss me and him sitting up laughing, and we're gonna be back in the saddle. But just hearing these young people lifted my spirits up. I'm hearing Beloit, I'm hearing a group of kids from the Bronx, I'm hearing a band in Texas, Agoura Hills out in California, and every year has gotten better. The solos have been better, playing more authentically and they're feeling the vibe of Duke, inventing stuff, making up new things. So yeah, we in Essentially Ellington now and we're gonna prove that we're part of the movement of now by being for real about his music.

23:29 MG: And if you're just tuning in, we're talking about, hopefully you can join us next week, June 8th through June 12th for the first ever international virtual Essentially Ellington Festival. You can head to jazz.org to figure out how to tune in. It's gonna be live streaming on Facebook and a lot of really, really great being able to highlight the next generation of jazz musicians. And talking about the next generation of jazz musicians, are you hearing right now from musicians who are inspired to compose new music as a response to what's happening today?

23:58 WM: I'm not hearing so much from people who are inspired to write new music. As a matter of fact, we're looking over the last year and a half from musicians who were really deeply socially

engaged and we, as a programming team, said it doesn't even matter what their position is on Jazz at Lincoln Center. Let's get them to write some music. We need more people out here, with a kind of civic, and a social rights consciousness that wanna speak with a... That wanna speak on it. I'm sure the young ones... I'm here, we're talking now... I got a couple of musicians called me from Minneapolis. They were out in the protests. We talked two nights ago and we had a long conversation. It was revealing, I just listened, trying to learn from them. And they just said there are a lot of elements at play.

24:49 WM: And the things they said they learned was just how what you see in the media has nothing do with what goes on on the ground. And there's just a level of systemic corruption in all of the systems we deal with. That we as a nation are gonna have to figure out how to attack and as I've said, it's a problem too great for one person or one group of people. It's gonna take the participation of millions of people, and with the participation of those people, we will see changes, but if you think one person is gonna come down here and address corruption in churches, corruption in the voting system, corruption in putting people in the prisons... Look at the work Bryan Stevenson has done, that's one person create a whole movement, it's gonna take many people.

25:35 WM: And my younger people are fired up, I've been teaching long before this moment to them. You see the people of different races, come together. Understand the racial reality in the United States, don't pander to people. We jazz musicians, we've been trying to come together in this country long before any of this. People threatened Benny Goodman's life for putting on a concert. Now, that's a long time ago. But, of everybody, let me know the next time somebody threatens your life and you put your concert on. And they're for real, and not like today where it's like you gonna get to sue somebody. So we have to understand our tradition, let alone the tradition of Louis Armstrong. It goes without saying the type of stuff Duke Ellington went through, and I could tell you stories about stuff Duke dealt with, that I heard from older musicians. And it'll break your heart, but it's part of the legacy of this country.

26:27 WM: So I'll tell a story about it. They were playing a dance somewhere and they got somewhere in Illinois or Indiana, and the people who were at the dance, the rednecks were at the dance, they were mad at the way Duke Ellington was dressed, so they pulled a bunch of pistols out and guns out and they said, "Dance." Okay, well this is Duke Ellington. What is he gonna do? Then they started shooting. What you think he did? Okay, it's not like today where you can put a slogan up and you're revolutionary. He was like, "Okay." He had to handle the moment he was in.

27:06 WM: Like people always tell you as a joke, cats say, if they're actually good, they say, "I'mma show you I'm from the hood." I'm gonna start running. This is not a TV show, it's not a movie. So you think of the great Duke Ellington and the types of various humiliations he had to deal with. And he was also conscious of what it was. So you didn't have a person who was not conscious. But, what he returned with was always something that was uplifting to our humanity while still conscious of what it was. He never turned his back on it, put a smile on it and, "Everything is beautiful, boss." Don't let people put you in the position where you have to turn against people of goodwill, and people who live the same way you are because they don't look or act like you. It's stupid, it's foolish and it's to go back into a tribal past that's not gonna end well for

you, whoever you are. The future is not tribalism. If you're going in that direction, you might think you're gonna get revenge, you're not gonna get it.

28:10 MG: Thank you for that, Wynton, and on that...

28:11 WM: I gotta be for real about it. I gotta be for real about it, I don't care how mad people get. Those tribalists, great, get mad. They've been on me for years about this stuff and I'm okay with it.

28:25 MG: Well, I mean, and on that too, I know you mentioned Bryan Stevenson. We were supposed to, in April, have a show, the JLCL with with Wynton Marsalis special guest Bryan Stevenson. Can you talk a bit about that show that we were supposed to have, and hopefully will have it in the future?

28:44 WM: Equal Justice Initiative, you know what Bryan is about. He's one of the greatest Americans fighting for civil rights. Now these shows are planned years in advance. It's just funny that our whole season this year was about social justice. They have a Fonky Lowdown coming out, Black, Brown and Beige, Benny Goodman's music. As a jazz ambassador, everything in the season was designed to be about these moments we're seeing now. So Bryan, we were gonna sit down. We weren't prompted because there was a protest to bring Bryan, we were already gonna bring him. All of us have looked at him and respected him and have so much love for what he has done to help to make the Constitution, these state constitutions, the judicial process be more fair. And even with all his unbelievable work, to shine a light on lynching and injustice and the fact that it still exists in a different form. Think about how much more work needs to be done, and then think about how much resistance there is to that work, and the intelligence of that resistance.

29:47 WM: So yeah, I had a chance to have a conversation with him the other night, and I mean, he is what he is, he's fighting the good fight. Integrity cannot be bought or sold. He's been doing it. He didn't just get out here last week, he's been out here, and he don't sleep at night. There's no superlatives I can find to talk about this man's vision, his team's vision, the symbols they are putting up, the way they're trying to get us to come to grips with what our history is and has done. And we are a nation of slavery and of subjugation, but we're also a nation of freedom.

30:30 WM: And I always have to take us to remember something and everybody to think about it. Nations whose cradle has nothing to do with freedom, when they beat people, and they kill people, and rape and slaughter and tear up stuff, they don't go back and apologize. Genghis Khan never apologized to... Hitler wasn't going back saying "Man, I'm really sorry I did this." The reason the apologies in the redemptive posture is so important is because we are supposed to be about freedom. Once you say you not about freedom, then you don't have to apologize to anybody. All you have to do is say, "You know what? I'm not really about freedom, I'm about dominating people and taking their stuff. If they can beat me, great, if not, sorry." The bully don't have to apologize. Just wait for the next bully.

31:15 WM: But we have to make a decision who we wanna be as a nation and how do we prize being, and then we no longer have to take people that we have victimized and also make them

guilty. So you put those two things together. You go pull a guy like Gary Tyler off a bus in the 1970s, he's gonna spend his entire adult life in jail because he wasn't guilty of something. You're gonna take a teenager and beat the hell out of him, grown men, then throw him in jail forever and you're not gonna one time say, "What we did was wrong. We are sorry, we regret that we did that." You can't get redemption, you can't get peace and rest in your soul. You can't get that if you don't apologize to yourself for dumb stuff you've done. So think about it.

32:02 MG: Thank you for that, and on that note too, I'm just gonna give it back to Wynton just to wrap things up. And thank you so much, Wynton for taking this time to remind everyone to not only fight now, but commit for the rest of your life to fighting for injustices and for freedom and continue to do that. Thank you everyone for tuning in, we'll be back again next week. I'm going to throw it right back to Wynton. Once again, hope you can join us next week, June 8th through June 12th, for our first ever international Essentially Ellington Festival. Wynton, you wanna wrap things up?

32:34 WM: Yeah, I just wanna say this is a very emotionally charged time. We got to direct that emotion with intelligence. If we wanna see changes, always go funnel that emotion and understand that if you wanna see changes in an institution, push for the changes you want to see, don't waste your energy. The police have a union, they have qualified immunity, they have a grand jury system. And they've been conditioned by behavior to do what they're doing. It's like drunk driving, if somebody have citations they just keep drunk driving because there was nothing that's ever happened. The officer who murdered Mr. Floyd in public had had 18 complaints against him. Okay, now my job is, of course, this is not new to talk about these issues. I've talked about them in prisons, high schools, in penthouses and outhouses, it doesn't matter where. I've been soapboxing my entire life. My mama soapboxed, my daddy did it. Okay, it's an inflection point, but let's understand, it's the underlying mechanics that lead to victory. It's not the halftime, it's not the halftime.

33:49 WM: I was looking at the TV, somebody asked Steve Young, they would say, "Man, when you go into the Superdome, it's a lot of the fans and everybody's cheering and they have such an advantage. Man, what were you thinking about when you walked into the dome?" And he said, "I was thinking about Ricky Jackson, and people on their defense." You have to fight what is in front of you. You win the game against that defense, not against the fans cheering and all that, that helps. But the coach said, "Let's go get 'em." Or it's like a boxer telling in the corner saying, "Hit him, hit him." "Man, I'm trying to hit him, he's hitting me." So we gotta battle. I hope that by the time I die, I see some improvement in our culture and our understanding of the destruction of words, ideas, the way people are portrayed and then we stop going for the okie doke. In my field, the field I know about.

34:45 WM: I wish I knew enough about politics to really be intelligent in my discussions of them, but that's not what I've studied my entire life. I've studied Afro-American and American music, and I don't divorce them. They are one in the same. And if you wish to divorce them, you're inaccurate. Those are musical facts. For your political agenda, great, good luck. But, I believe as strongly in the rights of black people to stop being messed over, on all levels of our society. Because it's not just

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going on in the street. It goes on everywhere from the street to the New York Times, believe me. To the best universities. Remember what our administration was when Black Lives Matter was born. Who was the attorney general, who was the President. Remember, we need to be out here holding people accountable for the nation we want to see, all of us, and it's gonna take all of us in our own way.

35:46 WM: So thank you very much. I always love talking to y'all, a serious subject. Okay, we can be serious, but the fact that we're serious doesn't mean we still can't play around and joke and still go back to being serious, and we're gonna be doing all that next week when you see all these young people in here swinging.

36:01 MG: Thanks so much, Wynton, and thanks everyone for tuning in.

36:04 WM: Thank y'all. Yeah, you right.