

Skain's Domain

Episode 12 - June 15, 2020

0:00:00 Adam Meeks: All right guys. Welcome. Thanks for being here for this week's episode of Skain's Domain. My name's Adam Meeks. I'm the video producer here at Jazz at Lincoln Center. Tonight with Wynton we're gonna focus on the current state of things in this country, and after a few opening thoughts, we'll open it up for questions and a dialogue. I'll remind everybody on how to ask questions when we get to that point. And with that said, I'll hand it over to Wynton to kick things off. Go ahead.

0:00:25 Wynton Marsalis: Okay, thank you very much, Adam. Chloe, I see you too. It's good to be with you all again. Every other week, you might notice I'm just opening it up for questions. I'm not... Sometimes we have special guests, next week we're gonna have our orchestra on and we're gonna talk about different things that we're doing. Now, it's a kinda interesting time and all of this. Some of the states have opened up, people are getting out, it's not the same as it was a little earlier. So now we're dealing with our transition from one thing to the next. It's a lot of activity in our country, there's a lot going on, and there's a lot to discuss.

0:01:03 WM: I think that it's always good to re-acquaint yourself with music that you wanted to learn or things you wanted to check out. I found myself listening to some Thelonious Monk last night. I started to check different things that Monk was doing. I even put the film on, the Monk film on. I started to think about Charlie Rouse and all the great things that he said. He came out on the road one summer in 1987. But I remember then I would always laugh at him because he was afraid to fly, I didn't know that that would be me in a few years. But I remember the seriousness with which he approached every gig. And if we had something that we played that he was unsure of, he would always say that's the song he wanted to play. And when we wanted to play some of Monk's music, he would say, "Man, I played Monk's music. I'm out here with y'all, I wanna play what y'all are playing."

0:01:52 WM: And I remember once, we had a kind of style of music, song we were playing, played all kind of fast stuff, chromatic things in different time signatures and stuff. And Monk was... I mean, and Charlie Rouse was listening to it and he asked us... We would start discussing what makes something new, he said, "You ever consider the fact that what's new might just be in your sound?" So we started to think about it. And because sound is such an ephemeral thing, it's also difficult to say what is your sound, that his concept of your consciousness and everything was in your sound.

0:02:27 WM: And then just seeing Monk play and the different things that he went through. His music comes from such a deep place within him. And also I think his compositions, I was thinking about the way that they're constructed some songs like Oskar T, are very fundamental, some very complicated songs like Trinkle Tinkle or... What's the one that's really hard to play on? Off Minor.

And how Off Minor is related to John Coltrane's Giant Steps, is related to Wayne Shorter's Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum. And then I started to just listen to Monk and think about just the depth of Monk's playing and the seriousness that Monk had to have about playing.

0:03:08 WM: He lost his Cabaret Card at one time taken in a drug bust for Bud Powell, and he went years without working, and he went years being disrespected. Some people even said he couldn't play the piano at all, but he never lost his focus and his clarity, so that when people finally came around to Monk after he started to play at the Five Spot with John Coltrane, when they finally started to come around to him, and gigs started to come in, and start to talk about him, that same integrity that he had, the same depth of feeling, and the same insights that he had, that was present in his music, he didn't have to follow whatever the fan wants or try to figure out how to be current because Monk was always current.

0:03:46 WM: I started to think about his relationship with Coleman Hawkins. Coleman Hawkins, though not that much older than Monk, was considered to be from a earlier era, the swing era. And how much Monk loved Coleman Hawkins and he respected Coleman Hawkins, who we called Bean. And Coleman Hawkins reached out to the younger musicians at that time. Also, we have a tendency to think that it's 20 or 30 years difference between them, it's not that much. And when they started to play bebop in the style of music they played, even though Monk, who was known as the chief architect of bebop and the high priest of the style, did not play bebop. And he also would tell you he didn't want you playing bebop on his tunes. He would also say when you improvise on one of his songs, play something that comes out of the melodies that he wrote.

0:04:29 WM: So I was thinking about Monk playing with Coleman Hawkins and just the depth of his playing, and then I was listening to his solos and thinking about the consistency of his playing across time, how you can listen to Monk's playing in the 1940s, and then you listen to his playing in the 1960s, early '70s, one of those last tours he went on with Dizzy and with Al McKibbin playing the bass. And just Monk's playing, which is... He always had that kind of light and the thing in his touch. And he was always searching and looking for something that was better than what was there.

0:05:01 WM: Another great thing I love about his playing was the way he interacted with drummers. I was looking at the film in Newport with him playing with Roy Haynes and just the type of dialogue and conversation he had. And started to think about all the great drummers that he played with. Ben Riley was my man, I would talk with him a lot about playing with Thelonious. And he said his first night he was playing with Thelonious. And he said, "Well, how was it Monk? He said, "Yeah, it was okay." He said, "Well, what do I need to do?" He said, Monk said, "Swing." He said, "Jay, you know, okay. But after that?" He said, "Swing some more." He said, "Okay. But after what else?" He said, "Swing harder. More."

0:05:43 WM: I love how Monk was just so... He found his thing, his voice, what he believed in. And he was a philosopher, he knew how to deal with the negative space. You tell him something, he would take the opposite of it. One funny thing about Monk I always like to talk about, he had... Toot told me this story. He gave me a money clip that belonged to Monk, and he said Monk used to take this money clip, he would put a \$1,000 bill in it. And when people come up to him in the club to

say, "Monk, you got \$10 or you got \$20?" Monk would pull that \$1,000 out and say, "Can you break this?" So it's just the kind of humour that Monk had. And I was thinking too about the craftsmanship of his songs across time and just the need for the beauty of craftsmanship and of just...

0:06:37 WM: Just pursuing that type of integrity, without fail and regardless of cost. So I think it's a good time to return to the people you like, or even if it's not, 'cause Monk's music, everybody can't just hear it right away. I remember my father used to always try to get us to listen to Monk, but we didn't wanna hear it. But then when you finally hear it, you can't believe just the depth of it, and the beauty of it, the poetry, the imagination. And I think Monk's greatest skill is the most difficult thing to do when you are soloing, is to figure out how to maintain coherence and logic, and to build your solos, and keep your thematic development together, and then bring your solo down. Monk... That solo... Sophisticated Lady on Monk plays Duke Ellington. That's one the greatest solos for that type of thematic development.

0:07:27 WM: Another famous one, is the solo he plays on The Man I Love with Miles, where he's repeating the same phrase over and over again, but Monk has thousands of these solos. Another good thing about Monk is that he was filmed a lot, so if you wanna check Monk out, there's all kinda films of Monk playing and the quality level is always unbelievably high. I was looking at Thelonious, it was a live concert he did, and he stood up and he started to just stand like in profile, and listened to the band, and I was just watchin him and I was thinking, "Man, what in the world is Monk thinking right now?" And he was just listening to the music and at just the perfect time, he sat down and he started to comp, boom, just a certain thing, he was waiting for a certain thing to lift the rhythm sanction.

0:08:18 WM: And I think another good thing about watchin Monk, is he teaches us how to listen, if we just watch him when he's quiet, 'cause he always has a lot of energy and he's always moving his feet, kinda the rule-of-thumb for musicians a lot of times is don't move around a lot when you play. A funny story about me and Tony Williams, we were playing and I was moving a lot when I was soloing and Tony said, "Man, when you play, every time you tap your feet, when you play a rhythm, it becomes a polyrhythm, so stop tapping your feet," he said, "I noticed the musicians were good time, they don't move around a lot, they don't tap their feet," he said, "Like Coltrane didn't move around a lot when we played, Miles didn't move around a lot," so when he finished telling me, I said, "Yeah man, but Monk moves about a lot when he plays," he said, "Man, what does that have to do with what I'm telling you?" [chuckle]

0:09:07 WM: So sometimes with the musicians, it's always funny stories and he was about getting to the point. And I think that in this time, it's important for us as we kinda transition out of one phase, what we learn to go into the next, to stay focused and not lose sight of the things that we learned in this time. 'Cause there's a lot that I'm sure all of us here have learned, there's a lot that we have lost or there's a lot that we've gained, we've had the chance to look around. Now it's gonna take a lot for us to recover and to rebuild. So I just think it's important for us in this time. When we started this, it was like things we should do during the lockdown, it was like 10, 11 things we should do. Well, we have things we need to do to transition, and I don't really know what they are, but I'm

thinking about it. So that's my riff for tonight.

0:10:01 WM: I just riffing on Monk, talking about the importance to reach out for those sounds that have the most substance for you, and re-acquaint yourself with what they're doing, and let them take you into deeper waters. Sometimes it's good to be taken into deeper waters. It's good. I remember when I was trying to learn how to hear the history of jazz, I could never listen to nothing before 1940. I couldn't listen to music from 1930s and 1920s, the sound on the record the ti ti ti ti, the vibrato play with. So one summer I said, "Okay, I'm gonna just listen to Basie in the 1930s and just get to where I can hear and try to understand what they're playing." It took me maybe a couple of weeks of just the Decca recordings just listening and listening. And I mean I knew Sweets and Rudy Rutherford, and I played with a lot of the musicians and I knew and loved them, so I had a understanding. Buck Clayton, certainly the trumpet players from that era... Buddy Tate.

0:10:58 WM: I was blessed to know a lot of those musicians from the great band from the 1930s. I even met Jo Jones, I didn't know him, but I met him. He used to come to Mikell's on 97th at Columbus, and the bartender at Mikell's at that time, he was a... Just the whole scene was unbelievably soulful. And I remember seeing Max Roach come in with Jo Jones and they were coming in to hear Art Blakey, and James Baldwin's brother was the bartender. So I remember James would come in there every now and then, but it's just the scene was very cultural, but it was small, and Mike was keeping the club open, the vibe that they had in the club. But even with that, it was hard for me to hear the music, because I was listening to the technology and I didn't... I couldn't... Then finally one day I heard it, like, "Okay, wow, I can hear what they're saying." And it was deep because it made me then able to listen to the music of that era, and then I was able to just kinda go back and strengthen my understanding in my hearing of music.

0:12:07 WM: So in a time like this, a transitional time, it's good to be adding things too, to your palate. It's always good with music to add things to your palate, different styles, different things. And it can go on till you die. You never have to stop learning different things about music, and different forms and styles of music and trying to understand what things mean in their language. And that's really all I have to say about that. Now I'm ready to answer whatever questions you all have for me, and once again, I thank y'all for joining me. I know Kenny is on here somewhere, so if you wanna say something too Kenny, I am with you.

0:12:47 AM: Cool. Thanks, Wynton. So I'll just remind everybody, if you have a question you'd like to ask, we're gonna use the raise hand feature. So click Participants and then Raise Hand, and I'll try to get to as many questions as we can tonight, and then if you'll just make sure that your first and last name are listed, then I can call on you when it's your turn. With that, first question's coming from Robert Hrabluk. And Robert, you can go ahead whenever you're ready.

0:13:17 Robert Hrabluk: Hi, Mr. Marsalis.

0:13:18 WM: Yes sir, how are you doing, Rob?

0:13:20 RH: How are you doing?

0:13:20 WM: Good, man.

0:13:21 RH: That's my puppy, Bowers...

0:13:22 WM: What's going on?

0:13:24 RH: He's a big trumpet fan. Something about the frequencies...

0:13:27 WM: All right, what's going on Bowers?

[chuckle]

0:13:30 RH: He was on earlier with Vincent Gardner too, that was a great session with Clifford Brown. Yeah. I just want to give a shoutout to Adam and Chloe and Seaton. And I don't mean to leave anybody out, but these are examples, I feel, of people in the exact right job. And I really appreciate them, and I appreciate you, and I appreciate the organization, Jazz at Lincoln Center, for everything that they're doing during this time. And the fact that you have basically revolutionized yourself online, so to speak, in this time speaks volumes to how much you care about the music and the history of the music and forwarding the music into the future. And the Essentially Ellington Festival absolutely defined that for me. So I just wanna give a shout out to those people, and I don't mean to leave anybody out because I know there's a lot of people behind the scenes, but I just really appreciate that.

0:14:35 RH: And I know Adam's gonna remind us later, but if all 190 participants in here can do some donations either to a local cause or to the Jazz at Lincoln Center, I think it'll really, really help bring the importance of this music to the forefront of everything. I'm a middle school band teacher essentially, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. And due to Skain's Domain I've actually met three people, educators and performers alike, and we keep in contact a little bit, so I thank you for that network as well, and realize that there is a bit of an outreach network happening at this point. That is very much appreciated. My question to you is about balance, and we're all trying to find balance within our own lives at this point, within society at this point, and I'm struggling with that as other people are struggling with that as well.

0:15:35 RH: But when I do get my middle school jazz band back, hopefully in September, besides listening to the drummer, the bass player, section leaders, recordings, are there any other suggestions you can give or impart for balancing a middle school jazz band, so that things aren't sticking out in certain ways. And then specifically maybe for the trumpets, when is a good time to kinda start introducing doits and falls and effects like that into one's playing?

0:16:15 WM: Okay, that's two good questions. I think a good thing to do with balance is not make it be a big deal and just challenge one part of the band to hear something else. For trumpet players we most often are the culprits. We like to play loud, especially when we're learning how to play. So I think if you challenge a trumpet to hear something like a clarinet that we never... Things in the

woodwind category, we almost like to overlay them. We like to play. But if you give them a part to hear and say, "Hey, let's see if you can..." And also I found with younger people, if you make them feel a sense of achievement in doing those things, it's like a coach that celebrates hustle plays. And when you give the kids a sense of achievement... Another thing I think... I love a good middle school band, man, I just...

0:17:07 WM: They're right between that elementary school sound and the kind of high school sound. I think just... You can still get to them, they still have enough child in them, where you could still be like... Get in the middle of them and just be like a cheerleader number one. And I always say it's just the affirmation that you bring to them. And they will do... What you reward them for is what they're gonna do and they're gonna achieve. And if you just keep telling them... And in terms of effects, I tend to think... I wouldn't even name it. I would just play an example of it and say, "Do this, make this sound." I remember trying that when I first was learning how to play, I was asking Clark Terry, "How do I play with like a... How do I go... Make it be like the sound of jazz musicians?" Go on...

[music]

0:18:00 WM: So he was telling me doodle... Doodle doodle doodle... I could never do that. As I was trying to...

[music]

0:18:07 WM: And I just kept playing with it. And I was thinking... I'm not ever... But I also didn't realize it was a rhythmic thing too. To explain it technically, for him, maybe it could be doodle 'cause he's such a natural, just unbelievable trumpet player, but for me I just kept playing without learning to accent some of them, slur some of them, and so...

[music]

0:18:43 WM: And so on and so forth. Then I started to get it. So I think with fall-offs, if you give them linguistic things to do and sing it in an animated fashion, and get them to sing it, then tell them, "Make your horn do that." Then they're gonna figure it out.

0:19:00 RH: Well, I appreciate that. And is there any rhyme or reason to the accent that you came across when you were listening more attentively?

0:19:11 WM: You need to explain that. Bring me closer to what you're saying. I don't quite understand.

0:19:16 RH: Just... You mentioned that you accent every so often some of the notes. Is there any kind of rhyme or reason that you came across to that, or is it just the feel, listening to players, listening to recordings?

0:19:31 WM: I think just the feel. I notice Clifford would tongue a lot of the notes, then Fats Navarro would tongue 'em, and Miles played really good time like that, then Dizzy, forget about playing like him. And then I started to notice when I listened to trumpet player, Freddie Hubbard, who we all would try to sound like in the 1970s, he played it with such dexterity, playing up, up and down the trumpet with so much fire. Then different people you listen to, you learn different things, and then New Orleans musicians, but I tend to think that people figure stuff out, and I like to put them in a ballpark with some good metaphors and stuff, and I don't like to kinda... When you hear stuff, you're gonna hear much more scientifically when you hear it naturally. When you approach it scientifically, you're gonna hear less because the theory that you're using is less than what you're hearing.

0:20:21 WM: So you just have to be patient with your hearing. It's like, can somebody explain to you how to dance? You go to a dance, you do it. Or it's like someone explain to you how to swim or ride a bicycle? You get up, and then you figure it out. And a lot of other things in life that are experiential. Like Zora Neale Hurston said in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, "You gotta go there to know there." And don't take that from your students. Let them go there. You just bring 'em in and just tell 'em when it's not right, "That's not it." And then sing it, and then when they get it, you'd be like... If they even get close, and to me, for students getting it means you're closer than you were the last time you did, so it doesn't mean you reached your final destination. You have middle school. They're gonna get to a certain point, but the more positive your affirmation is of any slight improvement, the greater they're gonna play, I think.

0:21:11 RH: I appreciate that very much. I appreciate you and the organization. Thank you.

0:21:15 WM: Oh, man, bless you. Thank you, we have some fantastic colleagues. I have to say that, what you're saying, to Adam, and Chloe, and Seton, and... Any way you look, Vince, Kenny... It's been a blessing for me to have colleagues on this level of all the generations. They're fantastic.

0:21:32 RH: I'd absolutely agree. I would absolutely agree.

0:21:34 WM: It's fantastic to work with.

0:21:37 RH: Thank you.

0:21:38 WM: Yes, sir. Thank you.

0:21:40 AM: All right, next question's coming from Dave Drake.

0:21:44 WM: All right now.

0:21:45 AM: Dave, go ahead.

0:21:48 Dave Drake: Hi, good evening. Thank you so much, Mr. Marsalis. Thank you, Wynton. Thank you so much for hosting these every Monday night. I've been a really, really grateful member

of the audience, so thank you so much. I actually wanted to ask you a question tonight, if it's okay. My question was, what role do you feel a person's spirituality or spiritual practice might play into the kind of music that they make, and what kind of role you think those two might have with one another, the kind of influence of your spirituality and your music? And if you're okay, if you're comfortable, maybe just sharing a little bit of any spiritual practice you have, and maybe how it informs your music, if that's all right. Thank you.

0:22:30 WM: Yes, that's also a very serious question. Well, I think everybody is spiritual, even the non-spiritual people. We are spiritual entities. We live in the... We're spirit first. It's just what I think, I don't wanna... I won't argue with anybody. I think that spirit is so large that it can be what I think, and you could think the opposite of me, and it could be that too. And I think that spirit informs everything, but that spirit may not express itself in a religious belief or something that is organized, but it will express itself in a profound understanding. And you can have that understanding in so many avenues of thought and feeling. You can have a profound understanding of intimacy, you can have a profound understanding of humor, you can have a profound understanding of physicality and of the motion of things, you can have a profound understanding of the type of humor that goes between sexes, you can have a profound understanding of how the past exists in the present. There's so many, millions and millions of ways to be spiritual.

0:23:40 WM: And to exhibit depth, and when we realize that all of us, we are one small piece of a fabric, and all of those pieces together is one part of a fabric, so I think I have a belief system that's not relegated to a particular thing. I see a commonality in all of the teachings. I grew up in the book religion, so of course, the Old Testament and the New Testament, but I've known profound people with a depth of spirituality and religious understanding in many religious traditions. And the most profound ones that I know are generally the least sticklers that you follow some convention of their religion, generally. That said, there are profound ones who believe a certain thing, but I believe that your belief system and your integrity and your ability to focus on a thought and on a practice, I don't mean practice in a home, but a practice, influences who you are as an adult. But I also believe that our understanding is always expanding and increasing, and that's why I hesitate to put a gate around and understand it because we just don't know enough.

0:25:00 WM: But I believe that your seriousness in your insight does influence your music. It influences your sound, but I don't think, I don't think 'cause Coltrane wrote A Love Supreme, the prayer, and Billie Holiday was known to have the life she had, I don't feel he's any more spiritual than she was. I think Louis Armstrong is another example of a person who was very, very deeply spiritual. But if you look at things he did in his life, I don't know if you could characterize him by some textbook definition of them, but who he was, and to be in his presence, everyone who was around him says he had wings. The spirit was... And I feel that there are people who were not great musicians necessarily or not, but the spirit is all around us, and it's in everyday things, and in everyday people, and it's in children, and it's in... I believe this... If you look at it, you're gonna see it. The only way you don't see it, is if you don't look. But if you look around, you see spirit everywhere. So I don't know if I answered your question, but... Yeah, I believe in it. It's very, very, very... I believe in it.

0:26:16 AM: Thank you, Wynton. All right, let's take another question. This one's coming from Andre Carter.

0:26:23 WM: Uh-oh, what's up Dre?

0:26:25 Andre Carter: What's going on, man?

0:26:27 WM: You, man. What's happening?

0:26:31 AC: You know, nothing much man. It's real serious out here, you know. There's a lot like going on, and I just wanted to ask you man, I just wanted your opinion about what do you think the impact that our president has on the culture that's going on now today and the climate that we have to deal with right now.

0:26:53 WM: Man. Man.

0:26:55 AC: I just feel like he's a big part of the problem, man. I'd just like to know your opinion.

0:27:00 WM: Let me choose, I'm gonna choose my word carefully. And I want people to understand where I'm coming from. I'm not coming from a left or a right, because you're getting ripped off and abused on any side you're on. Okay? So I wanna make that clear. You can come from any side you want. This is a game that's being played that's outside of those sides. I feel like he's like, he's an embarrassment. And this is not connected to... I don't know what to say. You got to at least know the constitution to be the president of a country, and there's so many ways that he falls short. Now I've often said that taking all those Southern Democrats was a mistake that the Republican Party made, and now they're choking on that, and they're trying to pretend like they aren't, but they are.

0:27:55 WM: The ideology of the Southern Democrat who was running from the civil rights changes of Lyndon Johnson did not and does not fit in with republicanism. So they've had to absorb a foreign body to get votes. They've brought a lot of ignorance into their party. And I said the left has all kind... I don't even know if we have a left really, it's whatever it is, and the level of corruption is so high all across the government. That's why I'm spending so much time to remove it from that discussion because I don't want anybody to confuse me with somebody who looks at us, "Wow, this is so fantastic."

0:28:28 WM: But what this man has done, just what he allowed Howard Stern to say about his daughter, just how he represents himself, his pulling us away from NATO, his allowing nuclear treaties and all these things to go dead, him undermining the UN, him... You can't be a person who travels the world and is sophisticated and knows people and be in favor. Him giving the unbelievably huge tax break to corporations and just absolutely stabbing that large white middle class and to upper middle class that think that he has the same values they have. I mean, he does so much, but for some reason he's immune. So, he's rich, he's like a character that you can't believe is actually... You can't believe it. Here's a guy sitting up talking about Confederate generals, he's the

president of the United States. They lost. You go tell me, who won the Super Bowl last year? San Francisco got beat by... Who won the Super Bowl, Adam?

0:29:35 AC: Who won the Super Bowl last year?

0:29:37 WM: Yeah, last year. I know San Francisco lost. Oh, they lost to Kansas City, okay? I grew up a Oakland Raiders fan, that's why I've forgotten. Okay. Are you're gonna go to the Kansas City Chiefs' stadium and see a statue of the San Francisco 49ers' Head Coach?

[laughter]

0:29:57 WM: Man, some of this stuff is so ridiculous, but I was reading a book on Richard Wagner one time, and in the book they say, "Prejudice survives all evidence." Man, sometimes it's just, your ignorance chokes you. And here's the thing about all of this. Like something, that anti-reason, all that is great until it affects you. Now, let's say you're first to sitting up, you don't want the health care in a nation that everybody's health care should be free, it shouldn't be connected to your job. You a person going to work every day and your employer is in control of your health care. You need that for your life. You were so idealizing, you've been sitting up listening to propaganda so much that you are now fighting to be once again built by a bunch of companies with your insurance, and a guy is gonna come in, you gonna... Now you have coronavirus, people in your family are sick, you're struggling. You need health care insurance, but you've been let go by your job. Now all of a sudden, anti-reason is rump rump right up against reason. Now you're forced for your politics to be against what is in your best self interest.

0:31:07 WM: "Will that group of people wake up?" is what I'm saying the whole time. Will the large majority of just white Americans in an America that, they're not calling people names, they're not running black people out of jobs, they're not... They don't have status, they're struggling. These are people that are being used and abused all the time, I mean, junk bond scandal, subprime... Look, I could name scandal after scandal. Reaganomics is just constantly attacking this group of people, ripping them off, lying to them, giving them propaganda constantly. I don't care where they go, left or right, somebody is getting them. But damn. How long are you gonna act against your self-interests to be against some black folks who don't have nothing? That's the bulk of the 700,000 that died in the Civil War. Now you following this guy? [chuckle] Hey, come on. I don't know what to say about it.

0:32:01 AC: Right.

0:32:02 WM: Because, you know, I was so tired of hearing the CNN and these other stations talk about him, and when I'm on the road I turn those stations off. I don't wanna hear it because I'm tired of hearing about it. But I gotta just say that, man, he's so absurd. Once again, 'cause this has nothing to do with no partisanship. This is ridiculous.

0:32:23 AC: Right.

0:32:24 WM: This, what's going on now is ridiculous. And it's in public. It's like I slapped your mom, I called her a name, I came to your house to eat, I defecated on the floor, I got up on the table, I poured all the stuff out. What do I have to do for you to say, "Man, you gotta get out of my house." I mean, I don't know, man. You know, we've seen this in public, I've been against a lot of stuff out here for years, that just... I thought I wasn't gonna see worse. But I'm seeing worse. And once again, I'm not with all the people who just wanna just have something to say and choose one side 'cause they're both terrible. So don't get me wrong, look, let me be straight. We need another coalition in this country, and we need to be come together, people who... If you just take all those people who are being abused by the policies of my man, they support him, don't forget about this propaganda. Go with what you really need out here. That's all I'mma say.

0:33:23 AC: Right, right.

0:33:26 WM: So I don't know what else to say because it's so absurd. I mean, just the way we're being undermined around the world. I don't...

0:33:33 AC: I'm terrified of the possibility of another four years of this. Possibly. Hopefully not.

0:33:38 WM: Man, you know, that's why people gotta get out and vote. And then if they vote, they gotta be care of cheating, but get out... If we had 80%, 90% turnout in a country that 50 something percent turns out... I feel bad, it's like a lot of times the positions I get put in by people, I wanna defend you, but... [laughter] You put me in such a bad position, I can't... Am I supposed to defend this? So we gotta get out and vote. You know, we have to participate in our own government. All of us. Me? What have I done except just paid money, tax after tax after tax? I haven't done nothing. I'm talking about it, so I'm not separating myself from just the course of stupid. We need to vote and be vocal. This is the time to be vocal.

0:34:28 AC: That's right.

0:34:29 WM: Yeah, he is ridiculous man. [chuckle] He's ridiculous. The Republican Party never used to discipline a country. I'm not gonna just go down the line, man, the stuff that they do now. A fiscal conservative. When somebody say we're conservatives, I say, "A conservative? How we get these kind of deficits with conservatives?" 'Cause you know, black people a lot of times are caught in between. Because we, traditionally, are fiscally conservative and are socially not conservative, because the social conservatism means we back on a plantation. So if you're socially like that, I don't know. You need your head examined. And what he is doing, no, man, come on, we can't have this. No, we got to do better than this. We're a laughing stock. We are a laughing stock.

0:35:17 AC: This is true.

0:35:20 WM: And that's all I can say about it, Dre. Man, don't call me asking me that kind of stuff again. [laughter] Oh man, you know... No, man. Uh-uh. We gotta do better than that, and... We're gonna put ourselves in a very bad position. And we don't need...

0:35:41 AC: I'm afraid we have another four years of this... Ridiculous. So we gotta [0:35:45]

_____.

0:35:47 WM: Man, I don't look at it topically. I don't look at it as another four years, we've already had another 60 years of it. I'm not... I look at stuff across time, what direction are we... You could get a speech, Martin Luther King's last speech in the pulpit before he was assassinated. It's in DC. Not the night before in Memphis. It's a DC speech. Get that speech and listen to it, it's gonna shock you. What he's talking about then, in 1968, is what's going on now. I think it's... I forget the name of the cathedral... Canterbury Cathedral? Something like that.

0:36:24 AC: Oh, okay.

0:36:24 WM: Just check it out. Anybody who's listening, I recommend check out King's... Maybe before we finish this, I'mma see if I can pull the name up of it, so I can tell you exactly what it is. Just listen to what he says. All you gotta do is put it on and listen to it.

0:36:37 AC: Yeah, I heard you talk about how King was deeper than "I have a dream," and he was really... He was on point with that. He was deeper than "I have a dream."

0:36:47 WM: Yeah, yeah, much deeper. Yeah, he sacrificed... He deserves for us to check him out. And this time it's good to reach for him because he got a lot of good things to say.

0:36:57 AC: Right, always.

0:37:00 WM: Yeah, a lot of nuggets.

0:37:03 AM: All right, thanks for your question Andre.

0:37:05 AC: All right, no problem. Thanks, man.

0:37:07 WM: Alright, Dre.

0:37:08 AC: Right.

0:37:11 AM: All right, next question's gonna come from Patrick Donaher.

0:37:14 WM: Uh-oh. What's going on Patrick?

0:37:17 Patrick Donaher: Heya, Wynton. How are you doing?

0:37:19 WM: Hey man. Good. Great to see you, man.

0:37:21 PD: Good to see you too. It's funny when you said that, I thought about my dad, 'cause I know we've been talking about your dad a lot, and I'm so sorry. My father used to say, "Do you

wanna be right? Or do you wanna be happy?" And it seems like right now, a lot of people would rather be right. [chuckle] But I wanted to... Two things, I wanna thank... I know Kenny's here. Kenny came and talked to my band and four other bands during all of this for no money, just because he wanted to do it and it was so inspiring. And I just wanted to shout him out publicly because it was just spectacular.

0:38:01 WM: I wanna get Kenny on too. So when you finish what you're saying, I wanna get Kenny on to say what's the... Shout us out a little bit too.

0:38:08 PD: Yeah. I have a technical question 'cause people don't know, I'm a high school band director. I've done Essentially Ellington and a lot of...

0:38:17 WM: A great director, a great director. You are fantastic. Great. Great to see you.

0:38:21 PD: Thank you. So a lot of us are dealing with the whole virtual ensemble thing. I know y'all put up that thing on "Walkin'" today that was fantastic, but imagine yourself as a teacher. You know how hard this stuff is to do with a really crack, the team that you have, so we're doing it with duct tape and rubber bands and from a teaching point of view, what do you think are the positives of projects like this, since they're very likely going to be something that's on the table next year, and what do you think are the negatives or other ways we should be approaching virtual learning?

0:39:01 WM: You know, I don't see a negative in it, I mean, it's fun. 'Cause when you get to be our age I have trouble seeing the icons on the phone. But for young people, man, they can do it, I think it's great. Let me just say one thing, that speech was Martin Luther King's final speech at the National Cathedral, that's what it's called. So, I think it's only upside. Of course, it's not gonna compete with us being being live, but I think you assign one or two students to be in charge, man, they'll figure it out then they can teach it to you.

[laughter]

0:39:40 WM: I always say let the young people teach you. I let my younger ones that I know, I just call them, "Show me how to do this. It's a great project." And they'll figure it out. That's what I think, I think embrace it. And I think it allows you, in the project, I think getting together and learning parts that way and playing them and learning lead parts and going. And then there's a new way to do it now, we're supposed to be doing it next week. And if you have a question, I think in the band, we always will call either Victor or some people call Ted and Carlos knows a lot. So you know Carlos... I mean I know Victor has done a lot with his students at Northwestern, they did a whole project at the end, all virtual.

0:40:23 PD: Yeah, one of my drummers is there now.

0:40:26 WM: So what did he say about it?

0:40:28 PD: I haven't talked to him about it yet. I will.

0:40:31 WM: So, you know. Yeah, I believe embrace it.

0:40:35 PD: Okay, cool. Thank you.

0:40:38 WM: Man thank you so much for coming, it was good to see you.

0:40:41 PD: Good to see you.

0:40:42 AM: We got Kenny here too, if Kenny wants to chime in.

0:40:45 Kenny Rampton: Sure. Hey Wynton, what's up? Patrick, man thank you for the shout out, man it's good to see you. I've got a youth jazz orchestra with my organization with Jazz Outreach Initiative in Las Vegas, and we've been doing recordings. And I've actually been reaching out to a lot of educators and talking to them about what they're doing, like Julius Tolentino. And one thing that I'm discovering is it's actually, I think it's a great tool, because if you're rehearsing live with a band, the fourth trumpet player can kinda hide and kinda scuffle on the part and not be discovered and not know it.

0:41:19 WM: What? The what? [chuckle]

0:41:23 KR: I'm not saying, our fourth trumpet player, Wynton. But with the isolated recording like we're doing right now, everybody's gotta be responsible for their parts and really need to step it up. And that's one thing that's really positive about this is, I think the kids are stepping up more than they were before. With my Youth Jazz Orchestra, we had six rehearsals and then had to call it due to COVID and we've gone ahead and recorded, now we're working on our three... On our third song and the kids have actually improved while not rehearsing. I've been trying to encourage them and send them recordings of the original recordings of the big band versions of the song, plus small group versions of the song to listen to, and they've been practicing.

0:42:13 KR: We created virtual music folders for all of them, they've been shedding, they've been working on the music, and man, they've done two recordings for us so far. Now, we're working on Victor Goine's piece, the Business of America is Business, with the Las Vegas Youth Jazz Orchestra. They've rehearsed the piece twice together, but they've been practicing it alone at home and it's about the process. And one thing I encourage the kids that I say to them is, "It's about the process. It's about the journey, not the destination. It's not about that final concert at the end of the year, it's about the growth that happens during the year when they're working and improving." And they're still working and improving, and it's real encouraging for me, and there's a lot of new things being discovered because of the situation that we're in now.

0:43:04 KR: And the more conversations I can have with people like you and your students, Patrick, I appreciate you having me on, because I learn. And I speak with Julius and other great educators around the country and I learn so much from them, and we're just discovering all kinds of new things due to the situation we're in now, so... Let's just keep moving forward. Let's keep

growing. Let's keep learning. Under any circumstances, the journey never ends. That's what I tell the kids, "It's about the journey, not the destination and the journey never ends." So it's actually, I'm learning a lot. It's really pretty cool, man.

0:43:43 PD: Thank you.

0:43:44 KR: Yeah.

0:43:45 WM: You're right. Yeah, I agree with Kenny.

0:43:53 AM: All right, let's take another question. This one's coming from Tamika Howard.

[background conversation]

0:44:00 AM: Hey, go ahead.

[background conversation]

0:44:14 AM: Alright, I'll come back to her in a minute and see if she's...

[chuckle]

0:44:19 AM: Let's take one from Stephen Lapointe. Hey, Stephen.

0:44:27 Stephen Lapointe: Wynton and Adam and Chloe, thank you so much for these weekly sessions, they've been amazing. And Wynton, I'm not sure if you remember this, but when I was in college, this was like the late '80s, you were incredibly generous. You came to Philadelphia and I gave you a paper on Monk and Wayne Shorter and you basically provided some amazing mentoring and coaching for me for free, which was just such a gift and I feel like the same generosity that you demonstrated then has been a part of these weekly sessions. It's been amazing. And one thing I remember distinctly, I was working on some Monk transcriptions, and I would call you and whereas I was hearing maybe three or four notes, you would play like seven or eight notes in Monk's voicings in these tunes and they just completely sounded so different to me with that fuller sense of harmony.

0:45:33 SL: And so I guess one question is maybe musical, how to develop that capability to really listen for the depth of the music that is there in Monk, say in Crepuscule with Nellie or Green Chimneys, any of the tunes. And the other one is maybe related, when you're really working on transcribing and dissecting music, how do you keep a sense of wonder about that piece that inspired you to wanna learn about it in the first place? Because I felt so inspired by the way that you kind of opened up those tunes for me more and helped me appreciate them more.

0:46:13 WM: Well, thank you so much. And I do remember that. The main thing that I think is learn stuff by ear before you write it down. And with Monk, you gotta just keep listening to the

record, over and over again. And I can remember Farid Barron, great piano player and I, from Philly, we always be, "Man, I don't hear this note," or, "I don't hear this..." Also Carlos does that all the time. Except when Chris is around we don't do it 'cause Chris can hear all the notes. And I could go all the way back to high school with my brother Branford always... We'd be talking about, "What are the notes in the chord?" He really could hear all the kind of chords. And then you start to work out the logic of Monk, how he's approaching the harmony. 'Cause harmony is vertical and it's horizontal. And I think it's just always... Just keep listening to things over and over and over again and you're gonna start to hear them.

0:47:03 WM: And as you study theory and harmony, all of the harmony in the West is related. It all comes out of Johann Bach, Bach's harmony. Monk, they added the blues to it, so it's additive, it's the foundation of the type of harmony you find in Bach, four part chorale writing, now you have this added to it, which is blues sonorities and a way to voice chords that comes purely of the American style. That's what Duke Ellington is the supreme master of and Monk used to always say, "Duke Ellington knows all the chords." It's a way to voice things in a way that brings out those blues twinges. And also Jelly Roll was a master of that. And we have some examples of it in classical music to a lesser degree. George Gershwin and Aaron Copland with things like the train piece, John Henry that he wrote. You have examples. But with Duke... And so I believe in that. The other thing is that...

0:47:58 WM: To keep the sense of awe and wonderment about it, if you just take a piece and write down everything you hear that's not a note, man, you're gonna hear so much more, you just write down what you hear. And you can start with musical things like dynamics, inflections, start with things that you can name, then go into all the things you cannot name and you can assign whatever words you wanna assign to it. Profound or wistful, you start to find words that are much more ephemeral kinda. Then look at that list of the 40 or 50 things you've written about a piece and then look at the transcription and ask yourself, "How much of what's on that page with words on it is reflected in those notes?" Man, those notes are just the covering of something. And it's the very lowest level of covering. So you keep that sense of awe by addressing all of what's in music that has nothing to do with a note, and that's gonna be a whole lot more of it than what the notes indicate.

0:49:04 WM: And then when it's jazz, think a bunch of other people are playing too, so unless you're doing a total transcription, which... A good friend of mine has always talked about this. Unless you're transcribing the drums and the bass and whoever else is playing, then you're only transcribing one part of the song anyway. Then when you transcribe those other parts, man, you start to understand something about the beauty and complexity of this music. Because this music allows you to hear different people's perspective on the same phenomenon. And I don't think that's ever existed the way that it has existed in this music. There have been little examples of it but never a whole piece that's developed from four or five different people's perspective. It's really miraculous.

0:49:49 SL: That's great. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

0:49:51 WM: Thank you. Thank you so much.

0:49:55 AM: All right, we're gonna go back to Tamika Howard. Tamika you should be good now. Can you hear us?

0:50:02 Tamika Howard: Yes. Hi, Wynton. You will not remember me, but I'm going to tell you, back in the early '90s I was a freshman at Spellman College and I was a part of the Spellman Jazz Ensemble under Joseph Jennings. We opened for you, you hear my dog in the background. We opened for you at the Roxy in Atlanta, do you remember maybe playing... At least playing at the Roxy in Atlanta back in the early '90s?

0:50:27 WM: I remember. I've got a good memory, I remember everything you've seen.

0:50:30 TH: And we surrounded you like bees and honey. And it was a bunch of us girls, all girl jazz band. And I just wanna say that, I just have great admiration for you and your career and everything you're doing to advocate for jazz.

0:50:42 WM: Thank you.

0:50:43 TH: And I would love for you to hear me play one day. If I could give you a link or something, you can tell me what you think because my journey with jazz has been up and down to be honest with you. I've been off and on again, I haven't been consistent. But I think something is kinda happening with me and jazz because back in 2010 I did have the opportunity while at UGA... I'm a professor now, I'm a part-time professor. When I was getting my doctorate degree back at UGA, I was given the opportunity to study jazz composition with Steve Dance. Great, wonderful pianist and arranger. Oh my god, he's just insane. Anyways, I had the chance to do that and then of course, I neglected it after that, so I've been up and down. But what's happened in recent time... And this coming to my question is that...

0:51:37 TH: I've been an adjunct professor at a couple of different colleges, and one of the colleges I teach at, they asked me to start a jazz combo 'cause they heard about my love of jazz, I play at open mics and things like that. And so for the past year, until push got to shove, we had a jazz combo with about eight students, and of course, we had some things with the department as far as funding and the department is really struggling, so of course that got shut down after about a year. So I got a taste of it. So my thing was, I saw that I was bringing jazz to a group of people that... 'Cause it's outside of Atlanta, I'm calling from Georgia, and some of those more rural areas where as a music appreciation teacher, I had students tell me at one time, "Well, why are you teaching about jazz?"

0:52:27 TH: And then of course, and when we did our concerts, I could tell there was a audience, that we were really opening people up. Some people were really glad that we brought that to them, but it's just, what is your suggestions... Two part question. What are your suggestions as far as advocating for jazz in areas, especially areas in the South where, believe it or not, they're still kind of in the dark about the wonderful things of jazz. How do I advocate it as an educator? And then also with myself, what can I do to better myself? I would love to have a band one day. I write, but

all I do in the midst of being busy teaching classes, I'll hit a open mic here and there. And maybe I've been asked to do festivals, I've done festivals here and there too, but I don't think I'm as consistent as I need to be, so what is your reaction?

0:53:18 WM: Well, first, thank you for asking me a question. I remember that, I remember that gig. A lot of times, I tell people I remember stuff, they think I'm joking. I have a good memory. So it's one thing that I was blessed with. So a lot of the fantastic experiences I've had I can remember that and I can remember people. I think in terms of being an advocate for the music, you gotta just keep people in front of the best pieces that you know, the records you like, things, constantly research documents. I think a good recording is like a good book and get things that are appropriate for the kids you play it. And the main thing is to develop their listening habits, not just musicians. As a nation, if we could become better listeners to our own music, vernacular music, jazz music, any music that has a development section or some type of folk group, we will become better as people. We have lost track of trying to become better with our listening skills.

0:54:16 WM: We will listen to each other better, we'll be less prone to wanna argue and fight all the time about every little issue. We will understand that there are different perspectives, and jazz teachers that, even if you take something basic like Charlie Parker's quintet with Miles Davis playing "Now's The Time," 'cause their personalities are so different. Or you take the kind of perennial favorite which is, Kind of Blue, it's great just 'cause of the personalities of the soloists. The recording is good. Or you take something like, Dave Brubeck, Time Out. You get to recordings that are easy for people to listen to. Or Duke Ellington, The Far East Suite or John Coltrane and Johnny Hartman. Some of these records, people can listen to and they can kinda... Okay, they can follow it. Or any kind of real swinging big band with call and response, they go back and forth, brass, reed, brass, reed. And you get your five or 10 things that you really like, and get your students and people to listen to the music.

0:55:09 WM: Or if they can't hear records past a certain time, get stuff that's after 1960 something and just have them listen to things all over Sonny Rollin's Alfie or the Blues and the Abstract Truth. Some of these pieces are a little more popular, find them. And I think that's important. Listening is very, very important, and also to get people out that's not just in the band. With the band, get them singing and playing some blues and some basic music, some modal kind of things they could just play on immediately, then they'll start to enjoy the music. In terms of yourself, just communicate with me, if you go to my website and write a note to Luigi, just call him by his name, Luigi. And tell him to aggravate me. Yeah, 'cause I've been getting so many messages, I've been laying down on calling people and getting back with them. That's no disrespect, if I'm sitting on you. I can't keep up with my volume in this time, but...

0:56:03 TH: I can imagine.

0:56:05 WM: Tell Luigi to stay on me. He's a trumpet player, he will stay on top of me and then I'll communicate with you, we'll rap about it.

0:56:11 TH: That's what I'm talking about.

0:56:11 WM: But I think it's beautiful. Keep playing.

0:56:15 TH: Thank you so much. Thank you.

0:56:16 WM: Do your thing.

0:56:17 TH: One thing about...

0:56:17 WM: And never give up.

0:56:18 TH: Awesome. One thing about COVID-19, if it wasn't for COVID-19, I doubt if we all would have been brought together in the way that we've been brought together, so I'm thankful at least for that.

0:56:27 WM: That's right. Yeah, I think... Yeah, we gotta continue this after this is over.

0:56:31 TH: Yeah.

0:56:31 WM: That's the question, how do we stay in contact when our lives get filled up with things that allow us to not be really in this type of contact? Great.

0:56:41 AM: Awesome, thanks Tamika. All right, our next question is coming from a Niara Adebanye. Am I saying your name correct?

0:56:50 Niara Adebanye: Yes, you did.

0:56:50 AM: Great.

0:56:51 WM: Hey, Na. What are doing, Niara?

0:56:53 NA: I'm doing great. How are you?

0:56:55 WM: How old do you?

0:56:56 NA: I'm 14.

0:56:57 WM: 14. Is that some milk and cookies I see over there?

0:57:00 NA: No.

[chuckle]

0:57:01 WM: What time is it? Okay, it's 10 o'clock, all right.

0:57:07 NA: I met you one time at your rehearsal for the Sesame Street celebration with Ms. Thylacker.

[chuckle]

0:57:17 WM: I remember that.

0:57:18 NA: But I go to Juilliard and I'm in the music Advancement Program, and I major in classical clarinet, but I love jazz, and I was introduced to the clarinet in a jazz band. So how do I balance classical music and jazz while succeeding in both?

0:57:39 WM: Okay, I want you to look up the career of Benny Goodman, okay? I want you to just study his career. Look at how he started playing jazz, he went to the hall house, he studied with a symphonic clarinetist from the Chicago Symphony, so he played with Jimmie Noone, he came out, he created one of greatest bands ever, he played. Then he commissioned great clarinet concerto pieces that were written for him. But study the trajectory of his career. I also want you to listen to Jimmy Hamilton. He's a clarinetist, he grew up, he liked Benny Goodman. He played... He loved Barney Bigard. He put different styles together. And then the last clarinetist I want you to listen to is Sidney Bechet.

0:58:25 WM: So that's three people I gave you. Benny Goodman, study his life because of his classical music, and jazz. Jimmy Hamilton because he was a jazz musician playing with Duke Ellington and grew up listening to Benny Goodman. And I want you to listen Sidney Bechet. 'Cause he's the foundation of jazz clarinet playing. I think you just have to keep your schedule and realize that you don't have to make a choice. You have to practice things, it's gonna be much harder for you to learn how to play jazz because there's much less good information and infrastructure around it. But all of the playing is combined. For someone your age, you coming after all of these people who have done a lot of work, but I just want you to check out their work. Now I can look at you, I can tell your level of intelligence, about a cadence of your sense. I can tell you're extremely intelligent. Okay, use your intelligence to your advantage. Does that make sense what I'm telling you?

0:59:21 NA: Yes.

0:59:22 WM: Okay. Intelligence is an advantage because all three of those musicians were extremely intelligent. And I want you to research them, learn about their lives, know what they went through, and... All of them they've passed away, learn what they went through in different periods, and pick a solo that you would like to play of each of them. And then when you study Benny Goodman you're gonna come into contact with a lot of the contemporary music, come back to our rehearsal, make sure you talk to Victor, Victor Goines. And you gotta get around the music and stay around it. And make sure you go hear The New York Philharmonic, because that's some unbelievable clarinet playing that's going on, when you get their chance. Okay?

1:00:00 NA: Yes, Mr. McGill is one of my teachers.

1:00:03 WM: Well he... Okay. You know, Anthony he's not only a great teacher, he's a great person. So you can have an example of great clarinet playing, a great, a depth of humanity and the kind of beauty of him as a person, is also... You're fortunate to live in a time where you can hear that kind of clarinet playing and be around and do everything he tells you to do, so that when you come back to your lesson the next week, or the next two weeks, he wants to teach you even more. Because you're gonna be out here. I can just tell you got a certain kind of seriousness to you. Embrace that.

1:00:37 NA: Okay, thank you.

1:00:39 AM: All right, I'm proud of you.

1:00:40 NA: Thank you.

1:00:41 WM: Make sure you... I don't want you staying up too late. 10 o'clock... 11 o'clock curfew. Good luck.

[chuckle]

1:00:49 AM: Thank you. All right, our next question is coming from Jazz at Lincoln Center's very own Maurice Restrepo. Maurice [1:00:56] _____.

1:01:00 Maurice Restrepo: Thanks guys. [chuckle]

1:01:01 WM: It wasn't supposed to happen man.

1:01:04 MR: I'm surprised man.

1:01:05 AM: Go man.

1:01:06 MR: So, when I'm not putting in the work for us at night, I'm getting my Master's in Ethnomusicology over at Hunter and my professor Barbara Hampton often talks about the record you did with Yacub Addy. And I was wondering, in working with the rhythms from the [1:01:20] _____, how was your approach to transcribing them, digesting them, and then also kind of marrying them with jazz.

1:01:29 WM: That's a good question. Well, first with Cub, you know, I loved him. He passed away. We called him Namwe. And I went to the Symphony Center, man not 20 years ago with Billy Banks. And Billy introduced me to Cub. And Cub said, when I met him, he said, "I wanna do a piece with you." Man, I wrote this... Started writing this piece. And I was right and everything on all the wrong beats I was calling Cub and he was telling me where one was, it wasn't nothing to do with one. So finally, Carlos got old enough to teach me about the rhythms. 'Cause then at that time, Carlos was maybe 10 or 11 years old. Carlos Henriquez. Then in that time, I had met Carlos, and now around 2000, 2001, we did a show. And it was terrible... The First Congo Square. So I knew

Carlos, by that time Carlos was maybe 22 or 23, so I asked Carlos I knew Carlos always liked to talk about clave. I said, "Carlito, listen to this and tell me why this is this sad." And he was like, "Man, this stuff is not written to the right bells, man." So we started to talk about a bell patterns, and this. And Carlos actually, Carlos and Ali Jackson opened my eyes.

1:02:37 WM: We started... Then with them, I started to study it and they started showing me... Ali would say, "Man, this is the drum pattern." So I would get tapes from Yacub, and Cub would tell me what this meant and what this was, and then I would sit down with Carlos and Ali and they would just go through like the bell, I played the bell, Ali would play a drum part, Carlos would play... This literally went on for years. So from the first Congo Square that I wrote... I wrote a totally different one with Cub, and it took... I would say it took 10 years, man, it took me like maybe four or five years to understand what Cub and them we're doing. And if it had not been for Carlos and... 'Cause he grew up in the Afro-Latin tradition and he understood what to listen for. Not that he understood all the rhythms because we were always saying, "Man, what is this? Or what is that?" And then when I got with Cub, I could call him and see him and all the... All the casts from Ghana. Ani and... We loved them and we were like brothers. Then we started to put the pieces together. And it took a lot of work, I'm not gonna lie to you. But to understand the rhythms and where things came in and the cues and what the bell patterns were.

1:03:42 WM: And we had one bell we argued about for years, man. Carlos and I. I was hearing it like...[vocalization] And I wrote this whole piece going... One, two, three...[vocalization] So Carlos was listening to this, and he said, "Man, nobody is gonna play a bell pattern that's a half beat away." So the bell is actually instead of being...[vocalization] It's...[vocalization] So that playing in three and four at the same time, if it was...[vocalization] But if it goes...[vocalization] It's all on the... The fourth beat is always... Man, this is probably confusing to you. I'm sorry.

1:04:36 MR: No it's great. [chuckle]

1:04:37 WM: But it just... And then with Yacub I would go up and study with him and hang with him man we'd get some of the good shrimp that Amina would make and Obi and Ahmed. I was thinking about Congo Square the other day and how much I would love us to do that again. But Yacub has passed away, you know? But it was educational for me. One of my great masters in life was Yacub Addy. I learnt more from that man, just about spiritual things, let alone about just a certain type of African music. And the kind of polarity and truth in the music. Man, I appreciate you calling and reminding me of him. It was something to put it together, very difficult.

1:05:22 MR: Nice, thanks man.

1:05:23 WM: Man, thank you, man.

1:05:25 AM: Thanks, Maurice. It's good to see you.

1:05:28 WM: All right, Mo.

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1:05:30 AM: All right, we got time for just probably one more question. I'd like to take this moment to remind everybody that we're a non-profit organization in New York City. If it is within your means, please consider making a donation. We're extraordinarily grateful for any support. With that, I think our last question is gonna come from Milan Selassie. Milan, can you hear us?

1:05:54 Milan Selassie: I can, thank you very much.

1:05:58 AM: Great.

1:06:00 MS: Thank you for allowing me to ask this question, I wanna, first of all, say thank you Wynton, for allowing us the opportunity to listen to you, and I also wanna say thank you to Jennifer Lodezno, who invited me to be a part of this. Wynton, I met you in Johannesburg a few months ago with Greg Vinson and the group, I gave a speech right after you did. I'm the person that asked you about the legend of [chuckle] sugarcane and sweetie pie.

[laughter]

1:06:27 WM: I remember that. Hey, man.

1:06:29 MS: How are you?

1:06:31 WM: Hey.

1:06:31 MS: I wanted to ask two very quick questions, one, you have a lot of books behind you, and if you were to recommend one for us to read, which one would it be? And the second question would be, I came in a little late, so I'm not sure if you discussed this, but I'm an Indie features film producer, given your knowledge of jazz, and there's so many complex characters who've led very interesting lives, which person would you suggest a person like me, doing some additional research in, that you think would be a fascinating movie? Thank you very much.

[pause]

1:07:13 AM: Hey Wynton, I think you're on mute still. Sorry.

1:07:19 WM: What's a good book for you read, I have to know what you like to say what you... You have to tell me what kinda stuff you like to read, then I could tell you. But I think any book on world mythology is good. I always like the kinda world mythology books. But there's so many great books. I believe in the kinda universal myths, 'cause when you get to those myths, you can understand more things symbolically. And Joseph Campbell, all the series of books he did, is interesting to kinda read primitive myths, so on and so forth. So if I just had to pick a generic one, that's what I would say. In terms of... You know what, I forgot to... Start think about these myths, I got lost on what I was thinking, man, I forgot what it is that you asked, the second thing.

1:08:20 MS: The second question pertained to your knowledge of jazz and some of the interesting

vibrant characters that you've been experienced, that you know so much about. Who would be a great story that you think people don't know about, but because of their life, the complexity, the brilliance, just the uniqueness that people would love to watch?

1:08:42 WM: Man, there's so many of them that was great. It's so many... I'm trying to think of who... I think Art Blakey would be a good one. You know, I Think Boo, people know him, but I think he would interesting. I think the most interesting of... Duke Ellington, just 'cause of the world lived in, he know so many people, and he was such a remote figure, he knew how to keep himself distant from things, but, I feel like his world was huge. So whose world would have the most people in it, it would probably be him. But I still... I love Billie Holiday. I mean so many, man, I don't know who you're looking for, somebody who's not known, I don't know. There's so many great ones, it's hard to pick. I'm always fascinated by the music, 'cause it's just so many great people, so many people. Every time I discover somebody else, wow, I didn't even know this person. And it's a lot of great people. Maybe somebody who's not even from America would be interesting. How they learned how to play and what they did, how they did what they did. The things they put together. There has been a lot of interesting people. Now, if you want some wild people who lived the wildest lives, there's some of them too. Jelly Roll will probably be the best for that. Jelly did a lot of stuff. I wish I could be better for you. I think Jelly Roll will probably take you into more rooms. I think.

1:10:24 AM: Awesome, thanks Wynton. That's about all the time we have for tonight. Guys, I just wanted to say thanks to you all for being here and thank you to Wynton for taking this time out of your week, every week. We'll be back every Monday night 9:00 PM as we are, and Wynton, do you have any closing words?

1:10:47 WM: Yeah, thank y'all so much for coming. I'm just deeply appreciative of you coming in, and checking it out. And until we meet again, let's be for real in everything we do. Much love and respect. Have a good night.