

Skain's Domain

Episode 5 - April 20, 2020

0:00:01 Moderator: Wynton, you're ready?

0:00:02 Wynton Marsalis: I'm ready.

0:00:03 Moderator: Alright.

0:00:06 WM: I wanna thank all of you for joining me once again. This is Skain's Domain, we're talking about subjects significant and trivial, with the same intensity and feeling. We're gonna talk tonight... I'm gonna start off by talking about a series we're gonna start, which is, "How to develop your ability to hear, listen to music." I think that for many years, me and a great seer of the American vernacular, Phil Schaap, argued about the importance of music appreciation. We tend to spend a lot of time with musicians, talking about music, and we forget about the general audience of listeners, so I'm gonna go through 16 steps of hearing, over the time. I'm gonna be announcing when it is, and I'm just gonna talk about the levels of hearing from when you first start hearing music, to as you deepen your understanding of music, and you're able to understand more and more things, till I get to a very, very high level of hearing. Some of it comes from things that we all know from studying music and even what we like, what we listen to, but also it comes from the many different experiences I've had with great musicians, from the beginning. I can always remember hearing when I was a kid, the story of Ben Webster, the great balladeer on tenor saxophone. He was playing a beautiful ballad.

0:01:21 WM: And in the middle of it, he stopped, and everybody said, "What's wrong, Ben?" His nickname was Frog, they said, "What's wrong, Frog?" He said, "I forgot the words," so because he could not put the melodic notes in the emotional context of the words, he felt it was time to stop. I can remember doing a lecture with the great Reginald Veal on the bass, who grew up in the Afro-American church tradition, and he explained with his bass, what things mean in a church service, so he started to play, this is the offering, this is the recessional, this is that... And then he started to do a juke in like a funk bass line. He said, "What do that have to do with service?" So he connected us to the fact that music has meaning. I can remember the great Yacub Addy, master drummer from Ghana, laughing, saying that, "You, Americans, made a big mistake when you failed to realize that drums have meaning, and rhythms have meaning, and a sound has the meaning." He was always talking about that and it takes me back also to when I was going to the tango when I was in a trumpet lesson, and one of my teachers asked me, we were working on Mahler's Third Symphony, and he asked me about the solo, and I was playing it and he said... It's called a post-horn solo, and

he said, "What is a post-horn?"

0:02:37 WM: And I was trying to figure out something and lie, and try to just come up with something to make myself seem knowledgeable and he said, "It's just exactly what it says. Somebody, they're delivering mail, and they call it, 'The sound of the trumpet across dale and valley,' and it has to be played with that feeling." So many times if you don't know the meaning of something, it's very, very difficult to hear it and to know what it is. Also, from the whole presence of Rattlers and Shakers in music across time, and when those Shakers and Rattlers are used to call out the Holy Spirit, these are just different things. The music means different things at different times. In New Orleans' music, the tradition of the trombone being the instrument that signals you're gonna start a jazz funeral and Jelly Roll Morton on the "Dead Man Blues," in the beginning he's just joking around, he says, "I think I hear that trombone phone. I think I hear that trombone phone blowing." So he's letting us know what the traditions are, so we're gonna talk about the levels of hearing from just hearing music as a sound experience which means like how you hear a film score, just as dynamics and textures and moods, to finally understanding the meanings of music in the context of national and global history and connecting things and trying to understand where they fit in on the timeline.

0:04:02 WM: That's where I'm gonna be at, coming up, but I think tonight because we've had so many good conversations and telling our stories and stuff, of course, we can always go back to our story-telling. I wanna thank all my guests. Just last week with Dee Dee and Chick, it was so informative and beautiful to hear them just tell stories and many things I know none of us knew. We're gonna get back to that, but I think tonight I just wanna hear from you all. It's been a month since we started, and we started with our 10 things to do during this time that we're quarantined and we feel very different now, a month later, and we're gonna feel very different a month from now, because this is a very interesting period, so I'm just gonna open it up to whatever questions you all have, and if I can say anything that will help alleviate some confusion, maybe some of the things I say will add to confusion. If it does, I apologize and I will do the best I can to be as forthcoming and direct as possible. So, Adam?

0:05:06 Moderator: Great. Thanks, Wynton. Cool, looks like our first question is from Hugo Dart. Hugo, go ahead.

0:05:15 Hugo Dart: Hi. Hello, Wynton. It's a real privilege to be able to speak with you again and these series of conversations, it's just amazing, and I appreciate the opportunity. Now, we're talking about listening, and I guess for many of us non-musicians, how we listen to music depends a lot on the media, on how we have access and I've been fortunate enough to actually attend a few concerts at Jazz at Lincoln Center. I'm from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, but I've been able to make it there a few times. But for many of us, it's through the media, and of course, TV is mass media, so I recall this interview you gave some years ago about how televised jazz can be very important, but, and I quote, "It has to be on our terms, because many times, musicians want [0:06:09] ____ tradition it's not on our terms and then it's best not to do it."

0:06:13 HD: Now there have been some very interesting examples of jazz on television, and the

ones that really come to mind are the Ken Burns series "Jazz," which you participated in, and I learned so much from you in the series. Then there was the "Treme," show that had everybody from Fats Domino to Jon Batiste. Now, of course, we've been able to see you on CBS Sunday Morning, so there's maybe interesting examples of musicians being on TV on their own terms, I guess. Do you feel that's better now, do you think that it's easier for musicians to really reach the public and educate the public about the music on their own terms on television? Is that easier today? Is it easier because you have the option of doing that online now?

0:07:02 WM: Well, I think... Thank you for your question. I think it's... If you wanna be educated in there, I think you can go online and you can... There's a lot of information, so... And that way, I've said before that I love the fact that so much information is online, but I think that it should be something that we learn in school, music appreciation. Music is a very important art. It teaches us so many things and it's difficult to have a three-minute television slot every now and then and educate a general public in a very complex though simple subject. I think many times when you appear on TV, if you're trying to play something, the question of the producers is always, "Do you sing something? Can you play something fast, like can it be over quick?" Or, "Can you play something slow, like is a singer gonna sing a slow ballet, so we don't have to hear, 'do do do do,' all those notes? Can you not play? Can you talk about something?" And I think that we have a long way to go with that, and in terms of our culture, we've devalued music a certain way as an art, as it has come to the forefront as a way to sell products. Now, I'm not against us selling products. It's always a matter of balance. Once something as deep as music becomes only a product connected to everything, but adolescent passion, everything from adolescent passion to toothpaste, it's not something to decry, but I think that it's important for us to understand that the art of music is very serious.

0:08:31 WM: And a national music has a lot of things that you need to teach your nation. One question I've always asked younger musicians, not a general population when I meet them after gigs is, "Can you name five American folk songs?" I'm speaking of gigs in America. The answer is almost always, "No," and it's just part of the failure of our education system and while I say, "Yes, we have failed at these things," it doesn't mean I believe we're gonna continue to fail, but I believe we have to point out kinda things and try to work on it. You said you're from Rio de Janeiro, so an example of that is the kind of cross-rhythms and styles we share like a Baião.

[vocalization]

0:09:15 WM: Baião has the same feeling of the New Orleans' Habanera that we play in parades. Or Forró from musicians in the military who would throw dances and they would say, "The dance was for all," and people in Brazil would say, "Forró."

[vocalization]

0:09:33 WM: So the music has many connections and when we see 'em and hear 'em, we start to say, "Okay. Oh yeah, I see what that is," Or, "Yeah, I understand that," and the one rhythm I find, just to give you a little information about music, that we can hear all over world is...

[noise]

0:09:48 WM: For some reason, that rhythm which we call Habanera, is called a kinda Indian parade beat in New Orleans. It's in a lot of Pakistani music, a lot of African music. It's the Baião in the Brazilian music it's a... What is it called in tango? I'm gonna remember when I've stopped talking, but this rhythm has a lot of connections, so yeah, I think, I don't know if TV... I think you can go online and get good information, but in terms of commercial television as your way of getting that type of information, I'm not that hopeful for that.

0:10:23 HD: Right, thank you.

0:10:25 WM: Thank you. Sorry for that long answer, little brother.

0:10:27 HD: No, I appreciate it.

0:10:28 WM: I like your Brooklyn Bridge background.

0:10:31 HD: I took the picture myself. I'm very proud of it.

0:10:33 WM: It's a nice picture. Congratulations.

0:10:34 HD: [0:10:35] ____.

0:10:35 Moderator: Thanks, Hugo.

0:10:35 WM: Yeah, you're right, man.

0:10:40 Moderator: Alright, the next question is from Kevin Stevens. Kevin, go ahead.

0:10:48 Kevin Stevens: Good evening. How's it going?

0:10:49 WM: Alright, how you feeling?

0:10:51 KS: Excellent. By way of distant connection, I was in marching band with Kenny Rampton back in college.

0:10:56 WM: Alright.

0:11:00 KS: I've pretty seen a couple of occasions that when you're a player you should bring out what your instrument does best and I've been trying to figure that out for the vibraphone. I'm an amateur vibe player and I haven't come up with a good answer for what the vibraphone does best. I'm curious, both what you think that answer is, and then as sort of a sub-question when you're listening, do you like listening to two mallet or four-mallet players? Or do you care?

0:11:23 WM: Okay first, I don't know whether they're playing two or four mallets, so I don't really care. If I'm looking at them, I can tell. I think the more mallets, they can get that real soft pretty sound and play chords, and I love all the instruments and I feel like... When I think about the... Playing on the vibraphone, it can be a very sexy instrument. It can be very beautiful like the way it's played with Milt Jackson and the Modern Jazz Quartet. It can be a very powerful instrument played with a lot of fire and heat, like the way Stefon Harris plays it. It can be played with tremendous, tremendous energy, and it can play up and down the registers and be very percussive, like the way the young Joel Ross plays. It can be... It's so many things. It's in the percussion family. It's a great highlight instrument. It's also like a piano, but just the ringing. It rings, it's soft, it can be played with softer mallets and have a very ethereal sound. It can create a very pointed, kind of aggressive sound. It can create a kind of hazy patina of sound that makes you feel like you're in a daze. It's an instrument that's tremendously versatile and so many people have played it so well for such a long time that I really love that instrument. I need to study it more, but I like to use it sometimes in orchestration for colors and there are many vib players that I've loved, loved their playing.

0:12:42 KS: Thank you.

0:12:42 WM: Thank you very much.

0:12:42 Moderator: Thanks, Kevin. Alright, next question is from Robert Hrabluk. Robert, go ahead.

0:13:09 Robert Hrabluk: Thank you, Adam. Hello, Mr. Marsalis. How are you?

0:13:12 WM: Alright, how you feeling?

0:13:13 RH: I'm doing alright. In the very first episode of Skain's, you said, "Use this as a time to get to know the people that you think you know," and that resonated with me. I thought it was a profound statement because it really is that time, right? You have the opportunity, and we all have the opportunity tonight, to speak to you and get to know you a little bit more and I really... I think I speak for everybody in the sense that we appreciate it very much and my condolences on your father passing, and speaking of listening, we should know that he's listening, right, and he's listening in tonight, enjoying the same as all of us. The question of listening and the perception of listening. At faster tempos, the perception of the eighth note is that, in swing music, is that it straightens out a little bit. At slower tempos, how are you perceiving that eighth-note feel? Are you thinking in triplets? Where are you thinking the accent? Where does it become a shuffle versus a swing? How are you perceiving that eighth note swing rhythm at slower tempos?

0:14:33 WM: Yeah, that's a good question, because it's something that... When we tend to talk about the innovations of Charlie Parker, we always talk about the harmonics. He played the upper harmonics as if musicians before 1940 didn't play 11s and 13s and sharp 9s. They played all of those things. I think it's a question of the African six and four, so if you start with that.

[clapping 6 against 4 rhythm]

0:15:22 WM: You can see a derivation of the fourth feeling against the sixth feel and if you go look, listen to drummers like Billy Higgins, would follow you in the ride pattern. Somebody like Connie Kay would play a really tight swing.

[vocalization]

0:15:36 WM: Almost like something you wouldn't think would swing, but it did and I think each musician has a different way they interpret that eighth note feel. If you think about it, if you're playing on a really fast tempo, one thing Dizzy told me, was to make sure, if you really have something that's really fast, tap your feet on the downbeats.

[vocalization]

0:15:56 WM: But if you think about, we're not going...

[vocalization]

0:16:00 WM: Without playing straight 16 notes, it's like...

[vocalization]

0:16:02 WM: It's like shuffling.

[vocalization]

0:16:06 WM: We're also not going...

[vocalization]

0:16:08 WM: That's kind of like the way the musicians did before Charlie Parker. A good example of that is Johnny Hodges is playing on Duke Ellington's, "Giddybug Gallop," so I tend to be very loose with my interpretation of that shuffle pattern and that triplet. I had an exercise I would do where I would go...

[clapping]

0:16:24 WM: I would just take beat, it's good for musicians to just go...

[vocalization]

0:16:47 WM: So you go 16 note, rest, eight note, rest, triplet, rest, so you start to feel how the beat moves inside of a beat. I don't wanna be too technical about it when I'm playing or when I'm

listening because I can't enjoy it, but I just wanna do these things enough so that I feel the time naturally, so I know when I was growing up, in my trumpet lessons sometimes, we would have these military trumpet exercises in the Arban's Book.

[vocalization]

0:17:15 WM: And my teacher would always say, "Understand the difference in trumpet." A one-two, three-four, four...

[vocalization]

0:17:24 WM: The 16 note is different from the triplet, and also something like the Hindemith Sonata has that...

[vocalization]

0:17:34 WM: It goes from triplets to 16 notes. In jazz, you have to hear the larger unit. The faster you go, the more you have to hear inside of a larger unit, so if you're going...

[vocalization]

0:17:48 WM: Like what Dizzy was telling me, you wanna play a larger unit. Now, let's also remember that when you swing, larger the swing falls in an eight-note pattern, so if you're swinging...

[vocalization]

0:18:03 WM: Five, six, seven, eight...

[vocalization]

0:18:05 WM: Three, four, five, six, seven, eight, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.

[vocalization]

0:18:13 WM: So it's falling in a natural eighth feel and so I've practiced a lot, learning different shuffles. I would try to play that shuffle the way Sweets Edison played it. I tried to play like the 16 note the way Dizzy would feel it or way Miles would feel it, or Clifford Brown and try to find my own way of phrasing all those things at one time. I did a record a long time ago called, "The Magic Hour," and on that piece, it goes from four, five different sections. I work with different shuffles, so I don't know if I answered your question, but I try to be open in my hearing of it and if you take somebody like Art Blakey, he could play a shuffle by just playing quarter notes, so the bell would go...

[vocalization]

0:18:52 WM: He wouldn't have any triplet. He'd be going...

[vocalization]

0:18:57 WM: You start smiling, boy would play that... He'd play that quarter note for... He might have played 10 minutes.

[vocalization]

0:19:04 WM: And just the way he was placing it, you could feel...

[vocalization]

0:19:05 WM: When you looked at him, he was like, "Boy, I'm swinging up in there tonight," so there are many ways to feel these beats, but understand that it all comes from the six-four tension and African music. The three versus the two, the male-female energy going against each other. The positive and negative. It's a thing that exists. Yin and Yang. It just exists in the world. It's how you ride the wave between those tensions.

0:19:05 RH: Thank you so much, Mr. Marsalis. I appreciate it.

0:19:05 WM: Thank you, little brother.

0:19:05 Moderator: Thank you, Robert.

0:19:05 WM: I'mma tell Kenny.

[chuckle]

0:19:49 Moderator: Alright. Next question is from William Schwartzman. William, go ahead.

0:19:49 William Schwartzman: Hello, Mr. Marsalis. Thank you so much for doing this...

0:20:00 WM: Alright. Thank you, man.

0:20:03 WS: So I've noticed for me, personally, improvising, especially over a tune that I keep playing over and over again and I sort of, put it in my repertoire, I begin to develop habits during my solos and they start to sink into my muscle memory and overtime... I'm a piano player, my hands sort of feel like attracted to those certain... Almost like magnets and I wanted your thoughts on how to fix this issue if you think it even is a big issue, and just your general thoughts on this topic of habitual playing while soloing. Thank you.

[chuckle]

0:20:42 WM: Okay, that's a good question. How old are you?

0:20:45 WS: I'm 15.

0:20:47 WM: Man, if you 15, I think... Great. Tape yourself. Play a lot. Notice the things you like about your playing and the things you don't like about your playing. Listen to other musicians and I'mma challenge you to listen a layer below licks or harmony and I want you to try to figure out what the musician's objectives are when they play. You 15, that's old enough to think about it. How is that person... What is their harmonic concept? What is their concept of melody? And I want you to think when you listen to them, what are they trying to do when they play a solo? What do you notice about the way they develop form? The way they make harmonic choices? So go from the surface of it, which is where you're saying about your own playing, you have licks that your fingers falling to, and I want you to get a layer beneath that, which is, instead of, with licks their playing, how are they trying to make an audience feel? I'm gonna give you an example. If I ask you to write an essay about what it feels like to be quarantined. Then you say, "Okay, I'm gonna tell you everything about how it feels to me to be quarantined." Okay, then you write down all of what you think about it, but what if I asked you that, and then you look at me and say, "Well, how do you want to feel when I write this piece?" You see. I want you to incorporate... "

[pause]

0:22:39 WM: I feel like I'm playing the same stuff over and over again. He said, "Well, man, if you don't play something that's the same, nobody will know it's you," and then he sang a lick that Charlie Parker played all the time.

[vocalization]

0:22:49 WM: And he said, "When you heard that, you knew it was Bird," so I'm not telling you play cliches. You can pick through what I'm telling you. You hear what I'm saying, right?

0:22:58 WS: Yeah.

0:23:00 WM: Okay, so one, study yourself, figure out what your objectives are. Change those objectives to include more creativity. Another thing to do when you practicing songs, play them in different keys. Once you get... Go a half-step up or a half-step below, and I'll guarantee your fingers are not gonna fall on the same thing. Alright, try that.

0:23:19 WS: Thank you so much, Mr. Marsalis. That means a lot to me.

0:23:21 WM: Hey, man. I look forward to hearing you play sometime once we get back out there.

0:23:25 WS: Thank you.

0:23:27 WM: Come back and let me... Hear you do your thing.

0:23:30 WS: Thank you so much.

0:23:31 Moderator: Thanks, William.

0:23:31 WM: Alright.

0:23:33 Moderator: Alright, next up is Kiera Peppers. Kiera, go ahead.

0:23:38 KP: Hi, Mr. Marsalis.

0:23:41 WM: Alright, how you doing?

0:23:42 KP: I'm okay. How are you?

0:23:43 WM: I'm alright. I'm good, good. Thank you.

0:23:46 KP: I am a music teacher in the South Bronx and I teach... I teach kindergarten to fourth grade, but I teach through the lens of jazz, so everything that we study is somehow related, in some way, shape or form, to jazz and before the quarantine, we were studying Duke Ellington and my second through fourth-graders were studying, "Satin Doll." And before that, we did, "Duke's Place," and they had a really good time, so my question for you is... Well, because now that it's kind of difficult to teach music online, they have me doing Instagram lives and things like that, but I have to do some lesson planning and unit planning for next year, and my fourth unit for fourth grade and third grade is on the Marsalis family, so...

[laughter]

0:24:39 WM: I'm sorry. Let me apologize to you.

[laughter]

0:24:42 KP: It's all good, it's all good. My... I think it was either last year or my second... Or the year before that, we had a picture of you in the classroom and the kids loved it. They always said hi to Mr. Marsalis, so...

0:24:57 WM: They liked drawing on it.

[laughter]

0:25:00 WM: Tell them to keep their graffiti off of my picture.

[laughter]

0:25:03 KP: I'll tell them next time not to draw such a thin mustache.

[laughter]

0:25:08 KP: But no, they liked it. They really dug it. They're very interested in whatever and however, I present it to them. They really love it and so last year when I took... No, yeah, last year when I took a piano course at Juilliard, in the evening, whatever I learned there I would bring it back to them. They really enjoyed it, so I guess my question is to you is just like, what would you want children to know about developing or listening out for harmony and what would you want them to know, I guess coming from you and your heart as a musician, for five-year-olds to 10-year-olds?

0:25:45 WM: Well, first I wanna say that I absolutely love you.

0:25:45 KP: Aw, thank you.

0:25:45 WM: You're doing God's work. When I...

[chuckle]

0:25:54 WM: I'm telling you, I went to, been to so many schools, and when I get to that age, what you're teaching. The kids are so beautiful and so much of what they learn is from your feeling, so your kids are unbelievably lucky to have you as a teacher.

0:26:08 KP: Oh, thank you.

0:26:10 WM: Just by the kind of love and feeling you have, I know that if I would have come to your classroom I would love to do it, the feeling of it. I tend to think that a complicated thing like harmony, it's best to make it simple, so give them songs that are easy to sing harmonies to.

0:26:25 KP: Okay.

0:26:25 WM: And have them sing the harmonies. They don't even know they're doing it until you tell them. If I have two voices, start with two, then add three, I always like to start with just the blues and give them the simplest kind of hymns. I love that hymn in those American folk songs and you in the South Bronx, so you wanna get some stuff from that Afro-Latin tradition.

0:26:46 KP: Yeah. Oh yeah, they love that.

0:26:48 WM: You got to get... And the... There's also very basic fundamental songs that everybody sings and knows. It's great for them to learn that and then after you've taught them and they're singing in harmony, then you tell them, "Hey, this is harmony," because harmony is vertical and it's

horizontal.

0:27:04 KP: Yeah.

0:27:05 WM: So I would tend to teach them just a part that they don't... Like people in church sing in harmony. We don't know about singing in harmony y'all. We just start to find a note the fifth of way or something.

0:27:15 KP: Right, right.

0:27:16 WM: And modal music is good. Things like spirituals, very basic fundamental material that people have already sung harmonies on. Don't make it mysterious.

0:27:26 KP: Right.

0:27:26 WM: And then I think also... It's interesting about harmony, it's a thing that you can be... It's such an accompanying thing that you can be the main voice, and then you can go far in the background. I would teach them just that rudimentary harmony on songs like, "Little Liza Jane," and with that age, I believe in keeping it moving. Like even if I was on Instagram, I would have them singing. "Hey, we gonna learn these five or six songs," and always that enthusiasm and no matter how bad it is, keep repeating it.

[chuckle]

0:27:55 KP: Yeah.

0:27:55 WM: After a year, they're gonna get it, but I would always be, "This great, but let's try this second part. Let's sing this and let's do this," and I think everything singing and tapping out rhythms, so that's kind of how I would deal with it.

0:28:07 KP: Okay. Okay, thank you so much.

0:28:10 WM: I don't know if that helps.

0:28:11 KP: It does.

0:28:11 WM: But write to me. Get in touch with me. I'm gonna try to come to your school and we can get out of that...

[overlapping conversation]

0:28:14 KP: Oh, we would love that, Mr. Marsalis. The kids would love it.

0:28:18 WM: I would love... I'mma bring Carlos with me. He's from the South Bronx. We do that

type of stuff as a hobby.

0:28:22 KP: Oh, Henriquez?

0:28:23 WM: 'Cause he is the man. Yeah.

0:28:24 KP: Yes, he is. Yes, he is. Thank you so much.

0:28:27 WM: Yeah, I'll bring Carlos, bring Papi with me. We get out there.

[laughter]

0:28:32 KP: You're always welcome. Thank you.

0:28:33 WM: Yes, ma'am. Alright.

0:28:35 Moderator: Thank you, Kiera.

0:28:36 WM: Thank you.

0:28:36 KP: Thank you.

0:28:37 WM: Yes ma'am. Good luck with your kids.

[chuckle]

0:28:40 Moderator: Alright, next question is from Pradyumna Manot. Go ahead.

[pause]

0:28:50 Moderator: Pradyumna, are you there?

[pause]

0:28:55 WM: I'm having trouble hearing you, but you look... I see you got your...

0:29:00 Moderator: Oh yeah, there you are.

0:29:00 PM: Can you hear me?

0:29:00 WM: Okay.

0:29:02 PM: Hi Mr. Marsalis. How are you?

0:29:04 WM: How you doing, little brother?

0:29:06 PM: It's a great honor to meet you. I'm here in India and I studied from the late Madhav Chari who used to talk about you...

0:29:12 WM: Oh man, that's my man.

[chuckle]

0:29:14 PM: He used to talk about you and your father all the time, so I learned many things indirectly from you and your father and this is a great honor just to be here. My question is that being over here, so far away from the USA, and trying to be able to sound like a jazz musician, I think I have to work a lot to understand how to create melodies in my improvisation because it's like another language and then when we transcribed I get confused as to what do I really do with the transcribing because I don't know how to translate that into my own creative playing very effectively, so... And how can I create stronger melodies that speak jazz and not something else, was my question.

0:30:06 WM: Okay, first, thank you for calling in. I want to say, first of all, "Madhav." Madhav Chari, the great Madhav Chari, was my absolute man. Man, I loved Madhav, so I'm gonna tie it with you, saying into conversations that Madhav and I had. Madhav passed away. We went once to Queens. He was in New York to see a concert, a traditional Indian music from South India, so Madhav was counting out forms for me and then he would say, "Okay, you tell me where it is." Man, I would start counting forms out, I never knew where it was, so sometimes the people would go, "Oh." I would say, "What are they doing 'oh' about? It wasn't anything fast." He would say, "You can't hear that?" And I'd be like, "No, man, I have no idea what they're playing," and he said, "You have a lot of work to do." You know how Madhav was.

[laughter]

0:30:52 PM: Yeah.

0:30:54 WM: Madhav didn't mince words, so I was always trying to learn Indian music from Madhav and how can I hear this form or how can I do this? The most difficult thing to hear is the meaning of events in other people's culture. Man, somebody plays fast, yeah, something happened, but... In this concert, just something would happen and everybody in the audience... And I knew the audience was good 'cause it was all older people and... I think that, let's break apart what you're just saying. First, let's look at the fact that now Jazz is an international language and musicians have learned how to play that language all over the world. We can go back to the great Django Reinhardt. A European gypsy could play the way he played with as much authority as any jazz soloist that was playing, so it's something he did to figure that out and it's kinda like, you gotta look at it... Like when people found... When the Rosetta stone was found, now we can make comparative analysis to translate these ancient languages and look at where we are now, with hieroglyphics. Look at where we are, not from that, but look at where we are now, not from the Rosetta stone, look at where we

are now with cuneiform.

0:32:04 WM: We tended to break problems apart, so you're talking about melodic language. Start from the very basic melodies, the spirituals, the hymns. Things that are the foundation of a certain type of Western melody and then figure out what is the relationship that has to Indian melodies that you know, 'cause all of these things are related. Just some are tangential. When we did something with the group from Pakistan, it was interesting. They were counting like 238 bars of a form and we were thinking... And they counting 238 bars, but then you think about kinda the nature of Indian mathematicians, of the whole kinda superiority of chess or the kinda spatial way that they can work all the way that Madhav was counting forms out. Man, it was so complex, but for him, it was fundamental, so I think, find those things that we have in common, while you study the thing, the melodies you want learn, and do a translation. Translate from what you know to what you don't know and fill in the gaps and don't abandon all of what you know to learn what somebody else figured out because you're gonna find a lot of common ground. Look for that common ground.

0:33:15 WM: One thing that we have in common, is a kind of playing scales and figures on top of a drone and so I would always know to say... 'cause if you think even the most complex tune, tunes have bridges. On some level, it's a drone. Even something like, "Giant Steps," you going back and forth from whole tone scales, so I would try to perceive that scale of relationship, and I would try to study anybody who worked in that field of Indian music and jazz in a serious way. And then, the last thing I would say is, I would not transcribe by writing notes down. I would use my ears to transcribe and try to figure out... Once again, like I was telling my little young brother who was 15, try to figure out what things mean when people are playing it and try to think of what feeling do I evoke when I play these things? And I think that if you're systematic in your understanding and always start with what you like, and what you know. It's always best to start with forms of music you like and forms of music that you know and start from there, and start to spread your education out from there and you're gonna find a lot. Just the fact that you knew Madhav alone, 'cause you know how serious he was.

0:34:29 PM: Oh, my god, yeah.

0:34:30 WM: Man, I loved him, man. I loved to just hear him talk and tell me how I couldn't play and why. Madhav was something, man.

0:34:40 PM: He was...

[overlapping conversation]

0:34:41 WM: So you were stoked from that feeling he had.

0:34:43 PM: Yeah. Yeah. He was intense and he would tell me about how intense you were to him. He told me if you would call you would ask him how many hours he was practicing.

0:34:53 WM: I would mess with him, man. I would be messing 'cause he was so hard on me. We

would be taking turns see who could be hardest on each other. I loved him, man. People didn't understand him all the time, because you could get Madhav to laugh, too. I would joke with him a lot, too.

0:35:09 PM: Yeah, absolutely.

0:35:11 WM: The great Madhav Chari. Man, you made me feel good just to hear his name tonight. Thank you.

0:35:16 PM: Thank you so much. Such a great honor to talk to you.

0:35:19 WM: It's my honor, so learning things by ear. We'll talk again, man. I'll see you, but don't feel divorced from any traditions. At this point, the traditions all belong to the world. If you feel you have to be in New York to play jazz, you don't understand the history of jazz. People playing good everywhere. Tete Montoliu, study him. Dado Moroni, he could play. It doesn't matter where you come from. Igor Butman, Nduduzo Makhathini, South Africa. You take your pick. There's people playing great everywhere.

0:35:50 PM: Thank you so much.

0:35:52 WM: Yes, sir.

0:35:52 Moderator: Alright. Thank you.

0:35:53 WM: Alright.

0:35:57 Moderator: Next question is from Sean Pow.

0:36:00 WM: Okay.

0:36:05 Sean Pow: Hello, how are you...

0:36:06 Moderator: Sean, go ahead.

0:36:09 SP: First of all, thank you for the opportunity. We've met a handful of times over the years after a few concerts that I've been to of yours and I've enjoyed listening to your music for about 30 years. The question I had was, I'm curious how accurately do musicians play during live concerts when you're at the level of playing with a great band, like Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra? And so accuracy of playing the arrangements right and not so much in terms of improvising, because you know with improvising, you could be playing wrong notes more so than... Or just making poor choices, right, as opposed to wrong notes, but is it a case where musicians make mistakes very infrequently like, "I missed that 32nd note last year in a song," or is it much more often than you think it's just...

0:37:05 WM: Well we miss... We joke with each other about parts. We don't really think about it. We assume we're gonna play most of it right, but I had an operation on my lips like, man, I don't know the year, 2000... I don't know, 2006 something and it took me a good eight to 10 years, to really... I had a new homage, a new way of playing, so I would literally be on gigs, sometimes I would miss notes that I'd never, ever miss and even now when I get above that G, I'm not as accurate as I was, so Ryan and I, we've been playing 20 years. Ryan Kisor, he's just next to me. He can go... I mean, we've heard him go a week without missing a single note, so at one point he looked at me, said, "Man, that operation must have been serious," I said, "Man, I'm struggling just to get through parts," and we all go through periods, sometimes it's a lot of little spiders up on the bandstand, but we are trying to play always accurately, but that's our objective more is to play together and to touch people.

0:38:05 WM: I'mma leave you with one story of the great Marcus Belgrave. We had the pleasure of playing a section with him and we laugh about it even now at the bandstand. Whenever you would mess a part up, he would laugh and he would say, "You playin' with a lot of expression tonight," so if you really messed the part up, he would say, "So much expression, so much expression," and that's kinda... We still say it on the bandstand, if you really mess a part up. It's more funny to us when we laugh about it because we've been playing together for a long time, and we're trying to be accurate, but we're not robots. We human beings and nobody looks at you and says nothing when you mess a part up. We have another saying that Ali Jackson used to always go when you mess a part up, it's just, "Hey man, we're still playing music. We're not assessing whether you play perfect or not," and we have a very relaxed feeling on our bandstand. We know we're trying to do the best that we can, but sometimes things don't work out.

0:39:01 SP: Appreciate it, thank you.

0:39:02 WM: Yes.

0:39:02 Moderator: Thanks, Sean. Alright, next...

0:39:05 WM: Oh, but I also wanna say one thing, that when you miss parts you get teased now. If you really mess up a part you're gonna definitely have to be ready and you say, "Man, what's going on back there?" You know they gonna definitely tease you and mess with you.

[chuckle]

0:39:20 Moderator: Alright, next question is from Jim Drost.

0:39:26 WM: Hey, Jim.

0:39:27 Moderator: Jim, go ahead.

0:39:27 JD: Wynton, Wynton.

0:39:29 WM: Hey man. What's going on?

0:39:31 JD: How you doing, man?

0:39:31 WM: Good to see you, man.

0:39:32 JD: Good to hear you and see you, man. We can't wait... Had to cancel a couple of trips, Chris and me, back to New York. Man gotta see you guys soon. I have... First of all, I think, 2004, was your operation...

[chuckle]

0:39:48 JD: 'Cause 2005 you missed Newport Jazz Festival and we were there and Victor Goines was leading the band, but you were there in 2005 'cause you played with Dave Brubeck.

0:40:02 WM: I remember that.

0:40:02 JD: And we were there both years.

0:40:04 WM: That's right, we played "Take the A Train." I remember that gig.

0:40:06 JD: That's right, but speaking, right along the listening aspect, about the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, I know you are so humbled, but I want an honest answer here. Has any band... I go back to the '60s, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Lew Tabackin, Ted Jones, Mel Lewis, Buddy Rich, Harry James, Duke, Count, all of them. Has anyone ever done what your band does now? Which is, the repertoire, almost on a weekly basis, you can go from Coltrane to Willie Nelson and everything in between and also all the arrangers in the band. Has any band, that you know of, ever done this? I don't think so.

0:40:51 WM: With the arrangers, I don't think so, but I'm not gonna brag up on us. I'm just saying I'mma just... That's when I evoke what my father would always say, "Man, don't, you know... "

0:41:02 JD: Well I...

0:41:04 WM: I think, well we have a lot of fire and power and I always say to people every day when we play, the hardest part of my job is really figuring out how we can access all the talent we have. Sometimes, because Elliot Mason is playing third trombone, he will be the last soloist and we all say this. Now, it's not just me, so when he starts to play some fantastic solo and he's playing, everybody will bend and look behind at him and say, "Oh, yeah, him." So we get to that. Another thing I wanna just say about the band is because... Everybody solos that wants to play. Sometimes you get to the second to last tune and you looking around to see who hasn't played. Now, everyone in the band is looking around and saying, "So and so didn't play. Let's open up space for this one," so yeah, the band, we stayed together long enough and we have leadership, like the older of us, we're proud of it, like what we've played, and we don't like to admit to that 'cause bands tend to

have a kind of dysfunction and a kinda...

0:42:02 WM: But with Ted and I and Victor, we've been there a long time, and we say, "Okay. We've gotten to some. We..." And our younger members are... Chris Crenshaw and Carlos counts as a younger member, even though he's been there for a longer time. They're so great to work with and easy to work with. They're such great musicians, that we, Ted and Victor and us, when we do a show like Chris Crenshaw's show he did of the '50s, Ted and I actually had tears in our eyes after we played the last note of his music because we thought, "Man, this guy wrote all this unbelievable music and his arrangement is so intelligent and clear, and so well-written and so attentive to detail," and it made us full of Carlos' job... he did with the Ruben Blades concert where he wrote 14 arrangements of all different styles and you gotta remember, we've seen them since they were 18 and 15 and 14, so...

0:42:54 WM: And then when you get to our really younger musicians like Camille Thurman or... Yeah, we're just proud to... We have a blues we're getting ready to put out that we all worked on in the first week of the quarantine and Camille wrote her chorus and gave us all kind of impossible trumpets to play, but we looked at her arrangement and we were proud of what she did. So it's a thing where, yeah, we have a vibe. We know that we've done a lot of music on a certain level, and we're always trying to get better, and we are very discerning about the level and we wanna get better and play on a higher level every time.

0:43:29 JD: Well, you guys are great. And... By the way, one of my favorite arrangements, I think "Tain" might have done it, but on your, "Autumn Leaves," you talk about the...

[chuckle]

0:43:39 WM: That's right. That's Tain's, yeah. Where we go one. One, two. One, two, three. One, two, three, four. One, two, three, four, five. One, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three, four, five, six, doom.

0:43:47 JD: Right, right, that was Tain.

0:43:50 WM: Yeah, Tain is something man.

0:43:52 JD: I'll just leave you with this though, please, and you guys are the best. You gotta get Ken Burns to do a documentary, a PBS on your band and I think people would find it, not only entertaining but educational as to what goes into all these different arrangements, across all these genres of music. I think people would find it fascinating. Ken Burns would do a knock-up job.

0:44:16 WM: I appreciate you saying, but Ken is working on maybe 15 things right now. If you know the work that Ken does and his energy and Geoff Ward, just that they work that way is so inspirational for me. Ken is a little older than me, but they have so many projects and they work constantly, so, I gotta just... Just hearing his name has made me tired and he never gets tired, so thank you, thank you, man. It's good to see you.

0:44:39 JD: Same here, man. Take care. Hope to see you soon.

0:44:42 WM: Yeah much love, man.

0:44:44 Moderator: Thanks, Jim. Alright, next question is from Frank Barrett.

0:44:51 Frank Barrett: How are you...

0:44:51 Moderator: Frank, go ahead.

0:44:53 WM: How you doing, Frank?

0:44:54 FB: Good, man. Thanks for doing this, this is really... I look forward to it all day and we all need things to look forward to at the moment, don't we?

0:45:02 WM: Man, you know it. It's good to see you.

0:45:03 FB: Good to see you, and I wanted to say something about the session you did a couple weeks ago about your dad, which was really lovely. The one thing that we didn't get to talk about much is what an incredible piano player he was. I'm a pianist so I notice, most people may not know, that he didn't make piano his main instrument until he was in his early 20s and he had to really, deliberately learn, teach himself how to play and one thing he does that, a good piano player knows is that he never used the sustain pedal. That's the lazy man's way of getting legato and your dad played the most beautiful legato without ever using a sustain pedal. That takes an incredible amount of discipline, so I just wanted to lay that out there. One question I have is, I know in some interviews you've mentioned your dislike of rap music. I wonder if you could say a little bit more about that in light of what you say about the power of drums.

0:46:08 WM: Well, the first thing is, what I'm talking about is the use of little words that has become common out here. For somebody my age, who grew up in the Civil Rights Movement and was integrated into schools and had to deal with a certain type of pressure of that, we don't wanna see that come out here and be in our mainstream is this is what we are. It's just like all those movies about pimps in the 1970s. My mama hated all of that, but yet and still, that became the mythology. That mythology won. Y'all pimps. Now it's the abuse of people. I saw a cover of the Rolling Stone magazine with three ladies on the cover of it and the article is called, "Women Shaping Our Future," and the cover made me so mad, not at them, but because the editor would do that to them, of a magazine, that put a picture like that and they're kind of used to these words.

0:47:10 WM: I'm not even gonna waste my time, I've said it a million times since the 1980s, I will never go along with that. So far as the creativity of the musicians and human beings are creative. I don't care what you call the form, people are going to be creative in it. They're gonna come up with new things. They're gonna invent things and there's a tremendous amount of creativity focused on hip hop. My specific thing with it is, I can't use making fun of Black people, making our pathology

something about our neighborhood be a safari for people in suburbs to go on. Celebrating gangsters and all that. I'm just, I'm not ever gonna be a fan of it. I wasn't in 1988 and I'm not now and I never will be.

0:47:48 WM: And if that makes people mad, I don't care. Somebody's gotta be, at a certain point, an adult, and not just go with cheap populism, so as far as that, that's what I've continued to say. In terms of drums, it's not too many people playing drums in. I would like to see a lot of great drummers, a lot of machines playing drums, lot of beats being programmed, some of which are very creative, but like the great Yacub Addy used to tell me, "What about the sound of a drum?" A drum has a very heavy sound, it's something very specific and what we see is the kind of kings of drums like Max Roach, like Elvin Jones, like... The list goes on and on, man, you take your pick. Of any race, Buddy Rich, Mel Lewis, Art Blakey, Tony Williams. I could name drummer after drummer after drummer. That level of drums is not being played, so once you let levels go out of the window, and once you say, "What is the new thing?" Then you don't have to know the Constitution to be a politician, then you don't have to know medicine to be a doctor, then you don't have to... So I'm not really a populist on that level. I'm not just going with the group because they're saying it.

0:48:57 WM: And one thing I wanna say I learned from my father in the Civil Rights Movement, was that when everybody was like into their racial thing, he just wasn't a part of that and he would take an unpopular point of view and he stuck with it. Even though there was no TV camera or nobody talking to him, it would be only Black people there and he had his way he looked at stuff, that was against the prevalent view, and he espoused it and that's what I do. I don't wanna get side-tracked with misinformation about my viewpoint on it, because when you do things and you say things, then the media, they're looking to create a story. It's like... And people in your country can be dying, a media figure is more interested in critiquing your president than it is helping people with scientific information. I'm an artist, I'm not a politician, so I don't have to relate to any one constituent or another and this permeates our way of life. I remember once talking to a friend of mine on Fox News, and once again, I'm not speaking right or left, 'cause it's a hustle any way you go, but there's a friend of mine, we went to high school together and we played in a band, so I'm thinking we're gonna talk about being in a band and playing and experience we had one night of dropping out, playing the national anthem at a basketball game. People start booing us.

0:50:13 WM: No, it went into some ridiculousness about some lightweight barber-shop-level politics that he was trying to get me, drag me through, and I'm not coming at these subjects from a political standpoint. I have my point of view. It may follow one way or other, but I'm coming more from a human standpoint, so when I comment on this, on the cover of this magazine, I'm coming from it like if I were them, would I wanna be portrayed like that? Are they happy with that? Or some adult, some person in their mid-forties made the decision to put them out here like this and I think that when we fall asleep as a culture and a society and we lose a human contact with people to go with hip hop or Black or White or when we allow whatever our misconception of people based on our misconceived concept of race or ethnicity or class, once we allow those things to dominate our conversation, we can no longer speak in a granular, nuanced way that is a hallmark of the intelligent. Then we just out in the street, cussing and howling and screaming at each other, which it can be fun to do that, but it's not a national agenda, and it's not fun on the national stage. That's kind

of a long answer, but that's what I think about it.

0:51:30 FB: Thank you and great to see you.

0:51:32 WM: Man, I like your beard. You're growing it in. I might let my snow come out too, you inspire me.

0:51:38 FB: Thanks, nothing else to do.

[chuckle]

0:51:41 WM: I like that snow, man, you're looking good. You know what I'm saying?

0:51:49 Moderator: Alright, great. Next question is coming from Josh Mizruchi. Josh, go ahead.

0:51:49 Josh Mizruchi: Mr. Marsalis. Hi, Mr. Marsalis, it's great to be here, I'm really enjoying hearing your thoughts on all kinds of different things and really enjoying hearing everybody's questions as well. My question is actually regarding to when you're learning new songs, particularly in small group jazz genre, but also in a large ensemble. Do you have a particular process you like to use when you're learning a new song? And... 'Cause I know we all have our kind of approaches to it, and there's a lot of different ways and I know sometimes when I'm playing, hanging with other musicians, we don't always get to talk about all that, but I'd love to hear your take on it.

0:52:41 WM: Thank you for your question. I tend to go from the broadest understanding to the most specific. So first I wanna know when was it written, who wrote it? What is it trying to say? What tradition does it come out of? How can I fulfill it? What is the accurate melody? What is the... What is the what, in the largest sense? Who wrote around that time? What consciousness that kind of understanding, does it come out of? Then I go into more musical things. What are the exact notes of the melody and what is the bass? I cannot look at the melody and the bass as the same thing. What are the... How do the harmonies... What is the harmonic conception? Why does it modulate to this key and what does it go to there? And how can I approach the harmony through X-X-X? How are we going to play variations on it, and then I go through a thematic breakdown of the melody. Like if this is a kind of, "A," theme, and this is a, "B," theme, then it goes up a half step and the, "B," theme reverses place with the, "A," theme then there's a new, "C," theme at this point in it, so then I go into the kind of granular understanding of it. Then, I try to just sing bass lines on the song and get the feeling of the harmonic progression in my ear and after that, I start to try to play the melody while... And humm the bass.

[vocalization]

0:54:00 WM: Spell out the cords from a... Arpeggiate the cords then put extra notes in it like flat 9, flat 13, raise. Just so I can hear it, and then I start to just play melodies on it and try to play melodies based on the melody that was written. So in that way, if I'm studying a song, I try to take it apart and learn it from the broadest to the most specific. So I hope that helps you.

0:54:22 FB: That's an amazing answer. That's some stuff I never thought about it, especially playing melodies over the... Over the song of your own, that's a really amazing insight. Thank you.

0:54:32 WM: Based on the melodic information of the song.

0:54:35 FB: Based on the melodic information...

0:54:35 WM: So, you could begin to play your solo as an extension, as if, "What if I were continuing to write this tune, what would I write?"

0:54:44 FB: Yeah, yeah, I never thought about that. It's really cool.

0:54:47 WM: Right. Good luck with everything. Handle your business, little brother.

0:54:52 Moderator: Thank you for your question, Josh.

[chuckle]

0:54:55 WM: Thank you.

0:54:56 Moderator: Alright, next question is from Steven Warren. Steven, go ahead.

0:55:02 Steven Warren: Hey Wynton, how you been?

0:55:02 WM: Alright now. What's happening?

0:55:04 SW: You feeling good?

0:55:05 WM: Oh, this my homeboy. What's up? Man, get this guy off of here. We went to high school together.

0:55:11 SW: Oh, no.

0:55:13 WM: What's going on, man?

0:55:15 SW: Just staying at home trying to be safe. Is everyone in the orchestra doing well?

0:55:21 WM: Yeah, man, we all doing good. We got that call of ours. Good to see you. Y'all alright?

0:55:25 SW: Yeah, Ethan just finished practicing and Theresa is doing school work for a class.

0:55:32 WM: Yeah man.

0:55:33 SW: Everything's good.

0:55:33 WM: Much love.

0:55:35 SW: Yeah. Likewise, so... Music has different feelings when it's live and when it's not live and one of the things I really enjoy is when you're live in New York, and I can watch it live here. Even though it's through the internet and I'm not there, it's still really good, and do you think there's a difference in whether it actually is live or just recorded live and you're listening to it?

0:56:12 WM: Yeah, there's a difference. It's like me and you talking across this... The phone, well you, you my homeboy. Y'all don't know it, but he's one of the most soulful-est human beings on Earth.

0:56:23 SW: It's true.

[laughter]

0:56:27 WM: And he's always been crazy since we were in high school he was like that, like that kind of timing, so is it the same if me and you, if we looking at each other talking? No man, but this is what we have for right now, so I could see you it's much better than if I was on the phone with you. I saw you, so I had that same feeling like if we were together with each other... And yeah it's a big difference between it being live, but how many concerts have I heard on recording. Let's think of all the great musicians that are dead, you're never gonna see them live and their music is still unbelievably impactful.

0:57:00 SW: Right. It's still wonderful.

0:57:02 WM: It's still great. So we don't have to... We don't have to choose. For right now, we have to choose, but you can, believe me, you're gonna be sitting around a bowl of gumbo before this all is over we're gonna be talking about this very conversation. So...

0:57:13 S13: Well, look at the video that I've got off my camera. This is a typical night of me dancing to you.

[chuckle]

0:57:22 WM: Wait. Don't show that now you're messing up your profile.

0:57:25 SW: I know I didn't suck my gut in, but you can see I just love listening to your music, pigging out, dancing in the kitchen. What could be better?

0:57:36 WM: You know, you're doing your thing. And you showed that to everybody. That's what I love, more than anything.

0:57:41 SW: It's like I'm in high school again. Well, I'm glad you're doing well and I really love these Monday night Skain's Domain.

0:57:51 WM: Thanks, man.

0:57:51 SW: Last week was exceptional and just seeing you and listening to you, is just such a treat always, because your... Your heart and your sense of humor is always there. You know and you gotta bite your tongue and hold it back sometimes, 'cause... You know you...

[chuckle]

0:58:12 WM: You know we're in public man, come on. Are you kidding?

0:58:14 SW: You know, you've been around. You went around the world, a few times. And that's a cool thing.

0:58:16 WM: Man, come on.

0:58:18 SW: But yeah. I love you, and I'll talk to you soon.

0:58:22 WM: Man, give my love to your people and to everybody man, it's good to hear from you.

[chuckle]

0:58:26 S13: Likewise.

[chuckle]

0:58:26 Moderator: Alright. Next question is coming from CoRetta Limous. CoRetta, go ahead.

0:58:38 WM: Alright now.

0:58:40 Moderator: Alright.

0:58:40 CoRetta Limous: How are you doing Mr. Marsalis?

0:58:42 WM: Alright now, how are you doing CoRetta?

0:58:43 CL: I am doing great. This is my birthday and I am spending it... Another April with you. We have been spending a lot of Aprils on concerts and different things and I'm glad to spend another one, not with Lincoln Center, as close as I can. And I wanted to say thank you basically for not being a hemorrhoid. Many times we meet our people that we admire, and they just turn into hemorrhoids and that's really, really sad. And I wanted to tell you I don't expect you to remember it,

but a couple of Aprils ago, my sister baked cupcakes for the crew, Mr. Boss Murphy.

0:59:38 WM: Boss Murphy.

0:59:39 CL: Yes Sir.

0:59:39 WM: Yeah, I remember.

0:59:41 CL: Boss Murphy asked us to so we baked 28 dozens...

0:59:44 WM: I remember that I remember.

0:59:45 CL: 28 dozen cupcakes, three different flavors.

0:59:50 WM: I remember that.

[chuckle]

0:59:53 CL: So we weren't sure you were gonna get it, but you know, we baked it so that everybody can have some. And she's a great baker, so she did and we weren't... We weren't able to see you after the show, so Boss said, "Well, go upstairs to the million-dollar ball." And so we went upstairs, so we got in the room. It was a room full of I guess millionaires. And so we're not... We went in the side door, we got in and it was like when you're in a room with people it's like ants on candy. I mean everybody is surrounding you and on you and so we're like, "Okay." Then we got... Someone asked us... Well they came to tell us that this was the millionaires' ball, and we didn't belong there so that we can go downstairs and listen to some free music.

1:00:53 CL: And so we understand, you know, googoo make your money. So we decided that we were gonna just leave, we understood. And then we're going up to the elevator we heard this voice say, "Come back, where are you going? What do you want?" And so we turned around, and it was you standing there asking us to come back into the ball and you told my sister that we had just as much right to be there as anybody. And I thought you know what, you didn't have to do that. You were there for a reason and we really appreciated that because you know how to respect a person, which I appreciate knowing that. So I really, you know, that's one of those stories you tell while you are alive. That we really, you know, you do a lot of nice stuff. I've been backstage enough to see, and I've been to 15 concerts since 2009. So I really... We really enjoy the music, my sister enjoys the music and you know, we tell Boss Murphy after all the concerts that y'all did wonderful, you did great, and that we really appreciate what you do.

1:02:12 WM: Well, first, I like just hearing that suburb voice, "We just appreciate what y'all," I love that. So happy birthday. And you know with us, a lot of times even if you go to the upstairs ball, now the people who are there many times, is people I know and they just soulful too. They don't want people out of there necessarily. Things are set up a certain way. And it's not... I remember, you know, I remember... I remember them cupcakes. I am going to tell you that. And you

know Boss Murphy he carry... He walks around with soul in his pocket.

[laughter]

1:02:44 WM: And you know, I'm glad you came. I appreciate you calling. I wish I had my trumpet and could play it. But a lot of times there's other people telling people you can't do this and you can't do that. The actual people who are there, are not like that. And, for me, I don't mind... I actually like to be around people. But on behalf of a lot of people who are uncomfortable around other people, I learned over the years just everybody is not... Sometimes people are nervous like you might take somebody who's playing before a gig, and they're really nervous about their gig, and somebody will come to them and talk to them and they're so nervous they just can't. And some people are uncomfortable with other people.

1:03:23 CL: Mm-hmm.

1:03:25 WM: And it's not that they're stuck up or they think they're better than people. That's very seldom the case. It's just that they... They're uncomfortable, you know and it is not their thing. With me, you know, I'm comfortable with people that I meet, I'm comfortable dapping them but it's just part of being Southern. I have a lot of brothers that... In that way you know, it's not really that much of a struggle for me but I empathize with people who are in the public who talk to people, who see people and might just have a thing and that thing does not always come from an air of superiority.

1:03:56 CL: Mm-hmm.

1:03:57 WM: So that's all I wanna say about this here, but I do appreciate you writing in. And I wish I had... I was looking around for see if my horn was right around in my station but it is not. I wanted to play a little happy birthday for you.

1:04:05 S14: Oh that's great.

1:04:06 WM: So next time at your birthday, Next time I'm gonna do it for you, and thank you so much.

1:04:12 CL: You're welcome.

1:04:12 WM: Yes Ma'am.

1:04:12 CL: Thank you.

1:04:13 WM: Thank you.

1:04:13 Moderator: Thanks, CoRetta.

1:04:16 WM: My horn is... CoRetta. I like that name. CoRetta. CoRetta.

1:04:22 Moderator: Alright. So we've got time for just one more question in this session. But as we wind down I'd like to just remind everybody about all the live events we'll be continuing to host. We have question and answer sessions with Wynton and special guests. Masterclasses and conversations with members of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. Live performance of stream from artists' homes, free education classes, and more. We also just premiered our Gala concert last Wednesday the 15th. It's called the "Worldwide Concert For Our Culture," and it can be found on YouTube, Facebook, and at jazz.org/gala2020, so be sure to check that out if you haven't and let's go to our last question. Our last question is coming from Katheryn. I don't see a last name from you, Katheryn, but I'll unmute you now. If you can hear us, go ahead.

1:05:05 Katheryn: Oh, hi. Thank you so much. Am I unmuted now?

1:05:09 Moderator: Yeah, go ahead. We can hear you.

1:05:11 K: I have a great story that I have to tell. In 2012, you came to Louisville, Kentucky and I told my father, I said, "Daddy, Wynton Marsalis is coming to Louisville." He got so excited and he paid for the tickets. I was going to pay for the tickets, but he paid for the tickets and he was 95 years old then. 95 years old and he was so afraid that he wouldn't be able to get in and get out and I remember specifically getting a seat right by the door just in case he had to go to the bathroom. He could go out, in and out, without disturbing anyone. Anyway, he came and he enjoyed it so much. He goes, "Oh yeah, that's the trumpet player from New Orleans," and see, my father is from Plaquemines Parish.

1:06:04 WM: Uh-oh, watch out.

1:06:05 K: He really appreciates this, so this is what I was going to tell you. When I heard about your father, I said to my father... My father died in 2015, but anyway, if he were alive, he would be 103 right now, but anyway I said to my father, "Daddy, Ellis Marsalis is up there. You have to go say hi." The way I like to think about it is that they're up there playing cards, drinking whiskey, telling lies, and talking about us and I just had to tell you that. I had to. I had to. My father just enjoyed your music so much and actually, you came earlier when you had written your book and you signed your book for him and he had on a fedora. My father always was the sharp dresser and you said to him, "I love that hat. I like that hat."

[chuckle]

1:06:56 WM: Well, I appreciate hearing and the story about your father. Rest in peace.

1:07:01 K: Oh, he's not resting.

[chuckle]

1:07:03 WM: I like the three things you chose that they were doing. Telling lies, at last getting a

drink of some whiskey. My daddy's definitely up there with him doing a little embellishing, so thank you very much.

1:07:15 K: Yeah, and they're talking about us, too.

1:07:18 WM: I hope my daddy's not talking about me 'cause he's saying, "I wish that boy would shut up."

[laughter]

1:07:25 S15: I think they're up there smiling.

[laughter]

1:07:26 WM: I hope so.

1:07:28 Moderator: Thanks, Katheryn.

1:07:30 WM: Thank you.

1:07:31 Moderator: Wynton, I misspoke. We've actually got one more question before we wind down. It's from somebody you might know named Kenny Rampton.

[chuckle]

1:07:40 WM: I heard about you in a marching band a little earlier, Kenny. We can let Kenny answer the question about do we play stuff perfectly?

1:07:53 Kenny Rampton: [laughter] No. I just wanted to say hi, man.

1:07:56 WM: It's good to see you, man.

1:07:57 KR: Yeah, you too, man. Thanks for doing all that you're doing, Wynton. It's inspiring to... It's inspiring to my mom. She's watching these all the time and it's just wonderful. Thank you.

1:08:07 WM: Man, give my love to your mama. She's out there for all of us, man. All the years of teaching and we're just trying to follow in their footsteps, man.

1:08:15 KR: That's it, man. That's it. You heard about my story about marching band, huh?

1:08:21 WM: Well, he didn't tell me a story. I wanted to tell me something to compromise you, but he didn't say it.

[laughter]

1:08:29 KR: All I can say is this...

[laughter]

1:08:32 WM: Alright.

[laughter]

1:08:35 KR: I'll talk you tomorrow, man. Just wanted to say hello.

1:08:38 WM: Man, much love, man. Much love.

1:08:39 KR: Back to you, likewise.

1:08:41 Moderator: Thanks, Kenny. Alright guys, thanks so much for tuning in tonight. Quickly to our supporters and donors, we can't thank you enough. Jazz at Lincoln Center is a non-profit organization in New York committed to entertaining, enriching, and expanding a global community for jazz. If it's within your means, please consider making a donation. We're extraordinarily grateful for any support. With that, I'll just say stay safe out there. We hope to see you again for our upcoming live events. Thanks, Wynton. Thanks, everybody.

1:09:14 WM: Yeah, you right, Adam. Take care. Good night.

1:09:17 Moderator: Take care. Good night.

1:09:19 WM: Yes, indeed. Till we meet again.