

Skain's Domain

Episode 8 - May 11, 2020

0:00:00 Adam Meeks: Welcome guys. Thanks for joining us for another episode of Skain's Domain. My name is Adam Meeks. I'm the video producer at Jazz at Lincoln Center. I hope you're doing well, wherever you are in the world. Tonight will be an extended conversation and question and answer session with Wynton Marsalis. For those of you who are joining us for the first time, if you have a question you'd like to ask we're gonna ask you to use the raise hand feature. To do this click "participants" on the bottom of your Zoom window and then in the participants tab press the raise hand button. I see a lot of you are already doing this, that's great. Please also make sure that your full name appears as your user name so we can call on you when it's your turn. When it is your turn to speak, I'll introduce you and turn your mic on so we can hear your question. That's about all I have on the front end. So with that, I'll hand it over to you, Wynton, take it away.

0:00:50 Wynton Marsalis: Okay, thank you all very much for joining us again. It's always a pleasure and honor to meet with you all and discuss things, trivial and significant, with the same type of feeling. We've had the blessing, we have a lot of great guests on, and we're gonna have some more don't worry, we're just getting started. I think tonight it's just good for me to answer questions that you all may have. I think I'm just going to go back to what... The very first one that we did, we talked about what can we do to deal with this time. To embrace the space that we're in. And I'm gonna go through some of the things that I talked about that first time. The first thing we said is realize that you're not alone. That this is a group experience. We're all in isolation. Some of us are lucky to be in isolation with families and loved ones, and some of us are alone.

0:01:39 WM: I mean, we're in our physical space alone and realize that all over the world people are sharing the same experience, and in itself that's very, very unusual. It gives us a kinship to some type of activity that's not just us being human beings or just natural functions. The second thing is embrace the space and be healthy, even if you get sick, in terms of discipline. If you get sick we wanna maintain our discipline, and do healthy things, and take advantage of this time, instead of allowing our anxiety to build up. We don't have control over the circumstance. We don't control the pathogen. We can't control who gets sick and who does not get sick. All we can do is control our response to it. And we said start to define and reconnect with the community by interests, by concerns, not just by geography or by work.

0:02:31 WM: Now you can actually find people that are interested in the things you're interested in all over the world. Connect with those people. Establish a new community. Find your community in a world that is gonna shock you. One of the first things I learned just traveling around the world, I remember being in Japan, I grew up in a segregated South. It was just all defined by race and I stood on the corner once and it was all Japanese people. And I thought to myself, the entire social dynamic that I was raised in has nothing to do with what's going on here. Now, they have their own

dynamics that I was not aware of at that time, but the world is... There are many dynamics in the world. So take advantage of this opportunity to find people that you connect with by your interests and embrace them.

0:03:16 WM: We said, set long-term internal goals that you've always had. Things that you heard about, things that you thought about. Get yourself acquainted with some dream you had. You might have wanted to learn how to Tango dance or learn how to cook, or learn how to fix Gumbo. I mean it could be anything. Whatever it is, take this time to just get to the things that you've always said, "I wonder what that's like." Or, "I'd like to learn another language." Or... It's not too late. Organize your short-term goals daily. Make a schedule for yourself and keep that doable schedule. Don't make the kind of schedule you're not ever going to keep. Not a military schedule but just a manageable schedule according to the level of discipline you know that you have. Then we said pay attention to this time and everything that is going on and rethink your fundamental beliefs.

0:04:03 WM: One of the things that happens to us is that we grow older... I guess as we grow older is true, but it can also inflict us when we're younger. When we get in comfortable groups we just think like that group thinks. And we get with our friends and our friends reinforce our thoughts and our ways of being. Take this time to rethink things that you've held fundamentally. Take this time to listen to what other people are saying, whether you agree or not. Take the time to listen to them. Analyze what's going on and come up with some type of response to... Even if it's just in an opinion, different from the opinion you held, get some information. Do different things. We say go internal to go external. Get inside yourself. Consider, "What do I actually think about this?" Don't take the opinions that are just common group opinions, and things that you always thought, "I don't know if I really believe this." Investigate what you believe.

0:05:00 WM: Diversify your day in a time-sensitive way. Take your time to get to learn friends that you know, learn their life story. Pick times in the day to do little ceremonies. I know some people are having their happy hour at a certain time. When they get a chance to connect with friends and have a toast or they have breakfast together. All that kind of stuff is beautiful and it makes the day, it punctuates the day and it gives you some way to get through things. Get your little special rituals that you have with friends and don't forget to have a good time with those ceremonies. You know it's great, the Zoom birthday parties and all the different things out there you have the chance to do with friends online. I mean, it's not like being in there live, but in a way it condenses the experience and you value the experience even more. So then when we can come out of this, I mean we are gonna come out of it, then let's try to retain the feeling that we have. The kind of love and feeling we have toward loved ones of every time we see them and we haven't seen them.

0:05:57 WM: And also it's important to stay active. Don't allow the anxiety of the moment, or the nervousness... There's a lot of fear mongering going on. You know, I always give you all the example of how terrified I am of being on a plane. That means that I am, no matter what happens on that plane, I'm scared. If it's not making a sound, something is gonna happen. If I'm in the line, I don't want to be in the line. If any sound is made, something bad is going to happen. If it's taking off, it's gonna crash. If it's landing it's gonna crash. When you're in the state of terror, you become irrational. The fear makes you irrational. Don't fall victim to that. You know and it's... I always use

that as an example, because it's easy to give advice about things that you can't reflect on your own irrational behavior. Because I know no matter what I can tell you these things, it still doesn't make me not be afraid when I'm on a plane.

0:06:52 WM: But it's important for us to stay active in some type of way, and have these goals. And those are the things that we covered. I don't know long it was, almost 60 days. It's been a long time. And if it's going to be, it's gonna be longer. And slowly things will open up and we hope that it's intelligent. This thing is not something to joke or play with. And when issues that are serious health-related issues become politicized, we have a tendency to think that they are made less serious by politics. But people going broke is serious too. It's one of those kinds of... That this is the instance that requires more than one... It requires communal thought. Get with the people in your community and listen to what they're saying. Formulate your opinion from many sources. And those are the things we covered. Now I'm just gonna open it up to see what questions we have... We have much longer time to answer questions. You know no question is too anything. Really we can get a re-appearance of my man who came on last week that was scratching the records. He had his 1970s suit on. Had sand dunes behind him. He's my favorite character. I'm just gonna turn it over to you all to see what it is that...

0:08:07 AM: You might be in luck Wynton 'cause I see him in here. We'll see if we can bring him back a little later on. We'll see if we can give him an encore later.

0:08:16 WM: Yeah man let's see... Let's see from him at the end.

0:08:20 AM: Alright. First question's coming from Charles Ellison.

0:08:25 WM: Hello? What's up Charles? Let me see you man.

0:08:29 AM: Yeah. Alright. Charles you're good to go.

0:08:33 Charles Ellison: Okay. How are you Wynton?

0:08:39 AM: Uh-oh, Wynton's muted now, let's see. Just one second.

0:08:42 CE: Alright. Okay.

0:08:43 WM: Just keep going on. Yeah. I'm looking for you. I love you. Thank you for calling me.

0:08:47 CE: Oh, I love you too Wynton. I'm really glad to talk to you.

0:08:53 WM: Butter. Wanna talk about all that butter in your sound, man.

0:08:57 CE: Oh my God. [chuckle]

0:09:00 AM: I got to go put some toast on.

0:09:01 CE: Oh, Lord Wynton. [chuckle] I just wanna say...

0:09:04 WM: Man, thank you.

0:09:06 CE: Thank you. I'm so proud of what you're doing. This is very, very beautiful. I'm here every week. I had my hand up last week and I was about to be called upon, but I said, "Let me get out of way of these young folks and let the young folks take it over." I just got out of the way. [chuckle] I thought I'd call and just say, that I love you. We all in Montreal love you.

0:09:30 WM: Thank you, man.

0:09:32 CE: We appreciate you so, so very, very, very much.

0:09:35 WM: Thank you so much.

0:09:38 CE: I really love you so much brother.

0:09:38 WM: Oh man. Man, it's been so many years, man. You like my big brother. How you looked out for me when I first... I met Charles in Montreal years ago. I was 18 and 19, or something. Man, you got your horn... Hit a couple of them little buttery... If you got your horn with, hit me with a couple of... Couple of... Hit me with one or two little buttery phrases, man. [chuckle] Come on now.

0:10:07 CE: Okay.

[music]

0:10:30 CE: So good and so horny. Oh. [chuckle]

0:10:34 WM: I love it, man. [laughter]

0:10:35 CE: Oh. Yeah. But you know, since we were together, I've had a heart attack, man.

0:10:41 WM: Oh, man.

0:10:42 CE: I had a heart attack and I had some dental work where I could not... I couldn't play the middle G. I had to teach myself to play all over again.

0:10:54 WM: You right.

0:10:55 CE: And, I'm hanging in there.

0:10:58 WM: Man, you sounding good. You went through some keys on me. I heard you...

[chuckle] It's good to see you, man. Imma call you. Let's catch up and rap. I'll call you, or something.

0:11:09 CE: Okay. Beautiful.

0:11:10 WM: Okay. Yeah. We'll hook up. Alright.

0:11:12 CE: Okay. I love you.

0:11:14 WM: Yeah, man. I love you. So much respect. It's beautiful.

0:11:18 CE: Alright. You take care.

[vocalization]

0:11:22 AM: Thanks Charles. Alright. Next question. Coming from Caleb Lee.

0:11:28 WM: Alright now Caleb. You got a good name.

0:11:30 AM: Caleb, go ahead. Caleb, you there?

0:11:38 Caleb Lee: Alright. Hi Mr. Wynton. This is... Can you hear me?

0:11:43 AM: Yeah go ahead. Yeah.

0:11:46 CL: Okay, okay. This is speaking from Sydney, Australia. It's pretty chill out here. It's great honor to speak to you. And my deepest condolences to your loss. Just to talk about myself. I was born in... From Korea. And I moved to Ghana in West Africa when I was 12 years old. And then I went to Seattle for my university to study physics. And then right now I'm here in Sydney studying cookery, working at an Italian restaurant at the same time. And, it's been quite an extraordinary life. Yeah so my question is for you Mr. Wynton. Regarding my past, and me becoming 29 years old very soon. I just want anything from you. Your wisdom or your idea, your opinion, just anything, that will really make me become myself. Because in music, even though I'm not a professional musician, music has always been something that was at the back of my head. Whatever I was doing. When I was studying physics. When I was cooking. When I was working in my parents restaurants. The older I get, it just becomes the reality. It just shows that there was something else I was supposed to do.

0:13:21 WM: Yeah.

0:13:22 CL: It was supposed to be... What I'm supposed to do about my fate? I was always compromising myself, tricking my mind that it doesn't have to be my job, or my thing. And also my environment that I was in, and my parents. Korean father, brainwashing me. Music just can be my hobby and things like that. And now I'm 29 years old and I've been doing this for 10 years, past 10

years, tricking myself. And now I'm in student visa in Sydney. It's not like I can go to school, I can't go back to US to study music in Berklee College. [chuckle] I don't know what to say. What should I do?

0:14:16 WM: Okay. And first I'm gonna address one, two, three things. First, the first thing is you are yourself. So if you start trying to figure out how to be yourself and you are yourself, you're never gonna figure that out. It's like you have some keys in your hand and you walk around in your house looking for those keys, you're not ever gonna find those keys. So when you... Just your resume alone... Man, you were in Ghana, you studied physics, you're in Australia now dealing with Italian cooking. Just your resume is a... And you're Korean. So nobody in the world has that resume. And you studied physics. So I can't wait till this is over so I can get with you and you can granulate my intellect and we can eat some good food, too. All for me. And then you can play and you love music.

0:15:07 WM: So the first thing is, all you have to do is identify those things that you like about yourself and those things that you dislike about yourself, and write those things down. There will not be another person in the world that has those things, I'll guarantee you that. So that's you, and you work on the things you wanna work on, but never forget to embrace the beautiful things that you are. We have a tendency when we wanna improve, if we're not dissatisfied it's hard to improve. You can't think I'm the greatest thing in the world and then you get better. So at some point you have to have a critical faculty. Try to achieve balance. The second thing is about your father. Fathers and sons and brothers, mothers and daughters and mothers and sons, and... We have a 360 degree experience.

0:15:54 WM: And that means that sometimes a father's really hard on the son and that makes the son be much greater to think and sometimes it crushes the spirit of the son. Sometimes in the same family two brothers or a brother and a sister will have the same upbringing and have a different experience, a different relationship to things. Your father, I don't know him, but we fathers, we do the best that we can do in most instances. Your father has a upbringing too. He has a tradition, he has things that he believes and he's gone through. Some of those things are great and some of those things are wrong. The first thing is he gave you his genes, so a lot of what you have from a genetic standpoint comes from your father, your mother, people in your lineage and your heritage. Those are things that are unspoken.

0:16:37 WM: Your father has a way he believes. I'm not gonna say that it's foolish for somebody to tell a person, "Music is not a profession and you're gonna struggle your entire life in it, and it's a hard way to make a living and be practical." That's a theme that runs through a musician. You could talk to people in any of the arts and they will tell you their parents largely were telling them, "Don't do this." When I was growing up my mother and a lot of my teachers said, "Don't go into music. You're gonna waste your brain on music, and you're gonna struggle." My mom was like, "You're gonna struggle just like your daddy had struggled." My daddy always said, "Man, don't have nothing to fall back on."

0:17:10 WM: Okay, that was unusual, but that didn't mean he wanted me to call him and come live

in his house and spend his money for some more years. So reconcile your vibe with your daddy. It's easier for younger people to change than for older people. Don't be too hard on the old man, and don't base everything you do on him. You have your freedom, you're living on your own. Do your thing and always remember your freedom doesn't have to be consistently earned from the person that you're trying to liberate yourself from. Once you've liberated yourself you don't have to keep liberating yourself. Sometimes we fight the same old battle, decade after decade. And that is gonna trip you out as you get old, you're 29 now.

0:17:50 WM: It's gonna shock you how you could be 59 or 69, 70 and still have the exact same problems you had when you were 29. Remember that youth is not a value, the fact that you're young only means that's how old you are. Doesn't mean you figured things out of nothing. Now the one thing that it does mean you have more time. In most instances because we don't actually know our time. So I encourage you to do that, work with the old man. And the next thing I'm gonna tell you is just about you being a musician and you feeling that it has faded. If you play music you are a musician. Okay? If you're playing music, if you're interested, you don't have to go to any college to be a musician. What it takes to be a musician is that you play music.

0:18:34 WM: If you wanna get better at playing music, figure stuff out and you will get better. You want lessons, call people. You don't need permission to be a musician. And that level you get on, that level you attain is based on your willingness to sacrifice the level of your ability, your insights and the people you're coming in contact with. So the main thing I'm gonna tell you is liberate yourself, man. Look at all the things you already can do. I like your tie and everything you have on, too. And you still look like you're about 16, so I just hope that continues for you as you get older. And you're gonna be all right. When it says... I wanna see you, we're gonna be in Sydney. If you're still there, make sure we hookup, I wanna get that Italian meal with you. Okay?

0:19:12 AM: Thank you, Caleb.

0:19:12 CL: Yes.

0:19:14 WM: All right, now. You've got a good name, too.

0:19:15 CL: Yeah, thank you so much.

0:19:16 WM: So if your daddy gave you your name or your momma, at least be happy about that. That's a good name, man. Caleb Lee.

0:19:25 AM: Thanks a lot Caleb.

0:19:27 CL: [0:19:27] _____ just when I was studying physics...

0:19:32 AM: Hello? I think we lost him. Let's see. Okay, let's take another question. We've got one from Hugo Dart. Hugo, go ahead.

0:19:47 Hugo Dart: So, hi. It's a pleasure to be here. It's, has been wonderful to follow Skain's Domain every week. And I have been thinking a lot about something that we heard from trumpeter few weeks ago, when he was talking about how he went to have a lesson with your father. And he was playing a tune and your father asked him if he knew the lyrics to that song, and he was embarrassed because he didn't want to admit that he didn't know the lyrics to the tune. And that has been on my mind quite a lot in what kind of weight the lyrics to a song have on your interpretation of a song. I've been thinking about one song in particular, Everything Happens to Me. Classic written exactly 80 years ago, and I discovered that tune in particular several years ago, and I was listening basically around the same time to two very different recordings. I was listening to the John Pizzarelli, George Shearing. And every time I would listen to John Pizzarelli sing this song I would giggle with laughs because he brought the humor in it.

0:21:01 HD: The lyrics are very funny. The same time, I kept listening to your recording of it, your father. And it made me weep every time for the first several times I listened to it, because you brought up so much of the melancholy in that song. So, I got an amazing sense of the humor of the song with John Pizzarelli singing the lyrics and I never felt that the melancholy in it so clearly as is in your performance with your father. So, my question is, what kind of ways do you use sounds, how much does it matter to you to have this understanding of the lyrics to a song? What kind of a difference does it actually make? 'Cause we have so many examples of songs that can mean completely different things. And as in this example, you can bring quite opposite sides of the song and it can be brilliant in both ways. So that's what I was wondering about.

0:22:03 WM: That's a good question and is... Well, the lyrics of that song have that type of dual meaning, like, Everything Happens to Me. I think it's so important to know the lyrics of songs and to understand also what the composer is conveying, and how do lyrics work with the words because they took a lot of time in those days on those songs, and they had a lot of... The songs have a lot of poetry and meaning, lyrically and melodically. And that's a good song to pick because you can hear that anyway, you can hear like, Everything Happens to Me, in a why always me kind of Charlie Brown type of sense, or you can hear it like the ironic, Everything Happens to Me. And I think the more information you bring to things, the more... The better time, you're gonna have with them.

0:22:48 WM: And I find that to be true of any activity. If you know people, you're with better you're gonna learn... You're gonna have a better time. And I believe in knowing about lyrics. My father was big on that there's a famous story of Ben Webster was playing a song and he stopped. And everybody said, "What's wrong frog?" He said, "I forgot the words." So, I tend to believe when you know words, when you know periods, when you know what environment it comes out of, when you know the tradition of a thing and what meanings are, you're gonna play things better, you're gonna have more latitude. And in actuality, go back to what I was saying earlier about 360-degree experience, our relationship to any event. There're so many ways that different people interpret things, and that is our individuality. There's no one way to experience any given thing. And it could be something profound as birth, death.

0:23:41 WM: Things that did an essence of life itself. You find people cracking jokes in a tragedy or you find people cry. I remember once to get hold of a row of people at a concert of classical

music. And a couple of people were sleeping, one person was crying, other people looking intensely and somebody had a score out. And I just looked down on it for a while. I remember taking my kids to see Cecil Taylor, when they were young, they were like six and eight. And Cecil was playing in the Vanguard. And we looked at his set and my kids when I would take them to a concert, it was like I was bringing them to a bed that they never stayed up until my one 8-year-old son got up on a chair, he was just looking at it intently and I was thinking, "Man, this guy goes to sleep on everything. He's checking Cecil out that much."

0:24:29 WM: And he was just listening and listen listen, after like two or three songs, he looked down at me, 'cause he was on a chair and he said, "Man I can't believe this many people in New York wanna hear this." So, everybody's attitude about things is different and is definitely a different time. So, one of the most beautiful things we can do is have our own personal perspective about things, and to be true to ourselves and who we are. And then to inform that truth. So, I think just the fact that you observe that is a profound observation. I like the fact that you had the CD covers that you were showing them too. That's a good technique. Thank you.

0:25:04 HD: Thank you so much.

0:25:05 AM: Thanks Hugo.

0:25:06 WM: Thank you.

0:25:06 AM: All right. Let's take another question this time from Chalisa Fonza. All right, go ahead.

0:25:21 Chalisa Fonza: Hi, Wynton.

0:25:22 WM: Hey now. How are you doing?

0:25:25 CF: I'm fine. How are you? My question is when you're in your creative mode, when you're writing compositions and pieces. Is it the chicken or the egg? Are you out somewhere and you're traveling and you see a big fat hen in the field? Do you come up with Big Fat Hen and then you go write or do you have the music and it's in your head and you're thinking about it, and then you name it afterwards? So that's my question.

0:25:58 WM: As you know, most of the times I name stuff afterwards. But if I'm working on big pieces that are long, I have a lot of outline that I write and I think about a lot and I start to dream about it. And I wake up and I hear it, but I also clown all the time. Like I come up with songs for people's names and have little details that I'm singing tend to put rhythms to stuff when I hear it in the street. I don't know why it's just hard for me to keep still. So, I'm always, I don't have to... I just have to... If I put my mind on something and I start working on it, like with Big Fat Hen, just make the chicken sound because Herlin Riley taught me how to make a chicken sound on a trumpet. I remember I heard him making a chicken. He was...

[music]

0:26:44 WM: So I said, "Man show me how to make that chicken." Herlin showed me how to play the chicken, and I started playing the chicken sound on that song, and that was on the song, we did... I wrote that song... We did a show with Chano Dominguez and the Flamenco Jazz on some... And we needed a song that would fit with both musics and a groove and The Great El Piraña was playing the cajón. That's the song that I just made up at the end of a sound check, and then we played it. It goes many different ways, if it's really complicated and I work on it for a long time, like big pieces like, All Rise or Blood on Te Fields or whatever piece I got come out called The Ever Fonky Lowdown. I had cue cards, that I would look at for three or four months, and I just really just work on it then I start to write the music and try to make it all be connected, like a big novel or something. I hope I'm answering your question, but it comes to me in a lot of different ways, but when I'm really hearing it, I wake up and I can hear it.

[laughter]

0:27:47 WM: And I don't know why, 'cause I don't have a perfect pitch, but when I wake up, I'm always singing in the key of the music that I'm working on, and I don't know why. I sing it into my phone a lot of times.

0:28:00 CF: Wow.

0:28:01 WM: Keep your phone, sing into those little voice memos, that's a lot of fun too.

0:28:06 AM: Thanks for your question Chalisa.

0:28:08 CF: Thank you.

0:28:09 WM: I like your name too, Chalisa.

0:28:13 AM: A lot of good names tonight. Alright, next question is coming from Adrian Novik. Adrian go ahead.

0:28:23 Adrian Novik: Hey, how are you, how are you everybody, good evening, this is Adrian here from Chicago. I would like to take a ride, a little bit that Caleb was talking, from Australia, I'm gonna follow up 30 years later [chuckle], from you Caleb. I am Argentinian, spent most of my life in Brazil, and I came here 20 years ago, for study and for two years assignment and when the assignment was over and I got a job here and I stayed. And I used to say, that I liked to summer here, and I survived the winter. And one of the key points of the winter is when the Lincoln comes here to play at CSO, close to my house, and I always can go over there to check the orchestra. Wynton, my question to you is the following and, I'm not gonna be 30 anymore, I'm gonna be 55 I guess.

[laughter]

0:29:30 AN: And you said something in the beginning here about what's going on here, and my grandparents came from concentration camps, I went through the Malvinas War in Argentina, went through the 9/11 here, was already here. And every time that something like this happens, what comes to me is the sense of urgency, is don't procrastinate, don't leave things for tomorrow, take care of your health, all the things that you were talking. And this is what we are going through right now, it's gonna pass, but we need to be resilient, we need to take care of our bodies. Going to the question, and sorry going a little bit long here, in my 54 years, I was in a hurry to be an engineer, I worked developing cellphones 25 years ago, now, I'm doing other things. And my music desire was always procrastinated because a little bit like you Caleb, I have my Argentinian father was probably close to your Korean father [laughter], probably, and I'm still getting... Especially with a pandemic here, they need to go back to the things that are important. And the music is something that's important. Caleb I already asked you this question already, the answer is, "Yes, go ahead." I haven't been playing, but 54 is still a good time to start. I'll go to the second question, Caleb, you have time. We both have time, and we can do a churrasco going to Italian food some time, some place.

[laughter]

0:31:11 WM: That could happen. You are laughing now but, it could happen.

0:31:15 AN: And actually, one more point before my question... And this is when I saw Carlos Henriquez and Chris Crenshaw playing here in Chicago, sometimes you call out who's their composer, who is their ranger. I have this feeling, I say, "Oh my God!", those guys are 25 years or 30 years younger than me, and they can talk, they can express themselves with the instrument in a way that I can barely say in Spanish, or in Portuguese or in English or whatever. The second question, now that Caleb already asked the first and I have a chance to go back to study music, is the following, when I talk, no matter what language I talk, if I talk in Spanish or in Portuguese or in English, the way that I was educated was, the words are yours until they are out of your mouth. And when they are out of the mouth belongs to whoever, listen and the interpretation can... You loose control of that. And the way that this impact me, is that you can see the way that I talk.

0:32:15 AN: I think in the same time that I'm talking. And the impact that it has when I try to improvise, when I try to learn my scales and my modes, and then... "Okay, Adrian, you go now, eight bars or nine bars or 10 bars." I can feel how I freeze, I feel like, "Oh my God, this is the right note that I wanna say, this is the right message, what exactly can I say?" And when I hear the orchestra or when I see the Jazz at Lincoln or other orchestras, and you see the fluidity, that they can improvise, it's something that amazes me. The question is, how people that are in the very, very high level like you and your colleagues, are able to de-attach yourself from this, "Oh my God, this is exactly what I wanna say." and just say and send it out and hopefully it works, right? Well, hopefully for me, not for you [laughter] hopefully...

0:33:19 WM: It's hopefully for all of us.

0:33:21 AN: Yeah, yeah, so this is the question...

0:33:22 WM: It is...

0:33:23 AN: How you become fluid in the instruments the same way that I am not fluid in my language when I talk because I always thinking how those things will impact other people, and it's exactly what I wanna say.

0:33:37 WM: I think that everything that you could think as a weakness can also be a strength. The first thing that I'm gonna address is the thought of other people and what they do. Like you see a younger person who does something, you see people who do things... Coming from New Orleans... And a lot of people can play. I mean, my brother can really play, so I was always around people who can play, Terence Blanchard can really play. We had other trumpet players that people don't know they can play. And we start to realize that it's not a competition as much as it is a cooperation. We all are different, the world was not gonna be interested. You think of all, what Caleb was talking. There's similarities but man, you know you're studying physic, doing this. Now we talk, me and you, Argentina, we start thinking about Fats Fernández. You're here, you work, you're a engineer, you talk about the music and you can still love the music. So, everything is interconnected. Now when it comes to playing, I think how many times... I love to work with little kids, who don't play at all, so I never teach them scales, I never teach them any technical thing about music. I always tell them, "Start with like some idea." Like if they can hit a note, they might play a note and go...

[music]

0:34:48 WM: Then I still can play with the rhythm on that note. Then they'll go...

[music]

0:34:55 WM: I say, "Okay, repeat that again."

[music]

0:35:00 WM: Try to turn it around backwards.

[music]

0:35:06 WM: Make some kind of wild sound.

[music]

0:35:10 WM: Put those two things together.

[music]

0:35:18 WM: Then just by giving basic things on one note, they start to realize that, hey, when you're improvising... It's just like talking. So you don't think about all of those things like what the note is, what the scale is, you only think ideas. And when you get in that stream of those ideas, the ideas are about come to you just like when you're talking, and you're gonna miss notes, you're going to make a mistake, you're going to misspeak, but you keep going because you're trying to communicate an idea, and the communication of that idea is more important. And the same thing is what if you play on a song with changes like if you play a song... "All The Things You Are" has a progression you say...

[music]

0:36:17 WM: So on and so forth, you develop your ideas. One thing comes to the next thing comes to the next thing. Now the fact that you wait before you speak that's a plus. So now instead of playing through the changes like I played you might go...

[music]

0:36:55 WM: You start to... You take your time more. So when you get to that point, where you're taking your time instead of filling the space, with fear and anxiety, fill that space with what you're hearing because when you're playing you don't have time to think about anything. You don't have time to, "What are people playing. What's the next cord," and the time is moving, so you get into that urgent time, you used the word urgent but in that time, it's kind of like you bought a gift for somebody and you wanna tell them that you love them, and you have things you wanna say, you have to deliver that gift to them. You can start analyzing... You know I bought this gift for you and... Fill it only with the love that you feel, and that's how you... I think you start to fill spaces with things that you want to hear in the space. You ever noticed that two dogs that are in the neighborhood to fight, I grew up in the country. So there was always dogs on the streets.

[vocalization]

0:37:49 WM: Then the dogs, when [0:37:50] ____ there's a silence and when they listen to that silence, one of the dogs don't like what they heard.

[vocalization]

0:37:54 WM: They walk away. Very powerful. I would say when you're trying to deliver something to someone if you give someone a gift, or you tell him something to mean something, even if you tell them something that you don't like you, "I really don't like the way you talk to me." You better wait after you tell them that. You don't say, "I really don't like the way you talk to me." "Hey, did you see the basketball game last..." You have to let things sink in. So I think you can use that space to your advantage. Just don't fill the space with anxiety.

0:38:25 AN: It's like Jim Hall right, when he plays the guitar that he has this space and the space are notes right? That are part of the words he is saying, right?

0:38:34 WM: Yes, he definitely is very patient and famously of course, Miles is very patient, Monk, very patient, Bill Evans, very patient. It's a category of musicians that is very patient and study those musicians. And instead of studying the technical things that people study, study what they're thinking about, in the silence, go into the negative space. It is always a good practice when you study, study the space that is obvious and then study the space that is not obvious. So... And that will help, I think.

0:39:08 AN: Thank you very much. One of the things also, just to finish, I'm sorry if I talk too much, one of the things that you said this pandemic is doing, we need to also celebrate the good things that are happening and the community that's been created in these events that I'm joining every Monday night, and the opportunity to... I mean, this will never happen eventually if life was different. Right? So it's a moment to celebrate that and I want to thank you and I saw the kids last week and I...

0:39:38 WM: I love this.

0:39:39 AN: It was unbelievable so I want to congratulate and I wanna say thank you and nice to meet all my new friends around the world. Thank you very much.

0:39:47 WM: Thank you very much. Thank you...

0:39:49 AN: Welcome from Chicago anytime soon.

0:39:51 WM: We are gonna be there, I love it Chicago, the Symphony Hall, James Fahey.

0:39:56 AN: Yes.

0:39:56 WM: Fantastic.

0:39:58 AM: Thank you, Adrian.

0:39:58 WM: Yeah, you're right.

0:40:00 AM: Alright, so the next question is coming from actually... Wynton, this is this year's winner of Essentially Ellington composing and arranging competition. This is Leo Steinriede with the question. Leo, welcome go ahead.

0:40:16 Leo Steinriede: Hi Mr. Marsalis. My question is, I want to keep it short. Recently I watched an interview with you and you said a lot of people, a lot of young people come to you looking for meaning, and I have been thinking a lot about the word jazz recently, I know a lot of people talk about this, I am sure you have gotten this question before, but my question is, what does the word jazz mean historically and what does it mean today?

0:40:49 WM: Well, the first... The first time that the music was used it had a sexual connotation. It was spelled J-A-S-S and they started to scratch the J off just like people would do. So, it was changed to J-A-Z-Z. It was equated, it was associated with that. Now, I am going to suggest something to you that I want you to do. The material is not something maybe a 1980 or '81, I would have recommended to somebody, in the culture we live in today, and at your age you are mature enough to handle this material. I want you to get to Jelly Roll Morton's Library of Congress recordings. You play piano? I haven't heard your compositions but I heard about...

0:41:33 LS: I play guitar.

0:41:35 WM: Okay, I look forward to forward to in hearing your composition by the way, Ted Nash was telling me about, everybody was reading about how good it is. I just want you to know, we talk all the time about young people were hear, I am proud of you for winning. That is difficult to win that. And we have had some great composers and arrangers win the last few years. I wish I had heard it so I could say something about your composition, but I always think, go to the source of things. Or go to call the Tulane Library. I do not know if they're opened now. And the whole holding library, call them and see if you could get all the interviews of the earliest jazz musicians. Take your pick and go through them and see. Johnny St. Cyr and get the early musicians. Danny Barker is another good source of information, great banjoist and guitarist. Get Jelly Roll Morton's Library of Congress recordings done by Alan, the great Alan Lomax and listen to those recordings.

0:42:26 WM: And in those recordings you are going to find as close as we can have to an essence of what this music is. Now, of course, it is all Jelly Roll's opinion. But he was close to the source, and he was an intellectual. So you got so many stuffs he is making up, but a lot of what he is saying has got a great deal truth in it. I want you to start out there and then later when I see you, I will see you online, because when we do the Essentially Ellington it's gonna be all online and I'll get a chance to talk with you again. Think about that and then have some questions for me about that and we can talk about the things we hear. I am directing to one set of things on that. There is a lot social things he talks about. That is the important, but I want you to listen to when he talks about the Maple Leaf Rag, he plays it three ways. He plays the Maple Leaf Rag the way Joplin wrote it, he plays it the way that people were playing... Ragtime pianists were playing in Missouri, there were kind of Rag in it. And then he plays it in his style, his way of playing jazz. And that is going to show you more about or what it means to play jazz than anything that's said in the whole series. I hope that helps.

0:43:31 LS: Thank you. Yeah. Awesome.

0:43:33 WM: I am proud of you, man, congratulations.

0:43:36 LS: I am a student of Joe, Joe Blocks so...

0:43:39 WM: What? Joe is too young to have students, man. I love Joe. And I know I love you. Joe Block was on last week. Joe and I went too nice and polite. I was telling him that, "Man be the way you all are in real life," because Joe and I are rough. Everytime you say something to Joe and then

he have all the things they... But congratulations you could not have a greater person to study with. It is great to see younger person learning for another younger person, because Joe has a lot of intellectual integrity and he is a seeker, So, great.

0:44:14 LS: Thank you, so much for answering my question.

0:44:16 WM: Man, thank you. Don't stay up too late son.

0:44:21 AM: Alright, let us take another one, this next one is coming from Kaycee Klark. Kaycee go ahead.

0:44:29 Kaycee Klark: Hi, I am just wondering, how do you stay motivated during this time and what is your mindset of doing so?

0:44:37 WM: Well, my mindset in this time is urgent because we are trying to keep our organization alive. And for performing arts organizations and for musicians, freelance musicians, is virtually impossible. And for us to not be able to open and not be play gigs and not be able to in any way to have revenue, but to still have bills. I am urging and we are all urging. I am not having any problem with stuff to do. I've literally been on the phone today, since 9 o'clock this morning with maybe 30 minute break, just trying to get people together, our community, find resources, plan what we are gonna do, talk about about how we can be more organized and more focused. I played one of my parts. I got it sitting up here. We doing a new thing of Chris Crenshaw's pieces conglomerative, a conglomerate. We are doing a virtual recording in the band. Cats are putting their parts and I had to put my part in, and we just... Adam who is hosting this...we keep him up late at night working on films. So he and Chloe, I do not know how they're up right now, but we are working and we are trying to uplift people and fulfill our mission in this time.

0:45:47 WM: And I need to get on my horn more. That is why I had my horn now in the night. My goal for next month is to really practice and get my 14 Arbnan's characteristics studies together, so that I can let Anthony Harvey know that I am still serious. And I hope I answered your question but I am urging, I want you to be urging too, set up your schedule. I think of some things you... Set a real far off goal, it is really difficult that you may not be able to achieve and then set a bunch of little goals up to lead to that big goal. And then I am gonna talk to you and two months after this and we are going see where you are. Okay?

0:46:25 KK: Thank you.

0:46:26 WM: Alright, I am serious now, I am not joking.

0:46:30 AM: Alright, next question is coming from Sara Frischer. Sara, go ahead.

0:46:34 Sara Frischer: Hi, Wynton.

0:46:36 WM: Hey now.

0:46:40 SF: Hi, Wynton. How are you today?

0:46:40 WM: Good. How are you feeling?

0:46:43 SF: Oh good, I am probably the only one who like it being locked up at home.

[laughter]

0:46:51 SF: I have an idea, though. They said that drive-ins could be a place that people can go to and maybe you could figure out a way to set something up in a drive-in and everybody would be in their car.

0:47:04 WM: We saw that the people did that in Denmark, I think. One of the first concerts. We're looking at everything. We wanna get out there and play. So, thank you for calling in with it. Believe me we are looking at it.

0:47:16 SF: Good. I know how... I talked to Lisa today. She said Everything is all about getting it together and keeping it going.

0:47:27 WM: We're looking at it. You know it's a challenging time. It's a challenging time. It's challenging for us but it's challenging for... Some people are struggling just to eat. So I always... Every time we talk about it in my mind always pause on those who really don't have enough to sustain themselves and how a difficult a time it is.

0:47:50 SF: It's very hard. Anytime I see something and if there's musicians that I know, well I see that maybe somebody's offering money or a scholarship or something, I try to forward it to the people I know.

0:48:02 WM: Right. Please. Please keep doing that.

0:48:05 SF: Whatever I can.

0:48:08 WM: Every little bit helps. Yeah, when you're trying to eat everything helps. So if anybody out there, if you can be community for somebody, lend them a hand. And if you need a hand don't be too proud to ask. This is one of those time periods.

0:48:23 SF: I'm just at home drawing. [chuckle] I have a question though.

0:48:27 WM: Yes, ma'am.

0:48:29 SF: So I've been drawing. I'm not a musician and I left my job because I wanted to leave my job and then they wanted to put me in lots and lots of people all the time, and I was like, "You know, this thing is contagious and I can't do it. I gotta leave. I have a plan, I have tickets I have my

subscription, I gotta be some place." So and I've been drawing and I've been drawing great master's drawings upside down so that I can find the space it is and maybe just get the composition or the shapes of the big part. And I wonder about a voice. 'Cause I wonder when you do a cover of someone's song, when does it become yours?

0:49:21 WM: I think just by the nature of your playing, you're gonna have things that you will do that other people won't do. And I think I would always say, sometimes years ago, like when Roy Hargrove was young, the older musicians would tell me, "Well, we can't tell what none of the younger musicians are planning they don't sound individual." And I would say, "You have to listen to 'em enough to hear their individuality." So, I think stuff is always yours. It's just a matter of you identifying what you want to take out of your playing and how you wanna put more of the thing that is you into it. I love the fact that if you're painting something upside down, we were talking early about the negative space.

0:49:58 WM: And I think that when you look at things from a different perspective, there's a lot to be found in there. And Monk was that type of musician. He was always in a negative space that's why his humor; Well, he's always so funny. You asked him, "What's happening Monk?" He said, "Everything is happening all the time." He would go out to clubs and people would say, "Can you give me \$20 Monk?" Or, "Can you give me \$40?" And Monk would pull a thousand dollar bill out of his pocket and say, "Can you break this?" So he understood the negative space and his playing is that way. So, I think that... And some people just have a lot of individuality and others of us struggle with it. And nobody, I don't think anybody really knows why but you have to have kind of the confidence in which you hear and a lot of this stuff is very mysterious and spiritual. But it has to do with belief and believe in your voice and trying to search for that with a certain type of intensity. I know, I would talk to Ornette Coleman. He suffered a lot because of his individuality. And he used to always say: music is not a race it's an idea.

0:51:05 SF: Yeah.

0:51:05 WM: So the kind of competition in people he always said it's an idea. And if you have that idea, then you follow that idea. He believed a lot, he said, "Music has a lot of gestural things in it." And I think the page is like that. All art is like that too. All arts I feel are connected. When we look at it, all of the kinda great artists and now there are so many and so many different mediums that people get so many different types of things. There's a lot of individuality out here.

0:51:37 SF: Yeah. I've been finding... I'm waiting for somethings to arrive from Amazon but like Miró writing about music and Kandinsky writing about music and Chagall on music. So I'm looking at everybody's thoughts and reading. It's really quite interesting. It's nice to have the time.

0:51:57 WM: Yeah, we have a symbiotic relationship with all of us. I remember years ago I wanted to use one of Matisse's painting; one of Matisse's collages on the front of an album that I put out called The Majesty of the Blues. This had to be in 1988 or '89. And I called his son, Pier, who had a shop in New York and I asked him for permission to use this piece called Icarus from Matisse's same reason this was called jazz and Pier said that his father loved jazz. And he talked about how

much Matisse loved jazz and later Romare Bearden, he was always talking about Matisse's love for jazz. And Ted Nash did a piece called Portrait in Seven Shades that was above... He had Chagall in that and some of the other great artists. And we did a second series that dealt with American, South American artist Papo Vazquez did a great piece based on Wilfredo Lam's work. And then we did a piece last year, I think, with Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. And yeah, we had a lot of different pieces. Everyone in the band wrote a different piece. So yeah, we have a lot of relationships with museums and there's so many great museums and great artists around. Yeah. We got to continue to do that. That kind of thing with more intensity.

0:53:18 SF: Thank you. Good luck with everything. My heart is with you every day. I wake up and just hope that there's some pieces that you can get together that make it work.

0:53:26 WM: Yes ma'am. Thank you so much. We trying.

0:53:29 SF: Yeah.

0:53:30 WM: All of us. Not just the orchestra. We're all trying; the entire staff, everybody. We trying to be for real. Thank you.

0:53:37 AM: Thank you, Sara. Alright, next question is coming from Anthony Session. Anthony, go ahead.

0:53:46 Anthony Session: Hi, how are you sir?

0:53:47 WM: Alright. How are you doing?

0:53:49 AS: Alright. I asked Camille last week. Well, I started... I don't wanna be long-winded, I wanna get this out there. Growing up, I did a lot of listening to the R&B stuff, growing up in the Fort in Brooklyn. I wanted to play horn, but we always had a basketball in our hand with the King Boys, and some of the other guys that we played with in Westfall Street and all that, so I never really got the music... How can I say? I never learned how to play. So now that I'm really trying to take it serious with my horn it's a little tough. But my question deals with confidence. I can talk to anybody. I'll play ball against Michael Jordan. He's gonna beat me, but that's okay, 'cause I'm not scared.

[laughter]

0:54:48 AS: I don't have a fear of that, but Adrian touched on it, and I really appreciate. Thank you, Adrian. I don't have the confidence to improvise in front of people. How do I possibly get over that?

0:55:08 WM: Man, if I could answer that, I would get over being afraid on a plane.

[laughter]

0:55:12 WM: Man, look. I've been in every type of flight simulator, I've talked to every kind of pilot, I've done... You know what? I don't know if I'm the right one to give advice on that. The only thing I can say is, the more you do it, the more you do it. [chuckle] So sometimes if we have tours, we have to get on four or five flights, okay, you know I...

[laughter]

0:55:37 WM: I endure it. And I can... Okay, after a while, I get used to doing it. But I really think the more you do it, and do it around friendly people. And I think it's great at any stage of your life to pick up things and learn them, and I think another thing is just accept the level that you're on. It makes you even more nervous if you're trying to be perfect, or you think people are judging you. Man, people are thinking about themselves most of the time, they're not judging you. Get out in there and play. My daddy used to always tell... When I was young, I played in parades, and I really couldn't play, but I'd be standing up there playing. He'd say, "Man, ain't nothing wrong with being sad." He said, "Just don't play a lot, and making sure you don't stay sad." So I think it's all encouragement, and it's a skill, that like anything, the more you do it the more confident you're gonna be. But you... To get confident in front of people, you gotta be in front of people. Because it can be nerve-wracking.

0:56:33 AS: Yeah, I don't have a fear of playing in front of people. It's just that I'm scared...

0:56:39 WM: Improvise.

0:56:39 AS: Improvise. [chuckle]

0:56:40 WM: But you know what? I feel like if you play in the R&B funk kind of style, you used to playing at E minor, F sharp, all the keys that people don't really play in if they playing jazz, get tools that you like to play on and become familiar with the sound of those songs and then go from there. The more familiar you are with material, the less nervous you're gonna be. And I think if you just pick two or three things you can play, play those, and people gonna be clapping and co-signing you, and then just build slowly. Build slowly your confidence. It's not a... 'Cause you're gonna find people are not hostile. People want you to sound good, they wanna have a good time. You a trumpet player? What do you play?

0:57:23 AS: I try to play, I play a little trumpet.

0:57:25 WM: Man, you play trumpet. Don't say, "I try to play." You a trumpet player.

[laughter]

0:57:28 WM: We all trumpet players. You heard Charles before play and he said he had a heart attack. He had work, dental work, and he's still up there with his horn. [vocalize] We all one family, we trumpet players, and you just gotta do your thing. And sometimes it's gonna be sad. You have to accept that. And sometimes you're not gonna do good, but come back that next day, and it's gonna

slowly get better. But start with what you can do and then slowly add things that you can't do and you see me in four or five years, you gonna be playing.

0:58:01 AS: I appreciate it, thank you. And also please, would you tell Ravi Best, if you talk to him, I said hello? I spoke to him, I talked to him for an hour, and I met Mike Reddick through him. Please, if you can, tell them, if you remember.

0:58:14 WM: I will if I see Ravi. Yeah, I love Ravi, man. Yeah, I used to teach Ravi when he was in high school, so that was in the 1980s. So definitely.

0:58:24 AS: Yes, alright.

0:58:25 WM: Thank you for calling.

0:58:26 AS: Thank you again.

0:58:27 WM: Yes, sir. Thank you.

0:58:30 AM: Alright, next question's coming in from Lori Peterson. Lori, go ahead.

0:58:35 Lori Peterson: Hello, Wynton.

0:58:37 WM: Alright, now, how you doing?

0:58:39 LP: Good, how are you?

0:58:40 WM: Good, good.

0:58:42 LP: Good. I just had a quick question. How do you merge classical music with jazz?

0:58:51 WM: Well, jazz and classical music of a certain tradition, we already have a lot in common. Let's think of the things we have in common. One is march, march form and march harmony, the conception of the march. Then the harmonic progressions in jazz are the same. Jelly Roll breaks a lot of this stuff down. The basic three harmonies in western music are the basic three harmonies in the blues. The use of counterpoint. Like New Orleans counterpoint is another way... Some of the early King Oliver's music sounds like Bach's music in the Brandenburg Concertos. I know Bob Wilber had made a recording like that, and John Lewis, great music director of Modern Jazz Quartet, used to always talk about those similarities. Sectional form, chorus format form, where you connect one section, to the next section, to the next section. The instrumental virtuosity, the concept of theme and variation. You listen to the Diabelli variations, or any of the great... Goldberg variations, any great variations you have throughout European music. Then through opera, we have a lot of connections. If you start to think about Arias in New Orleans, they had a big opera house and the musicians always playing and listening to opera and trying to play opera. Louis Armstrong loved Caruso. The similarities go on and on.

1:00:07 WM: We speak in the same syntax, in the same language. What it takes to hear a Shostakovich symphony is the same as what it takes to play Duke Ellington's Harlem. It's the same kind of a spacial relationship, of music registration. The exposition of form is the same, the concept of development has a lot in common. So, what you do is first try to understand the two instruments, and the instruments exist in families and they're expressed in registers, and when you start to understand how those registers are expressed, like you got your flutes and got your... You got your flutes and your oboes. You got your clarinets. Your clarinets is supposed to get down in that trumpet range, and then you get down. Clarinets goes down through that trumpet range down to where the trombones are. The French horn to key all of that stuff 'cause they're the middle, they are like a saxophone section.

1:00:55 WM: And they sit up in the middle, they're woodwind and their brass, and then you get down lower you start to get into your trombones. That's where we have our trombones. You get down there, you got your tubas and your contrabassoons and your bassoons. You got all those little instruments, then you got the string section. You have to put the violins up there with the flutes you got... It's such a great thing. I used to always, when I first started working on these pieces, just lay out the orchestra on my piano and just look at it, write the instruments and look at the way they were laid out and just think about 'em and try to be like if I was that instrument.

1:01:23 WM: And you know it's just a matter of integration, because the challenge of merging a jazz orchestra with a classical orchestra is first, the volume we're gonna play at. When we first started doing these types of concerts in the '90s, we were shocked at how much louder we were. So we had... A trombone section will wipe a whole string section out easily. So we have to start playing more. And then there's also functionality, you have to give musicians stuff to play based on how many of them there are. You can't just have a bunch of string players sitting up playing all notes looking at you 'cause there's too many people would be bored, so you have to find a way to give them hard stuff to play, so that they wanna play.

1:02:00 WM: And you have to be challenged, you know. There's ways of working and balancing and finding the rules and things that we have in common. Finding a way to write between three and two for the swing. These are things I worked on over the last... Since the '90s really. And I'm just getting where I can understand how to do a few of the things but some things I notice can work, and find that common slice of language and figure out how to orchestrate that, 'cause we have a lot of common objectives, but it is challenging. But you'll find with the contemporary classical musicians a tremendous eagerness to play with jazz musicians. And to the orchestras we play, we put out a recording with the St. Louis Symphony, and the great Dave Robertson conducting and just his spirit, he's so much up about it, and people coming together, and the orchestra has a lot of younger musicians and the percussion section in... And the kind of musicians in our generation, they're amongst older group, they wanna play different stuff.

1:03:00 WM: So you know it's challenging now. The Philadelphia Orchestra, I have an unbelievable a great experience playing with them, too. I love them, and they'll work on stuff and figure it out. We also have to build on the traditions we have: The tradition of Gershwin, of

Bernstein, of Copeland, of Duke, of Gunther Shuller, of John Lewis, of James P. Johnson. We have traditions that we can build on. I hope I didn't give you a real long answer, that's a difficult subject.

1:03:28 LP: No, that was the very on, good answer, very informative to me. Very detailed.

1:03:34 WM: I'm sorry it's so long, but it's very interesting.

1:03:35 LP: It helps.

1:03:37 WM: It's interesting be on the stage with all, with like a huge ensemble and for us to have to listen across... I didn't even touch on a percussionists, like one of the deepest... 'Cause for us, drums are playing all the time.

1:03:49 LP: Yeah.

1:03:49 AM: In orchestra, percussion the drums, most of the time are punctuation. So there's some things also for us the base sounds on every note. In orchestra the base is not sounding on every note. So we got the extreme highs, we got cymbals playing. There's a lot of challenges to it, but it can be a lot of fun when it works.

1:04:06 LP: Right. Yeah, thank you so much.

1:04:08 WM: Yes, ma'am, thank you so much.

1:04:11 AM: Alright, next question comes from Joshua Polion. Joshua, you're unmuted.

1:04:18 Joshua Polion: Hey, hi Wynton.

1:04:18 WM: What's going on, man?

1:04:21 JP: What's going on? So, my question is about college and college scholarships. So my parents... I'm a junior in high school, I play trumpet and I'm looking to go to college for jazz and jazz studies. My parents, they're depending on me to get a scholarship and to get good funding for college and they think that the way to go is through marching band and through an HBCU. So my question is, is it possible to go to jazz with a scholarship for... Go to college with a scholarship in jazz studies.

1:05:06 WM: It is possible to go to college with a scholarship in jazz studies, people do it all the time. I always say that your parents always want the best for you, and your parents give you the best advice they can give you with what they know, if you know something different show them. And the way you show them is learn how to play so well that they just say, "Well okay," then you pick out where you wanna have your auditions, and show them what you wanna do. I know when it was time for me to go to college with my dad, just looked at me and said, "Look man, you better get a scholarship, 'cause we don't have no money."

1:05:44 JP: Yeah.

1:05:45 WM: That was just what it was, and it wasn't a big deal, it wasn't like... You know, it wasn't earth-shattering or nothing like that. We all have different experiences. And I knew I wanted to get out of New Orleans, so I started practicing. And what I suggest for you is get on your horn, you know. You start getting up to 6 o'clock in the morning and you put in a couple of hours, and you get me in the middle of the day with another hour or two, 12 to 2, and then you get me at night with an 8 to 10 and you don't have to worry about scholarship. You're just a junior too, you got a good year and a half. Let's get to it.

1:06:26 JP: Alright.

1:06:26 WM: You know what I'm saying?

1:06:26 JP: Yes sir.

1:06:27 WM: Well, let's see. Let me know how you do. Let's get to it.

1:06:30 JP: Will do.

1:06:31 WM: Alright.

1:06:32 JP: Alright, thank you.

1:06:33 WM: Alright now. Is that some ties I see in the background? What is that I see in the background?

1:06:39 JP: Oh yeah. Ties and my melodica, up here.

1:06:44 WM: Melodica? Click this off. [laughter] It's great to see you man, thank you.

1:06:51 JP: Thank you so much.

1:06:52 WM: Yeah, you right.

1:06:54 AM: Alright, I believe we're running out of time. We've got just time for one more question I believe. But, as we wind down, I'd just like to remind everybody quickly about all of the live events we'll be continuing to host. We have question answer sessions with Wynton Marsalis, we have live events master classes and conversations with members of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, live performances streamed from artist's homes, free education classes and more. With that, I'm gonna take our last question. It's coming from Tim Mack. Tim, go ahead.

1:07:31 Tim Mack: Hi Wynton.

1:07:32 WM: Alright now.

1:07:33 TM: First of all, thank you for doing this. Everything you do at the Lincoln Center, and thank you for giving everybody this opportunity. I saw you back around '95, or so. You were at one of those jazz fests. I really didn't, I kind of was giving guitar lessons to a guy a few years older than me. He told me it was going down, and he gave me a ride down there and I found a ride back; somehow. But, one of the greatest experiences I ever had. That year, I think George Benson was there. I saw you guys play right after Jimmy Heath, and it was phenomenal. Just, phenomenal experience. I'm gonna go ahead and defer my question. I'm gonna let my son, he plays drums. He's very into jazz. So, I'm gonna go head and let him ask a question, okay?

1:08:30 Keegan: Alright.

1:08:32 WM: Well, I love seeing y'all first. Before you ask me a question, I love it. I love seeing you with your son. Whenever I see people at concerts and they're with their youngster always tell them, "Hey. Respect your old man." I see you got your drums in the background too, player. And, I see your painting. I can see it. So I'm glad, I'm glad, I'm glad you up with some supervision son. What's your question?

1:08:54 Keegan: Hi, Wynton. My name is Keegan.

1:08:55 WM: Hey man.

1:08:56 Keegan: And, I just wanted to ask, what's some young, some advice you can give young drummers that you've taken from, or learned from playing with jazz greats like Art Blakey, or just anyone in general?

1:09:10 WM: Okay, the first thing I'm gonna say is: the drums, the drum is a king. The drummer is the leader. The drum is...

1:09:25 AM: Oh, we lost you for a second, Wynton but you're back now.

1:09:28 WM: You got me?

1:09:28 AM: Yeah.

1:09:28 WM: I'm trying to find y'all. Because I was looking at y'all, now I don't see you. But, I'm gonna just go on without seeing you, it's okay. You got me?

1:09:36 AM: Yeah.

1:09:36 WM: Do y'all hear me? I think, learn the mythology of the instrument. What does it mean to be a drummer? What do drums mean? And I want you to come into contact with the works of the

greatest drummers. And, I would say, the master drummers of today, reach out to them. It could be Jeff Hamilton, Ali Jackson, it doesn't matter. Lewis Nash. I could just, name people. There's so many great drummers that are out here. Reach out to them. Try to figure out the things that they're doing. But also, when you're studying the history of your instrument, check out... For some reason, a lot of drummers have done recorded documentation. I'm gonna recommend, we were talking about Jelly Roll a little earlier, I'm gonna recommend Joe Jones talking about the drums. Baby Dodds talking about the drums. Buddy Rich who had a very colorful history. He was known as Baby Traps. He was one of the most successful children, child stars in the 1930s.

1:10:39 WM: And I'm gonna tell you about one time when I was in Italy with Art Blakey. In the late... In 1980 there was a festival, and for some reason, all the drums were there. I had the honor of sitting up listening to drummers talk from 12 o'clock to 6 or 7 in the morning. And, it was Art Blakey, it was Buddy Rich, it was Max Roach, it was Elvin Jones, it was, I mean I don't know, it was just everybody who was great. And, just to hear them talk and the stories, and the mythology, and the feeling of them. And, the love and the respect that they had for each other. Because, you wouldn't know it, like that. I think Mel Lewis was there, and I think, I just, Dannie Richmond. Billy Higgins. So, learn, kind of, the lineage of your instrument and have pride in it. And, when you go to play, exhibit that, that pride. Try to get in touch with The Hammer, you know, Jeff Hamilton and get online. And when I was in highschool, man, I would call trumpet players and to try to see if I could get with them; and get to know them and study their style. But, yeah, study those drum documents. And, remember the drum is a king. The drummer has to be unbelievably intellectual and smart, because the drummer is the leader. And, the drummer determines the tempo, the feeling and the energy and the power. The Drummer is like the president; it's the quick power in a band.

1:12:05 WM: The drummer has to be kind and play with volume control. The drums covers the entire spectrum of the music. The highest, high is the cymbal; the lowest, low is the bass drum. Remember about the sound of your drum. You want your drums to have a sound. Now it's real popular to get a real dead, kind of, drum sound. Make your drums sound alive. Like it's the tree itself. And, the casket. Develop your technique on your brushes. Think, look at all the different ways you can play your instrument. And remember, each instrument in a drum set is an instrument. Talk about your cymbals; that has an ancient connotation. The cymbals comes from the East; from the Middle East and the East. Get your sock cymbal playing together. Come up with different things, ways to play your cymbal. Learn trick drums; that was a good way to play the drums in the 1930s. And then of course, study all the masters, have they ever dropped at times, play all these odds time signatures. Don't separate the styles. And then after you do all of that, you're gonna be as old as us son. Good luck.

1:13:08 Keegan: Thank you.

1:13:09 WM: Stay with your old man. He's gonna show you a lot too.

1:13:11 Keegan: Thank you.

1:13:15 WM: Alright, thank y'all.

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1:13:17 AM: Alright. Thanks again to everybody for joining us for another wonderful evening, at Skain's Domain, and for being a part of this community. To our supporters and donors, we can't thank you enough. Jazz at Lincoln Center is a non-profit organization in New York City 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. And, as we sign it off, Wynton, I'll turn it over to you for any closing remarks.

1:13:51 WM: I wanna thank y'all. If you have ideas of who you wanna see, we'll call people, we'll get them up here. Just send us some ideas. We're gonna have interesting, interesting stuff coming on. I just try to spend this little time with y'all. And, until we meet again. Thank you so much.