# Jazz at Lincoln Center Announces Leadership Transition as it Ushers in a New Era

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Organization Embarks on Leadership Transition That Celebrates Wynton Marsalis and Builds Upon His Legacy

NEW YORK, Jan. 29, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? The Board of Directors of Jazz at Lincoln Center (â??JALCâ?•) announced today that, after nearly 40 years of visionary leadership, Wynton Marsalis will transition from his current role at JALC.

Mr. Marsalis will continue as Artistic Director during the 2026â??27 season. Beginning in July 2027, he will serve on staff in an advisory capacity as Founder. At the end of his contract in June 2028, he will continue to serve on JALCâ??s Board as Founder in perpetuity.

This announcement comes at a moment of organizational strength. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra has welcomed new musicians while sustaining strong concert sales. Education initiatives continue to expand through Essentially Ellington, Let Freedom Swing, and national programs. Jazz Congress and Blue Engine Records have become established fixtures.

The Board has appointed a committee to collaborate with Mr. Marsalis on identifying the next generation of artistic leadership. Another Committee will lead the search for JALCâ??s next Executive Director following Greg Schollâ??s departure this June. The new Executive Director and the new Artistic Director will serve as equal partners reporting to the Board of Directors.

â??When we established Jazz at Lincoln Center in 1987, our goal was to build an enduring institution for jazz, an often-overlooked aspect of American culture. JALC has been the honor of a lifetime, and I am proud of our progress,â?• said Mr. Marsalis. â??JALC and our Orchestra have been my artistic priority as a musician and a citizen. As we approach our 40th anniversary, this is the right time for this transition. I am grateful to my fellow artists, the board, leadership, and staff, and the incredible desire and dedication of the JLCO. Our work will continue and remains as crucial as ever. I am energized by JALCâ??s future as new leadership takes us to higher ground, surrounded by emerging, extremely talented, capable, and inspired musicians and advocates.â?•

Jazz at Lincoln Centerâ??s 2026â??27 season will be an international celebration of Mr. Marsalisâ??s career and enduring influence. The season lineup will be announced February 2026.

Read the full announcement: https://jazz.org/leadership-transition.

About Jazz at Lincoln Center

Jazz at Lincoln Center is a global leader in jazz performance, education, and advocacy.

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