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**Free Tickets Are Now Available for the
NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony and Concert
At Jazz at Lincoln Center on January 12, 2010**

26 fellow NEA Jazz Masters to help welcome the 2010 class

Washington, DC – The National Endowment for the Arts and Jazz at Lincoln Center announced today that **free tickets** will be distributed for the **January 12, 2010** NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony & Concert. Tickets are available for the general public at jalcc.org/concerts or at the Jazz at Lincoln Center Box Office, located at Broadway at 60th Street, ground floor, open Monday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm, as well as Sundays, 12pm to 6pm. Limit two tickets per person.

The 2010 NEA Jazz Masters are **Muhai Richard Abrams, Kenny Barron, Bill Holman, Bobby Hutcherson, Yusef Lateef, Annie Ross, and Cedar Walton**. The A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy is awarded to **George Avakian**.

The 2010 NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony & Concert will take place at 7:30 P.M. in the Rose Theater at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center at Broadway at 60th Street and feature the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis in a program dedicated to the honorees' works. Joining them will be the many of the honorees themselves including Mr. Abrams, Mr. Barron, Mr. Holman, Mr. Lateef, and Ms. Ross. Twenty-six fellow NEA Jazz Masters will be present, including **Toshiko Akiyoshi, Ornette Coleman, Paquito d'Rivera, Ramsey Lewis, and Dr. Billy Taylor**, among others. The evening will also feature video tributes to each of the 2010 NEA Jazz Masters. Additionally, the event will be broadcast live on Sirius XM Satellite Radio and WBG0.

“As the nephew of jazz lyricist Fran Landesman, it is especially meaningful to me that the National Endowment for the Arts can partner with Jazz at Lincoln Center to once again present our nation's top honor in jazz,” said NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman. “Jazz only exists in the interactions between musicians and audiences, so I am thrilled that we are able to present a free concert and awards ceremony to connect these American legends with the broad audience these deserve.”

“Jazz at Lincoln Center is honored to produce the concert to celebrate the great American Jazz Masters with the National Endowment for the Arts,” said Adrian Ellis, Executive Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center. “The contributions of the 2010 NEA Jazz Masters to the art form have been invaluable to the vibrancy of the music and we look forward to bringing this concert to jazz fans and newcomers alike.”

Prior to the concert (time to be determined), the 2010 NEA Jazz Masters and their fellow NEA Jazz Masters will gather for a group photo opportunity. **Members of the press who want to attend the concert or who would like to participate in the photo opportunity must reserve a place in advance. Please contact Victoria Hutter (202-682-5692 or hutterv@arts.gov).**

In addition to the concert, many NEA Jazz Masters will take part in a series of events as part of the APAP Conference NYC 2010 from January 8-12. Sessions for conference attendees include *Jazz in the 21st Century – America's Expanding Legacy* and *Got Jazz? A New Age of Audience Enlightenment*, as well as a conversation





with 2010 NEA Jazz Masters, moderated by A.B. Spellman. For more information on the conference and these sessions, please visit: apapconference.org.

The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts -- both new and established -- bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the largest national annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

About NEA Jazz Masters: NEA Jazz Masters are selected from nominations submitted by the public and receive a one-time grant award of \$25,000, are honored at a public awards ceremony, and may be able to participate in NEA-sponsored promotional, performance, and educational activities. Only living musicians or jazz advocates may receive the NEA Jazz Masters honor.

The National Endowment for the Arts has supported jazz artists and organizations since 1969, providing significant support through grants and awards. In 2004, the NEA significantly expanded its NEA Jazz Masters program and in 2005 created the NEA Jazz Masters Initiative, a comprehensive program of jazz support that includes the NEA Jazz Masters award; NEA Jazz Masters Live, a series of multiple performance and educational engagements in selected communities, featuring NEA Jazz Masters; radio programming featuring NEA Jazz Masters; educational resources through the NEA Jazz in the Schools program produced by the Arts Endowment in partnership with Jazz at Lincoln Center; and publications and reports. For more information on NEA Jazz Masters, the public is invited to visit the Web site, at neajazzmasters.org.

Jazz at Lincoln Center is dedicated to inspiring and growing audiences for jazz. With the world-renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and a comprehensive array of guest artists, Jazz at Lincoln Center advances a unique vision for the continued development of the art of jazz by producing a year-round schedule of performance, education and broadcast events for audiences of all ages. These productions include concerts, national and international tours, residencies, yearly hall of fame inductions, weekly national radio and television programs, recordings, publications, an annual high school jazz band competition and festival, a band director academy, jazz appreciation curriculum for students, music publishing, children's concerts, lectures, adult education courses, student and educator workshops and interactive websites. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis, Chairman Lisa Schiff and Executive Director, Adrian Ellis, Jazz at Lincoln Center produces thousands of events each season in its home in New York City, Frederick P. Rose Hall, and around the world. For more information visit jalc.org.

About the Association of Performing Arts Presenters: Founded in 1957, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (Arts Presenters, or APAP) is the national service organization for the field of arts presenting. The organization is dedicated to developing and supporting a robust performing arts presenting field and the professionals who work in it. Arts Presenters has 2,000 organizational members worldwide and brings more than 3,800 performing arts professionals together from around the world at the annual APAP Conference NYC. Members range from the nation's leading performing arts centers, to civic and university performance facilities and festivals, to the full spectrum of artist agencies, managers, national consulting practices and collaborators, and a growing roster of self-presenting artists who engage communities through live performances.

Arts Presenters is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, based in Washington, D.C. is led by its CEO Sandra Gibson.

About the APAP Conference NYC 2010: The APAP Conference NYC 2010 (January 8-12, 2010) is the premier global market and meeting ground for the performing arts industry and expects to convene 4,000





artists and industry professionals from around the world, over 400 exhibitors and showcase more than 1,000 performances. This year's conference theme, "Risk. Opportunity. Now." focuses on the ways in which risk catalyzes the opportunities that will create health and vitality in the performing arts. For more information, please visit apapconference.org

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2010 NEA JAZZ MASTERS

Muhal Richard Abrams

Born Sept. 19, 1930, in Chicago, IL
Pianist, Composer, Educator

Muhal Richard Abrams -- pianist, composer, administrator, and educator -- is predominately a self-taught musician. He is highly respected by critics and musical peers as both a pianist and composer in a variety of musical styles, including jazz, extended forms of improvisation, and classical music.

In the 1950s, Abrams wrote arrangements for pianist King Fleming's Jazz Orchestra. From 1957-59, he played hard bop in Walter Perkins' group MJT + 3 (Modern Jazz Two Plus Three) and accompanied leading jazz performers during their visits to Chicago, including Kenny Durham, Art Farmer, Hank Mobley, Ray Nance, Max Roach, and Sonny Stitt. In 1961, Abrams began his foray into extended forms of composition and improvisation in his Experimental Band, which included musicians such as saxophonists Roscoe Mitchell and Joseph Jarman.

Abrams is a co-founder of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) (in 1965), founder of the AACM School of Music, and currently president of the AACM New York Chapter. AACM, which has played a crucial role in the development of original approaches to extended forms of composition and improvisation, has produced such distinguished members as Anthony Braxton, Kalaparush Ahra Difda, Leroy Jenkins, Steve McCall, Amina Claudine Myers, Wadada Leo Smith, Henry Threadgill, and members of the Art Ensemble of Chicago.

Abrams first traveled to Europe in 1973 while still residing in Chicago. After relocating to New York in 1977, he traveled extensively to Europe and Japan, gradually acquiring a greater international reputation. In 1990 he became the first recipient of the prestigious Danish JAZZPAR Award, and almost a decade later Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley issued a proclamation declaring April 11, 1999, to be Muhal Richard Abrams Day. In 2008, he was chosen by United States Artists to be a Prudential Fellow in the field of music.

Abrams' compositional prowess is evident even beyond jazz. His Tranversion Op. 6 was performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and his String Quartet No. 2 was performed by renowned chamber ensemble Kronos Quartet.

During the last 30 years, Abrams has taught jazz composition and improvisational classes at Columbia University, Syracuse University, Stamford University, Mills College, University of California in San Diego, the New England Conservatory in Boston, the BMI Composers Workshop in New York City, and internationally at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, the Banff Center in Banff, Canada, and at workshops at the Sant'Anna Arresi Jazz Festival in Sardegna, Italy.

Abrams' current activities include composing for various types of instrumental combinations, performing solo piano concerts, and touring throughout the world with various ensembles.





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George Avakian

Born March 15, 1919, Armavir, Russian Federation
Producer, Manager, Critic, Educator

George Avakian is a record producer and industry executive known particularly for his production of jazz and popular albums at Columbia Records, including the first regular series of reissues of jazz albums. In 1948, he helped establish the 33 1/3 rpm LP as the primary format for popular music.

Avakian was born in Russia to Armenian parents, who moved the family to New York City in the early 1920s. In his teens he became enamored of jazz through radio programs such as *Let's Dance* with Benny Goodman. While a student at Yale University, Avakian convinced Decca Records to let him produce a 78-rpm record of Eddie Condon, Pee Wee Russell, and others from the 1920s jazz scene in Chicago, entitled *Chicago Jazz*, the first time jazz recordings were produced as an album rather than as singles.

In 1940, he was asked by Columbia to produce the industry's first annotated reissue album series, called *Hot Jazz Classics*, which included seminal out-of-print selections from Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Bix Beiderbecke, Fletcher Henderson, and Duke Ellington. He included the first-ever unreleased and alternate takes in the series. In effect, he had created the first history of jazz on records.

After service in the U.S. Army during World War II, Avakian began his 12-year tenure as a Columbia Records executive, eventually presiding over its Popular Music and International Divisions. At the same time, he was acquiring a reputation as a jazz researcher and critic of some renown, having pieces printed in *Tempo*, *Down Beat*, *Metronome*, *Mademoiselle*, *Pic*, and the *New York Times*. Concerned about the lack of jazz education, in 1946 Avakian started a course in jazz history at the university level at New York University.

In 1948, Avakian introduced the LP record format created by Columbia engineers and produced the industry's first 100 long-playing discs of popular music and jazz. Two years later, he released the original 1938 recording of Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall concert -- one of the first jazz albums to sell more than a million copies. This inspired him to use the long-play format for something new -- the live recording.

From 1959 onward, Avakian served as producer at Warner Brothers, World Pacific, RCA Victor, and Atlantic, among others. During the early 1960s, Avakian branched out, becoming the manager of Charles Lloyd and later of Keith Jarrett.

He has received a knighthood from the Knights of Malta (1984); the former Soviet Union's highest decoration (the Order of Lenin (1990)); a Lifetime Achievement Award from *Down Beat* magazine (2000); and Europe's most prestigious jazz award, the *Django d'Or* (2006). In 2008, France bestowed on him the rank of *Commandeur des Arts et Lettres*, and in 2009 he received the Trustees Award from NARAS for contributions to the music industry worldwide.

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Kenny Barron

Born June 9, 1943, in Philadelphia, PA
Pianist, Composer, Educator





With more than 40 albums to his name, and scores more that he has appeared on, Kenny Barron's imprint on jazz is large. The pianist has been recognized the world over as a master of performance and composition.

Barron started playing professionally in Philadelphia as a teenager with Mel Melvin's orchestra, which also featured Barron's brother Bill on tenor saxophone. At age 19, Barron moved to New York City and was hired by James Moody after the tenor saxophonist heard him play at the Five Spot. In 1962, he joined Dizzy Gillespie's band, an association that developed his appreciation for Latin and Caribbean rhythms. After five years with Gillespie, Barron began to perform with Freddie Hubbard, Milt Jackson, Buddy Rich, and Stanley Turrentine. In 1971, he joined Yusef Lateef's band, an experience that Barron acknowledges as having been a key influence on his improvisational skills. Three years later, Barron recorded *Sunset to Dawn*, his first album as a leader.

Throughout the 1980s, Barron collaborated with the great tenor saxophonist Stan Getz, touring with his quartet and recording several albums, one of which was nominated for a Grammy Award (*People Time*). In 1982, he co-founded the quartet Sphere, which was dedicated to Thelonious Monk's music and inspiration. Sphere comprised Barron, Buster Williams, and Monk band alumni Ben Riley and Charlie Rouse. After Rouse's passing in 1988, the band took a hiatus before reuniting in 1998 (with alto saxophonist Gary Bartz replacing Rouse) and releasing a recording for Verve Records.

Barron's own recordings have earned him nine Grammy nominations, among them *Spirit Song*, *Sambao*, *Night and the City* (a duet recording with Charlie Haden), and *Wanton Spirit* (a trio recording with Roy Haynes and Haden). He has won numerous jazz critics and readers' polls from *Down Beat*, *JazzTimes*, and *Jazziz* magazines; and is a six time recipient of the Jazz Journalists Association's "Best Pianist" honors.

As a composer, Barron's works have been featured in film and documentaries, and he most recently scored the film *Another Harvest Moon*. In 2009 he was named a Living Legacy by the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation and was inducted into the American Jazz Hall of Fame in 2005.

As a long-standing professor of music at Rutgers University (1974-2000), Barron mentored many of today's established jazz talents, including David Sanchez, Terence Blanchard, and Regina Bell. He continues to tour internationally solo and with his trio.

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Bill Holman

Born May 21, 1927, in Olive, CA
Composer, Arranger, Saxophonist

Bill Holman's unique and complex arrangements have long been appreciated by musicians and critics alike, although he is best known on the West Coast.

He took up clarinet in junior high school and tenor saxophone in high school, by which time he was leading his own band. After serving in the U.S. Navy and studying engineering, Holman decided in the late 1940s that he wanted to write big band music and enrolled at the Westlake College of Music in Los Angeles. He also studied composition privately with Russ Garcia and saxophone with Lloyd Reese.

By 1949, Holman's career was well underway. After writing for Charlie Barnet, in 1952 he began his association with Stan Kenton, for whom he would compose (and perform) for many years to come. During the 1950s, he also was active in the West Coast jazz movement, playing in small bands led by Shorty Rogers and Shelly Manne and





co-leading a quintet with Mel Lewis. During the following decade, Holman expanded his writing efforts, working for bands led by jazz greats such as Louie Bellson, Count Basie, Bob Brookmeyer, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich, Gerry Mulligan, Doc Severinsen, and others. In addition, he wrote for high-profile vocalists such as Natalie Cole (including her Grammy Award-winning album *Unforgettable*), Tony Bennett, Carmen MacRae, Anita O'Day, Mel Torme, and Sarah Vaughan.

In 1975, Holman launched the Bill Holman Band; the recording of *The Bill Holman Band* in 1987 was his first release as a leader in 27 years. Since 1980, Holman increasingly has become more active in Europe, including writing, conducting, and performing extended works for the WDR Symphony Orchestra in Cologne, Germany, and the Metropole Orchestra in the Netherlands.

To date, Holman has received 14 Grammy nominations and won three Grammy Awards: Best Instrumental Arrangement of "Take the 'A' Train" for Doc Severinsen and the Tonight Show Orchestra (1987); Best Instrumental Composition for "A View from the Side" for the Bill Holman Band (1995); and Best Instrumental Arrangement of "Straight, No Chaser" for the Bill Holman Band (1997). He was voted "Best Arranger" in the *JazzTimes* Readers' Poll four times; and received the "Arranger of the Year" award three times in the *Down Beat* magazine's Readers' Poll and Critics' Poll.

In 2000, the Bill Holman Collection of scores and memorabilia became part of the Smithsonian Institution's permanent collection in Washington, DC. In 2006, he was inducted into the Rutgers Jazz Hall of Fame, and in 2008, he was doubly honored: a Golden Score Award from the American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers and a place in the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers Jazz Wall of Fame.

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Bobby Hutcherson

Born Jan. 27, 1941, Los Angeles, CA
Vibraphonist, Marimba Player, Composer

Bobby Hutcherson's sound and innovative style on the vibraphone helped revitalize the instrument in the 1960s, adding an adventurous new voice to the free jazz and post bop eras.

As a child, Hutcherson studied piano with his aunt, but his interest in becoming a professional musician was sparked after hearing vibist Milt Jackson playing on a recording of the Thelonious Monk song "Bemsha Swing." Jackson's playing impressed him so much that he began working with his father (a brick mason) to save up money for a vibraphone. Studies under renowned vibraphonist Dave Pike followed, and soon Hutcherson played at local Los Angeles school dances in his friend Herbie Lewis' group.

In 1960, Hutcherson joined an ensemble co-led by Al Grey and Billy Mitchell. A year later, the group performed at New York's legendary Birdland club and the vibraphonist made his first live appearance opposite bassist Charles Mingus. Hutcherson soon relocated to New York City and signed with the Blue Note label. According to Hutcherson's own account, he made 45 records as a bandleader and appeared on more than 250 records as a sideman during his years with Blue Note -- working with jazz luminaries such as Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Jackie McLean, and McCoy Tyner, among others. His work on Eric Dolphy's recording *Out to Lunch* is considered one of his most masterful sideman performances, providing a vibrant texture to the piano-less quintet. In 1965, Blue Note released his astounding debut record as a bandleader, *Dialogue*. Hutcherson was accompanied on the album by some of the biggest names emerging in jazz at the time: drummer Joe Chambers, bassist Richard Davis, pianist Andrew Hill, trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, and saxophonist Sam Rivers.





In 1967, he returned to California and co-lead a quintet with saxophonist Harold Land for several years. Hutcherson eventually settled in Montara, a small coastal town south of San Francisco, where he continues to live. Hutcherson is a founding member of the SFJAZZ Collective, an all-star octet that debuted in 2004. In 2008, Hutcherson was the recipient of a lifetime achievement award from the Sedona Jazz on the Rocks festival in Arizona.

In addition to his own recordings and tours, Hutcherson also appears on other artists' records, including Tyner's *Manhattan Moods* (1993) and Hammond B-3 organist Joey DeFrancesco's *Organic Vibes* (2006). Hutcherson continues to perform at a masterful level on his instrument, playing with both his contemporaries and the new generation of jazz musicians.

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Yusef Lateef

Born Oct. 9, 1920, in Chattanooga, TN
Saxophonist, Flutist, Oboist, Composer, Educator

A virtuoso on the traditional jazz instruments of saxophone and flute, Yusef Lateef also brings a broad spectrum of sounds to his music through his mastery of such Middle Eastern and Asian reed instruments as the bamboo flute, *shantai*, *shofar*, *argol*, *sarewa*, and *taiwan koto*. A major force on the international musical scene for more than six decades, he was one of the first to bring a world music approach to traditional jazz.

Lateef was born William Emanuel Huddleston in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and moved with his family to Detroit in 1925. In Detroit's fertile musical environment, Lateef established personal and musical relationships with such jazz legends as Kenny Burrell, Donald Byrd, Paul Chambers, Tommy Flanagan, Milt Jackson, Barry Harris, the Jones brothers (Hank, Thad and Elvin), and Lucky Thompson. By the time he was 18 years old, he was touring professionally with swing bands led by Lucky Millinder, Roy Eldridge, Hot Lips Page, and Ernie Fields, performing under the name Bill Evans. In 1949, he was invited to perform with the Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra. At that time he converted to Islam and took the name by which he is now known: Yusef Lateef.

From 1955–59 he led a quintet in Detroit that included Ernie Farrell, Curtis Fuller, Louis Hayes, and Hugh Lawson. During that time, he began recording under his own name for Savoy Records. In 1960, he moved to New York City and joined Charles Mingus' band. He then performed and recorded with Cannonball Adderley from 1962-64. His albums as leader on Impulse! (1962-66) and Atlantic (1967-76) are considered some of his most diverse recordings.

As a composer, Lateef has compiled a body of work for soloists, small ensembles, chamber and symphony orchestras, stage bands, and choirs. His extended works have been performed by orchestras in Germany and the United States -- including the Atlanta, Augusta, and Detroit symphony orchestras -- and the Symphony of the New World. In 1987, he won a Grammy Award for his recording *Yusef Lateef's Little Symphony*, on which Lateef played all the instruments.

Lateef holds a bachelor's degree in music and a master's degree in music education from the Manhattan School of Music. From 1987 to 2002, he was a professor at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, from which he was awarded a PhD in education.

Lateef has performed extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Japan, and Africa. His touring ensembles have included master musicians such as Kenny Barron, Albert "Tootie" Heath, and Cecil McBee.





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Annie Ross

Born July 25, 1930, in Surrey, England
Vocalist

Annie Ross is one of the early practitioners of a singing style known as "vocalese," which involves the setting of original lyrics to an instrumental jazz solo, as part of the vocal trio Lambert, Hendricks & Ross. She has been equally at home in the acting field, appearing in numerous films.

Ross was born in England, but raised in Los Angeles. She landed a role in the *Our Gang* film series at the age of eight, singing a musical number on the show. Returning to Europe, she began her singing career, working with musicians such as James Moody, Kenny Clarke, and Coleman Hawkins.

Ross returned to the United States in 1952, settling in New York City, and soon recorded *Singin' and Swingin'* with members of the Modern Jazz Quartet. Later that year she recorded an album with vocalist King Pleasure, including the classic example of vocalese, "Twisted," which featured her treatment of saxophonist Wardell Gray's solo. It is perhaps her most famous song and has been recorded by Joni Mitchell, Bette Midler, and many others.

In 1953, Ross toured Europe with Lionel Hampton's band, which included Clifford Brown, Art Farmer, and Quincy Jones. After several years in Europe, she returned to the states where she teamed up with vocalists Dave Lambert and Jon Hendricks on an album of Count Basie solos transposed for vocals. That was the beginning of the group Lambert, Hendricks & Ross.

Between 1957 and 1962, the group recorded seven albums, including the one that put them in the spotlight: *Sing A Song Of Basie* (1957). They toured all over the world and also appear in Dave Brubeck's musical theater piece *The Real Ambassadors* (1961). Ross left the group in 1962 and two years later she opened her own London nightclub called Annie's Room; a compilation of her 1965 performances there was released on *Live in London* (2006).

Ross also is an accomplished actress and has appeared in a number of films, such as *Superman III* (1983), *Throw Mama from the Train* (1987), *Pump Up the Volume* (1990), and *Blue Sky* (1994). Her most notable film role was as the jazz singer Tess Trainer in Robert Altman's *Short Cuts* (1993), in which she also sang. On stage, Ross appeared in *Cranks* (1955) in both London and New York, *The Threepenny Opera* (1972) with Vanessa Redgrave, and in the Joe Papp production of *The Pirates Of Penzance* (1982) with Tim Curry.

Ross resides in New York City where she still performs regularly.

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Cedar Walton

Born Jan. 17, 1934, in Dallas, TX
Pianist, Composer

One of the great hard bop pianists, Cedar Walton is also known for his compositions, some of which have become jazz standards, such as "Bolivia," "Clockwise," and "Firm Roots."





Cedar Walton was first taught piano by his mother, and, after high school, moved to Colorado to commence studies at the University of Denver. There, during after-hours jazz club gigs, he met musicians such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and John Coltrane, who would sit in with Walton's group as they traveled through town.

Eventually, Walton moved to New York. In 1955, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and sent to Germany where he performed in a military jazz ensemble. Upon his return to New York City two years later, he began playing and recording with Kenny Dorham, J. J. Johnson, and Gigi Gryce. In 1959, he recorded with Coltrane on his seminal album *Giant Steps*, but the recordings weren't included on the initial issue of the album; the alternate tracks were later issued on the CD version. From 1960-61, Walton worked with Art Farmer and Benny Golson's band Jazztet.

Walton's next significant musical association was with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. During his years with Blakey (1961-64), Walton stepped forward as composer, contributing originals such as "Mosaic," "Ugetsu," and "The Promised Land" to the group's repertoire. Walton left the Jazz Messengers to lead rhythm sections and trios featured in various New York clubs and work as a sideman for well-known artists such as Abbey Lincoln (1965-66) and Lee Morgan (1966-68).

In 1974, Walton formed the group Eastern Rebellion with bassist Sam Jones, drummer Billy Higgins, and saxophonist Clifford Jordan, which would perform and record sporadically over the subsequent two decades. Other musicians rotated in and out of the band, including George Coleman, Bob Berg, Ralph Moore, David Williams, Curtis Fuller, and Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros. Higgins became a regular accompanist for Walton throughout the 1980s -- along with other stellar musicians such as Ron Carter, Bobby Hutcherson, Harold Land, and Buster Williams. In addition, he continued to perform in rhythm sections for Milt Jackson, Frank Morgan, and Dexter Gordon and accompanied vocalists Ernestine Anderson and Freddy Cole. He also led the backup trio for the Trumpet Summit Band, which started as a project for the 1995 Jazz in Marciac festival in France. He continues to perform and record with his own groups all over the world.