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NEW YORK CITY CENTER & JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

Present

Duke Ellington's

Cotton Club Parade

With Wynton Marsalis

and the

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra

An Encores! Special Event

Directed and Choreographed by Warren Carlyle

With

Carla Cook, Brandon Victor Dixon, Jared Grimes and Adriane Lenox

November 18 – 22, 2011

NY, October 27, 2011 – **Carla Cook, Brandon Victor Dixon, Jared Grimes and Adriane Lenox** have been cast in **Duke Ellington's *Cotton Club Parade***, opening November 18 at New York City Center. *Cotton Club Parade* is a celebration of Ellington's years at the famed Harlem nightclub in the 1920s and early '30s, when the joint was jumping with revues featuring big bands, swing and blues, dancers, singers and novelty acts. *Cotton Club Parade*, **conceived by Jack Viertel, with selected texts by Langston Hughes**, will be **directed by Warren Carlyle** and will feature the renowned **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis**, who also serves as music director. It is the inaugural production of a new producing partnership between City Center and Jazz at Lincoln Center that combines the organizations' specialties: musical theater and jazz. *Cotton Club Parade* will play for six performances, November 18–22, 2011. City Center is located on 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues.

With Ellington's music as the centerpiece, *Cotton Club Parade* reimagines one of the composer's Cotton Club floor shows. Ellington and his orchestra began a four-year residency at the Club in 1927 and continued making guest appearances throughout the 1930s. Legendary performers such as the Nicholas Brothers, Bessie Smith, Ethel Waters, Snake Hips Tucker, Peg Leg Bates and a 16-year old Lena Horne all performed at the Club.

As in the original revues, *Cotton Club Parade* will feature singers, dancers and variety acts, and songs by the greatest jazz composers of the time, including Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields (“I Can’t Give You Anything But Love” and “Digga Digga Doo”), a young Harold Arlen (“Stormy Weather,” “I’ve Got the World on a String,” “Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,”), and of course, Duke Ellington (“Rockin’ in Rhythm,” “Cotton Club Stomp,” “Black and Tan Fantasy,” and “Creole Love Call”).

The cast includes Alexandria “Brinae Ali” Bradley, Everett Bradley, Andrew “Dr.Ew” Carter, Carla Cook, Nicolette DePass, Brandon Victor Dixon, DeWitt Fleming Jr., Carmen Ruby Floyd, Jared Grimes, Jeremiah “Showtyme” Haynes, Rosena Hill, Rachael Hollingsworth, Kendrick Jones, Monroe Kent, Adriane Lenox and T. Oliver Reid, with Shani “Virgo” Alston, Jason E. Bernard, Tanya Birl, Braxton Brooks, Christopher Broughton, Chanon Judson, Karine Plantadit, Monique Smith, Daniel J. Watts, Joseph Monroe Webb, Christian Dante White and J.L. Williams.

Duke Ellington influenced millions of people around the world and at home. During the course of his 50-year career, he composed more than 3,000 songs and played more than 20,000 performances in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. He gave American music its own sound for the first time with popular hits such as “It Don’t Mean a Thing if It Ain’t Got That Swing,” “Sophisticated Lady,” “Mood Indigo,” “Solitude,” “In a Mellotone,” and “Satin Doll.” Ellington was awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1966 and later earned several other prizes, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1969 and the Legion of Honor by France in 1973.

The **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra**, composed of 15 of the finest jazz soloists and ensemble players today, has been the Jazz at Lincoln Center resident orchestra since 1988. Under Music Director **Wynton Marsalis**, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra spends half of its season on tour and performs a vast repertoire, from rare historic compositions to Jazz at Lincoln Center-commissioned works by guest artists and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra members.

Carla Cook is a Grammy nominated singer/songwriter whose eclectic repertoire includes jazz, R&B, European classical, Motown, blues and rock. Her 2000 debut album, *It’s All About Love*, received a Grammy nomination in the Best Jazz Vocal Performance category and was awarded the AFIM Indie Award for Best Jazz Vocal. In 2000 Cook recorded her second album, *Dem Bones* and in 2002, she recorded *Simply Natural*, both for MAXJAZZ.

Brandon Victor Dixon was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance as Harpo in *The Color Purple* and has appeared off Broadway as Haywood in *The Scottsboro Boys* (Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle nominations) and on national tour as Adult Simba in *The Lion King*. Brandon was last seen at City Center in the *Encores!* production of *House of Flowers*.

Jared Grimes is making his mark in tap and hip-hop/street jazz. He has danced alongside legends such as Gregory Hines, Ben Vereen, Jerry Lewis and Fayard Nicholas and toured with Mariah Carey. Jared’s stage credits include *Babes in Arms* at the Goodspeed Opera House; *Sammy*, directed by Debbie Allen; *Scottsboro Boys*, directed by Susan Stroman; *Pure Country*, directed by Peter Masterson; and *Vaudeville*, directed by Christopher d’Amboise. Jared performed with Wynton Marsalis at the Kennedy Center on the occasion of the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

Adriane Lenox’s many Broadway credits include *Doubt* (Tony Award) *Chicago*, *Caroline or Change*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Ain’t Misbehavin’*, *Dreamgirls* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Off-Broadway, she was seen in *Still Life* and *Dinah Was...* (Obie, Audeco Awards). Adriane appeared with Sandra Bullock in the film *The Blind Side* and will appear opposite Robert DeNiro in *Red Lights*.

Warren Carlyle directed and choreographed *Hugh Jackman: Back on Broadway*, opening November 10, and the *Encores!* production of *Finian’s Rainbow* and its subsequent Tony nominated Broadway production. He choreographed the *Encores!* productions of *Girl Crazy*, *On the Town*, *Juno* and *Stairway to Paradise*. NY credits include: *Follies* (Choreographer, Marriot Marquis Theater), *A Tale of Two Cities* (Director and Choreographer, Al Hirschfield Theater) and *101 Dalmatians* (Choreographer, Madison Square Garden and US Tour). His regional credits include *Camelot* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival), *Randy Newman’s Harps & Angels* (Mark Taper Forum), *Limelight: The Story of Charlie Chaplin* (La

Jolla Playhouse), *Buddy's Tavern* (The O'Neill), *Lucky Guy* (Goodspeed), *Mame* (Kennedy Center), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Paper Mill Playhouse, Goodspeed), *The Baker's Wife* (Goodspeed). UK: *Me and My Girl* (UK Tour), *Pageant* (Vaudeville Theater) and Sondheim's *Moving On* (Bridewell Theater).

Wynton Marsalis is the Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center. He is an internationally acclaimed musician, composer, bandleader, educator and a leading advocate of American culture. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, he made his recording debut as a leader in 1982, and has recorded more than 70 jazz and classical recordings, which have won him nine GRAMMY® awards. Wynton became the first jazz artist to be awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize in music, for his oratorio *Blood on the Fields*, which was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center. By creating and performing an expansive range of brilliant new music for quartets to big bands, chamber music ensembles to symphony orchestras, tap dance to ballet, Wynton has expanded the vocabulary for jazz and created a vital body of work that places him among the world's finest musicians and composers. He helped lead the effort to construct Jazz at Lincoln Center's home – Frederick P. Rose Hall – the first education, performance, and broadcast facility devoted to jazz, which opened in October 2004.

Jack Viertel is Artistic Director of *Encores!* and also serves as Senior Vice President of Jujamcyn Theaters, which owns and operates five Broadway Theaters, currently presenting *The Book of Mormon*, *How to Succeed... Jersey Boys*, *On A Clear Day...* and *Lysistrata Jones*. At *Encores!* he has overseen 33 productions, and conceived the *Encores!* revue *Stairway to Paradise*. Two of them - *Gypsy*, and *Finian's Rainbow* – later moved to Broadway. He spent two years as Dramaturg of the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, and from 1980 to 1985 was the drama critic and arts editor of the Los Angeles Herald Examiner. He was the original conceiver and co-producer of *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, and helped shepherd six of August Wilson's plays to Broadway, as well as Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, among many others.

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city for more than 60 years. It was Manhattan's first performing arts center, dedicated by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia in 1943 with a mission to make the best in music, theater and dance accessible to all audiences. Today, City Center is home to many distinguished companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Manhattan Theatre Club; a roster of renowned national and international visiting artists; and its own critically acclaimed and popular programs. The Tony-honored *Encores!* musical theater series has been hailed as "one of the very best reasons to be alive in New York." Dance has been integral to the theater's mission from the start, and dance programs, including the annual *Fall for Dance* Festival and a partnership with London's Sadler's Wells Theatre, remain central to City Center's identity. City Center is dedicated to providing educational opportunities to New York City students and teachers with programs such as *Encores!* In Schools and the Young People's Dance Series. Special workshops cater to families, seniors and other groups, while events such as the *fall for Dance* DanceTalk series offer learning opportunities to the general public. City Center is currently undergoing an extensive renovation project to revitalize and modernize its historic theater. A grand reopening gala is scheduled for October 25.

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, a jazz hall of fame, weekly national radio 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

Cotton Club Parade will run for six performances, November 18–22, 2011, according to the following schedule: Friday at 8pm, Saturday at 2 and 8pm, Sunday at 6:30pm, Monday and Tuesday at 7pm. Tickets start at \$25 and are available at the New York City Center Box Office (West 55th Street between 6th and 7th avenues), through CityTix® at 212-581-1212, or online at NYCityCenter.org. Further information is available at NYCityCenter.org and jalc.org.



COTTON CLUB PARADE

November 18 – 22, 2011

Conceived by Jack Viertel
Directed and Choreographed by Warren Carlyle
Selected Texts by Langston Hughes
Music Director: Wynton Marsalis
Scenic Consultant: John Lee Beatty
Costume Consultant: Toni-Leslie James
Lighting Designer: Peter Kaczorowski
Sound Designer: Scott Lehrer

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

Music Director and Trumpet: Wynton Marsalis
Trumpets: Ryan Kisor, Marcus Printup, Kenny Rampton
Trombones: Chris Crenshaw, Vincent Gardner, Elliot Mason
Reeds: Walter Blanding, Victor Goines, Sherman Irby, Ted Nash, Joe Temperley
Piano: Dan Nimmer
Bass: Carlos Henriquez
Drums: Ali Jackson

Cast: Alexandria “Brinae Ali” Bradley, Everett Bradley, Andrew “Dr.Ew” Carter, Carla Cook, Nicolette DePass, Brandon Victor Dixon, DeWitt Fleming Jr., Carmen Ruby Floyd, Jared Grimes, Jeremiah “Showtyme” Haynes, Rosena Hill, Rachael Hollingsworth, Kendrick Jones, Monroe Kent, Adriane Lenox and T. Oliver Reid, with Shani “Virgo” Alston, Jason E. Bernard, Tanya Birl, Braxton Brooks, Christopher Broughton, Chanon Judson, Karine Plantadit, Monique Smith, Daniel J. Watts, Joseph Monroe Webb, Christian Dante White and J.L. Williams.

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