

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**WILLIE NELSON, WYNTON MARSALIS & NORAH JONES CELEBRATE
THE GENIUS OF RAY CHARLES WITH *HERE WE GO AGAIN*;
NEW ALBUM TO BE RELEASED MARCH 29 ON BLUE NOTE**

**RECORDED LIVE AT JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER, ALBUM IS A TRIBUTE
TO THE ICONIC STAR OF SOUL, R&B, COUNTRY, JAZZ & POP**

Given the rousing artistic and commercial success of the first recorded collaboration of legendary country troubadour **Willie Nelson** and jazz statesman **Wynton Marsalis** on 2008's Blue Note album *Two Men With the Blues*, it's not surprising that the pair would rendezvous again. *The New York Times* called it "a smart and heartfelt record," while *Entertainment Weekly* wrote that "Willie and Wynton may seem like an odd couple, but this live disc makes the country legend and jazz master sound like natural partners with Marsalis' usual horn-fronted band doing the driving and Nelson settling in perfectly with his off-beat vocal phrasing."

The first meeting of these kindred spirits took place at The Allen Room at New York's Jazz at Lincoln Center for two nights in 2007; their encore appearance was also staged at the heralded jazz house—this time for two sold-out nights at Rose Theater in February 2009 with special guest **Norah Jones**. Rather than rehash the previous material Nelson and Marsalis had first presented, the threesome paid homage to the music of the late **Ray Charles**, the iconic star of soul, r&b, country, jazz and pop.

On March 29, Blue Note will release the category-defying album from those shows, ***Here We Go Again: Celebrating the Genius of Ray Charles***, a 12-tune song cycle about the ups and downs of love. It features tunes that Charles put on the musical map, including "Hallelujah I Love Her So," "Cryin' Time," "Hit the Road Jack," "Busted," "Makin' Whoopie" and arguably his greatest hit, "What'd I Say." All the tunes feature new, original arrangements by Marsalis and artists within his Jazz at Lincoln Center circle. The songs are rendered in a variety of styles, including gospel two-beat, boogaloo, country ballad, bolero, hard bop, r&b, waltz and 4/4 swing. Instrumental support at the concert came via the trumpeter's working quintet—tenor saxophonist Walter Blanding, pianist Dan Nimmer, bassist Carlos Henriquez and drummer Ali Jackson—and Nelson's longtime sidekick, Mickey Raphael, on harmonica.

Marsalis arranged the set list as a story line about love: "You fall in love, you get lost and busted, and then you try to come back," he says.

"It's what I call root-groove music," explains Marsalis. "The root music cuts across all the boundaries and genres in American music." He adds, "There was a time in the early '50s when artists would come up and be influenced by all types of music." Nelson agrees: "You have to love all kinds of music to put your own interpretation on [the songs]."

Nelson, who praises Charles's classic country disc *I Can't Stop Loving You*, says, "He did more for country music with that one album than any of us could have done because he opened country songs and country music to millions of his fans and brought a whole lot of people together."

Jones was thrilled to be invited to share the stage. "It was a no-brainer for me," she says. "I love Willie so much and have had a musical relationship with him. And I've always wanted to do something with Wynton." When she heard the theme of the evening was going to focus on Charles' music, she got excited: "I know all those songs. We all just love his music. That's the common factor."

"This was a special event for me," says Nelson. "It always is when we get together."

The track listing for *Here We Go Again* is as follows:

1. Hallelujah I Love Her So (Gospel 2-beat / Boogaloo / 4/4 Swing)
2. Come Rain or Come Shine (Walking Ballad)
3. Unchain My Heart (Bolero with Habanera bass)
4. Cryin' Time (Country Ballad)
5. Losing Hand (Dirge with Chain-Gang Shuffle)
6. Hit The Road Jack (Gospel 2-beat / 4/4 Swing)
7. I'm Moving On (Boogaloo with Afro-Latin Backbeat / 4/4 Swing)
8. Busted (Gospel 12/8 Shuffle)
9. Here We Go Again (Rhythm & Blues 12/8 Shuffle)
10. Makin' Whoopie (Hard-Bop 2-beat / 4/4 Swing)
11. I Love You So Much (It Hurts) (Waltz)
12. What'd I Say (Boogaloo)

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