

JASON MARSALIS

**2011 NEA
JAZZ MASTER**

VIBES QUARTET



“Just as his drumming is steeped in both modern and New Orleans rhythmic styles, his vibes playing draws on the rich tradition of that instrument...with commendably ardent swing.”

-George Kanzler, Jazz Times

From a tender young age it was clear that Jason Marsalis had what it took to be great. Jason is the son of pianist and music educator Ellis Marsalis and his wife Dolores, and the youngest sibling of Wynton, Branford and Delfeayo. Together, the four brothers and Ellis comprise New Orleans’s venerable first family of jazz, and recipients of the National Endowment for the Arts 2011 Jazz Masters awards.

Jason is well known for his prodigious drumming. Working with his father’s group, as well as the great pianist Marcus Roberts, he has fine-tuned his playing in two of the most demanding trio settings in modern jazz. However, with the release of 2009’s “Music Update,” listeners are now recognizing

Jason for his unique sound on the vibraphones.

Since 2000, Jason has been a mainstay on the New Orleans scene as a bandleader from the vibraphone chair. More recently, Jason formed the current incarnation of his Vibes Quartet in the summer of 2007, and has spent the last four years touring and developing repertoire and rapport with his young quartet. The quartet’s sophomore release is recently completed, and slated for a Fall of 2012 release. Jason is currently touring a recently developed program of newly imagined classics from the Modern Jazz Quartet and Lionel Hampton, along with his own original compositions.



“In a World of Mallets”

Jason and his quartet recently finished recording the group’s second album, set for a Fall 2012 release.

JASON MARSALIS



Jason plays Majestic Vibraphones, Mapex Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, and Vic Firth accessories exclusively

“Marsalis displays his curiosity and the breadth of his musical knowledge both in his original material and the tunes he chooses to cover.” -Geraldine Wycoff, Louisiana Weekly

Jason’s own playing is unique; drawing from a wide range of influences, he performs original music as well as many hidden gems in the jazz literature and beyond. Jason’s knack for selecting compositions that cover a wide range of moods, rhythms, and emotions, engages the audience, and offers surprises around every turn.

As a drummer, Marsalis continues to perform frequently with his brothers and father, as well as Marcus Roberts, John Ellis and Double Wide, the Scan-Am Quartet, and others. As a vibraphonist, he commonly joins Shannon Powell and other New Orleans musicians on the bandstand, as well as touring as the featured soloist with the Lionel Hampton Tribute Orchestra. These varied contemporary collaborations shape Jason’s conception for his Vibes

Quartet, as do his respect and admiration for past vibraphone mainstays such as Lionel Hampton, Milt Jackson, and Bobby Hutcherson.

Jason’s newest project slated for release, “In A World Of Mallets,” features original music contributed by the members of the Quartet, with Johnson, Potter, and Goble each offering one original. These are bookended by more of Jason’s delightfully unique and thoughtful compositions, along with a lively version of Brian Coogan’s “Nice Mailman’s Song For Ann,” and some surprise highlights of Jason’s other talents.

2011 was an exciting year for both Jason’s family and his own development as a writer, performer and educator. Jason continues to invest in education and outreach as he conducts clinics, workshops, and remains an active instructor at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts. 2012 promises to be an even more exciting year in all facets of Jason and his quartet’s continued development.



Press and Praise for Jason Marsalis, Vibraphone

On Music Update:

"The youngest son of the Marsalis family, the drummer Jason Marsalis makes infrequent...self-produced records that are always worth hearing...Jazz often wants to be acceptably cool. Here there's a sense of an excellent musician trying out something risky without embarrassment."

-Ben Ratliff, New York Times, July 2009

"*Music Update* explodes from its first track, a short but intense number marked by a second-line beat-driven call to attention. Jason Marsalis sets the stage for the furthest-reaching and most compelling album of his career...The disc survives repeated plays, and at just under an hour, its' biggest drawback is that it's over too soon."

-Jennifer Odell, Down Beat, June 2009

"Just as his drumming is steeped in both modern and New Orleans rhythmic styles, his vibes playing draws on the rich tradition of that instrument...with commendably ardent swing."

-George Kanzler, Jazz Times, May 2009

"Marsalis displays his curiosity and the breadth of his musical knowledge both in his original material and the tunes he chooses to cover."

-Geraldine Wyckoff, Louisiana Weekly, December 2008

Other Recordings and Performances:

"Those who value serious musicianship, sensitive phrasemaking and thoroughly idiomatic performances of a broad span of repertoire will find this work deeply satisfying."

-Howard Reich, Chicago Tribune, 9/12/09

"Marsalis' powerful vibes solo leads into the traditional melody, played in counterpoint by the winds and piano as the cantor's voice soars above."

-Ben Sandmel, Louisiana Cultural Vistas

"[Jason] was out of the public spotlight for a while, and no one knew what he'd play Thursday--drums or his newly discovered love, the vibraphones. It was the vibraphones, and I'm glad for it. I've already seen him dominate a drum kit, so it was great to see him also **excel at the vibes**. Marsalis was smokin' as he and his young band played energetic, modern jazz. Midway through the set, Marsalis dedicated three Lionel Hampton covers to the legendary man who introduced the vibraphone to jazz. Marsalis didn't stumble once as he ran through Hampton's parts. Even though he was focused, his attitude said he was having fun giving props to a hero."

-Review, Live New Orleans, April 25, 2004

The Musicians

Austin Johnson currently resides in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he recently finished a Masters in Music at the University of New Orleans. Prior to arriving to Louisiana, he performed professionally throughout North Carolina as a freelance musician with various local artists and was featured in the Steve Hobbs Quartet. He later finished his bachelor's degree at FSU in Tallahassee, FL where he studied with Marcus Roberts. In both NC and Florida, as well as NOLA, Austin was influenced by his many opportunities to study and perform with musicians such as Carl Allen, Lenora Helm, Branford Marsalis, Stephen Riley, Roland Guerin, Rex Gregory, Todd Williams, Winard Harper, Marlon Jordan, Terrell Stafford, Ed Thigpen, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Fred Wesley, and Delfeayo Marsalis.

David Potter is quickly becoming known as a formidable musician. He has performed with many other well-known jazz artists around the country including Ellis Marsalis, Marcus Roberts, Wess Anderson, Marcus Printup, Martin Bejerano, Greg Gisbert, Marcus Belgrave, Vincent Gardner, Fred Wesley, and Greg Tardy. David has also recorded the soundtrack to a short film with bassist Delbert Felix. In 2005, he was chosen from a national pool of applicants to be a member of the Louis Armstrong Quintet at the University of New Orleans. Unfortunately, the

tragedy of hurricane Katrina temporarily ended his hopes for a career in Louisiana. In the spring of 2006, David was awarded a full scholarship to the prestigious Juilliard Jazz Program in New York City. After several days of intense meditation, he declined the offer and recently returned to Florida State University, where he received his Masters Degree in the winter of 2008, after further collaboration with his mentor Marcus Roberts. David is now located in Atlanta, where he maintains a busy performing schedule.

Will Goble is an in-demand bassist performing across the United States. He has appeared several times with world-renowned pianist Marcus Roberts, most recently at Yoshi's Jazz Club in San Francisco, CA. As a sideman, Will has shared the stage with numerous other notable artists, including Vincent Gardner, Wess Anderson, Kevin Bales, Scotty Barnhart, Marcus Printup, Martin Bejerano, Philip Harper, Jason Marsalis, Fred Wesley, and Stephen Riley, among others. Will recently received his Masters Degree at Florida State University where he assisted Marcus Roberts. Currently, Will is located in Atlanta, GA where he leads his own group and also performs regularly alongside the city's top musicians. His first album as a leader is due out in 2012.



AVERI WASHINGTON (c) 20

JASON'S QUARTET



Austin Johnson, Piano
Dave Potter, Drums
Will Goble, Bass

Jason Marsalis, An Extended Biography

By age six, not only had Jason gotten his first real drum set, but he was also taking lessons from the legendary New Orleans drummer James Black. At age seven he was sitting in with his father's jazz group, as well as playing with his trombonist brother Delfeayo. Jason was progressing so rapidly as a drummer that in 1984 his father started using him consistently on engagements. Jason was starting to become a seasoned road veteran before the age of nine, even traveling to the prestigious Berklee School of Music in Boston for Delfeayo's senior recital.

Though Jason had also taken up violin at age five, drums remained his primary focus throughout his grade school years. In 1991, he auditioned and was accepted to the acclaimed New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts High School (NOCCA). Throughout his high school years he continued to hone his skills by playing gigs with his father and brothers, as well as studying orchestral percussion techniques at the venerable Eastern Music Festival.

Shortly after graduation from NOCCA in 1995, Marsalis ascended to the drum throne of a new group lead by virtuoso pianist and former sideman for Wynton Marsalis, Marcus Roberts. Despite a demanding touring schedule with Roberts, Marsalis furthered his educational goals by attending Loyola University in New Orleans, as well as studying composition with Roger Dickerson at Southern University.

While Marsalis has worked with such international jazz luminaries as Joe Henderson and Lionel Hampton, he remains visible on the New Orleans scene as well, working with a diverse cross section of bands from Casa Samba (Brazilian) to Neslort (jazz fusion). He is also a co-founder of the Latin jazz group Los Hombres Calientes.

The sense of style and tastefulness that Marsalis exhibits in his playing explains why he is a highly sought after musician. This style has been well documented on recordings with artists such as the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Marcus Printup, John Ellis, Fredrik Kronkvist, Stephen Riley, and Marcus Roberts to name but a few. He has also produced three albums under his own name: *Year of the Drummer* (1998), *Music in Motion* (2000), and *Music Update* (2009) as well as producing a reissue of his father's earlier recorded work, *Syndrome* (1996). His next album as a leader, "In a World of Mallets," features his Vibes Quartet once again, and will be released in fall of 2012. In addition, Marsalis is a respected clinician and an endorser of Mapex drums, Majestic vibes, and Zildjian cymbals.

With each passing year Jason Marsalis continues to grow and develop as both a composer and performer. With a fire in his heart and a passion for the music, his will to swing has never been more resolute. The maturity of this young lion and the command he possesses over his instrument is clearly evident to those who have heard or seen him.