

LIVE
FROM LINCOLN CENTER



September 22, 2010 at 9:00 on PBS
New York Philharmonic Opening Night Gala

Wednesday evening, September 22, will be a very special occasion for us, the presenters of Live From Lincoln Center, and you, the viewers and listeners. On that occasion Live From Lincoln Center will inaugurate its 35th anniversary season of bringing you outstanding performances, live, from the stages of America's premier Performing Arts center.

It is now a longstanding tradition of Live From Lincoln Center to begin a new season with the Gala Opening Concert by the New York Philharmonic. Alan Gilbert begins his second season as the Philharmonic's Music Director with music from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. From the 19th, the Tone Poem *Don Juan* by Richard Strauss; from the 20th, a work with one of the longest titles in the repertory for orchestra: Paul Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber*; and from the 21st, the American premier of Wynton Marsalis's *Symphony Number 3*, titled *Swing Symphony*, with a guest appearance by Mr. Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

Jazz at Lincoln Center, the newest constituent member of New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, was formed in 1987. From the very beginning its Music Director has been and continues to be the charismatic trumpet player, Wynton Marsalis. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra is comprised of some of today's most outstanding jazz musicians, and they have brought the sounds of jazz not only to New York and other American music centers but also on tour to various music capitals of the world. As a matter of fact, it was in Berlin last June, with Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic, that Marsalis's *Swing Symphony* received its world premier.

The *Symphony* was commissioned jointly by the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and London's Barbican Center. Wynton Marsalis was the first, and is still the only jazz composer to have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music. As in his other symphonic works, the *Swing Symphony* offers a synthesis of jazz styles in collaboration with a symphony orchestra. Describing the last movement of the "Swing" *Symphony* Marsalis has written: "It features slapping and a groove that we all play together, and it has a long melody and a space for everyone to play. And it brings together many different feelings. Then it goes into the church groove 'cause the centerpiece of a lot of Afro-American music is church music. And then it breaks down into something that is at the end of your life and you reflect on everything....that's why at the end I have us go "Huuuh". It's like that last breath that you

take. Like we did this and we had a good time. That's what we conclude in jazz, it's an optimistic music."

The other two works on the program exploit the Philharmonic's virtuosic side. Strauss's musings on the life and times of history's fabled lover, Don Juan, is a riot of orchestral color, with a particularly suave solo for the oboe and stunning heroics in the French horns. And Hindemith's work, composed in the United States when he was a refugee from his German homeland, has become a favorite calling-card for orchestras wishing to show off their individual and corporate excellence. It was the New York Philharmonic, under Artur Rodzinski's direction, that played the world premier performance of the score in the early 1940s.

So a festive event awaits us all on Wednesday evening, September 22: the gala opening of the New York Philharmonic's 2010/2011 season. (An important note: Our Live From Lincoln Center coverage will begin at 9 PM instead of the usual starting time of 8 PM). Please check your local PBS station's schedule for the exact time and date of the telecast in your area.

Enjoy!

MARTIN BOOKSPAN