

ALL THAT JAZZ



Jean Sibelius did everything a little differently. His sole appearance as a conductor in the United States was not at Carnegie Hall or any of the other leading orchestral venues, but at the Norfolk Festival in Connecticut, where he conducted the world premiere of one of his most obscure tone poems, *The Oceanides*, and nothing else. Nevertheless, Carnegie Hall was the site of the United States premiere of his great Violin Concerto

in 1906, featuring the path-breaking American virtuoso violinist Maud Powell. Virtually all of Sibelius's major works were heard in New York for the first time at Carnegie Hall. The image here is a signed musical quote from Sibelius's *Finlandia*, which has been performed at Carnegie Hall more than 100 times.

Finlandia



Jean Sibelius

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“FATS” WALLER
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More than a decade before the word jazz became synonymous with a wild new music that shook the world, a visionary bandleader named James Reese Europe was already playing what has been described as a rudimentary “proto-jazz” at Carnegie Hall. Read on ...

Two short-lived geniuses of jazz, the trumpeter Oran “Hot Lips” Page and pianist and composer Fats Waller, join together in a bit of warm-hearted camaraderie on stage. (The floor, usually meticulously kept, would here seem to have needed some sanding.) On another occasion, as memorably captured in this 1942 flyer, the gigantic Waller played both piano and organ in a program of improvisations and songs.

In 1943, in the middle of the German army’s invasion of the Soviet Union, Duke Ellington made his Carnegie Hall debut in a benefit program for Russian war relief. In addition to Ellington’s repertory of songs, the program, shown here, also featured the New York premiere of his longest and most-symphonic work to date, *Black, Brown, and Beige*, which he called “a parallel to the story of the American Negro.” The photograph on the right, which shows the Ellington orchestra in full swing playing WHAT TK, was taken three years later. As usual, when Ellington visited, the house was sold out up to the stage seats.



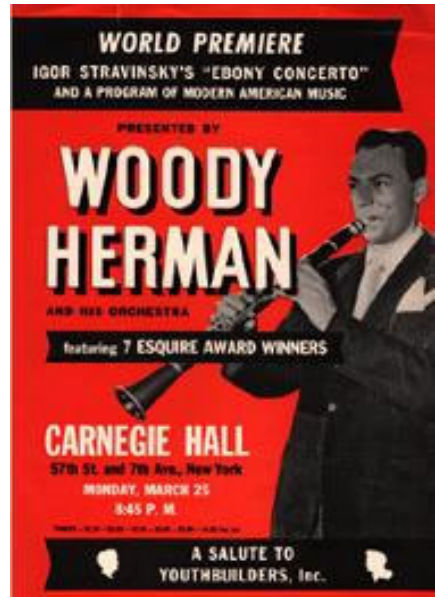
Hey look! It's Woody Herman! At *Carnegie Hall!* Herman played the world premiere of Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto* on that evening in 1946 along with music of his own. The delighted fan remains unidentified.

The one, the only, Louis Armstrong—"Pops," "Satchmo," peerless trumpeter, unmistakable and irresistible singer, American icon. According to the jazz critic and historian Gary Giddins, Armstrong was "as much himself rolling his eyes and mugging as he was playing the trumpet. His fans understood that, but intellectuals found the whole effect too damn complicated." Here he is onstage at Carnegie Hall in 1947.

Pianist Hazel Scott straddled the worlds of classical and jazz with equal aplomb. She appeared at Carnegie Hall on several occasions, including once with her husband, the congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. She later became the first African-American woman to host her own television program, the *Hazel Scott Show*, in 1950, 26 years before the advent of Oprah. When Senator Joe McCarthy accused Scott of being a Communist, the show was cancelled.

Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich—two legendary and legendarily temperamental drummers—battle it out on the Carnegie Hall stage in *WHAT YEAR TK* before a packed house. Krupa and Rich held their first drum battle at Carnegie Hall in 1952, as part of the kickoff of a national jazz tour,

and continued duking it out on the drums at other venues. As Rich told the *Voice of America* in 1956, "When we play places like Carnegie Hall where the places are sold out we know that the people are listening, we play good. We play other places where we don't think there's too much interest—rather than listening, I think that people would rather be heard themselves—so we let them scream and we play under them."



A bird's-eye view of a legendary moment in the history of modern jazz. Ella Fitzgerald began singing with Dizzy Gillespie's big band in November 1946. "These bop musicians have stimulated me more than I can say," she told *Ebony* in WHAT YEAR TK. "Bop musicians have more to say than any other musicians playing today."

In September 1947, she sang the scat showpieces "Flying Home," "Lady Be Good" and the as-yet-unrecorded "How High the Moon" at Gillespie's first Carnegie Hall concert, which also featured Charlie Parker. "A new era of jazz began in 1947," the magazine *Metronome* reported. "That modern jazz has come to stay."

Three geniuses of jazz backstage at Carnegie Hall—Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan, and Lester Young.

Billie Holiday at Carnegie Hall. Let the critic Nat Hentoff, who was there, tell the story: "The beat flowed in her uniquely sinuous, supple way of moving the story along; the words became her own experiences; and coursing through it all was Lady's sound—a texture simultaneously steel-edged and yet soft inside; a voice that was almost unbearably wise in disillusion and yet still childlike, again at the centre. The audience was hers

from before she sang, greeting her and saying good-bye with heavy, loving applause. And at one time, the musicians too applauded. It was a night when Billie was on top, undeniably the best and most honest jazz singer alive."



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