

Eric Clapton and Wynton Marsalis at Lincoln Center in New York City!

Written by Sally Rosen - OFC Contributor - Last Updated Friday, 29 March 2013 08:14



[Wynton Marsalis](#)

and

[Eric Clapton](#)

April 8, 2011 New York City. The billboard at Lincoln Center Rose Theater read “Wynton Marsalis & Eric Clapton Play the Blues” however this landmark performance in New York City was all about jazz. After years of following Clapton rock-blues concerts and as an ardent jazz fan at heart, it was a sheer delight to see Eric pair up with Wynton for this special weekend in April!

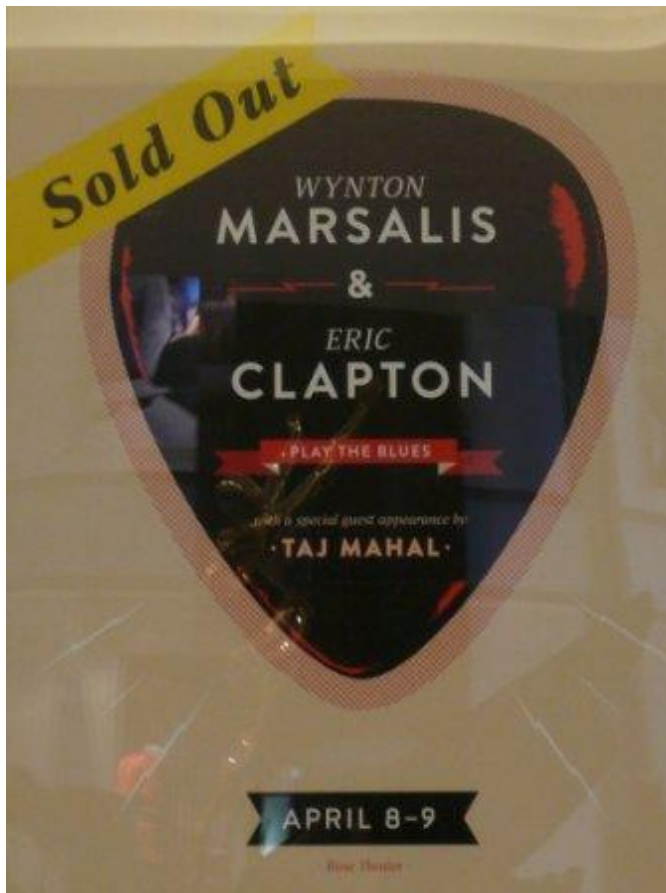
Since the late eighties, Wynton Marsalis has been the absolute pinnacle as a favorite trumpet player. Wynton garnered awards for both jazz and classical categories in the same year – a first in Grammy history. Not long after, Eric dabbled in contemporary, acoustic jazz during his Baby Face period; though not a personal favorite, achieved great commercial success. Eric later engaged in a brief revisit with jazz in the late nineties with David Sanborn and Marcus Miller. In his recent return to jazz and seamless collaboration with Marsalis, Clapton has no doubt found a new musical niche!

It was a dog’s fight to get tickets for this unique event. The traffic on the [Jazz at Lincoln Center website](#) was overwhelming and brought the site down several times. The box office staff was incredibly polite

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despite the frenzy of fans. The aftermath of over inflated ticket prices which surfaced on the secondary market websites was unpalatable but, alas, is the current state of affairs in the ticket world today.



Rose Theater at Lincoln Center was a splendid venue that seemed like it was meant for chamber music - small, intimate, sheer class, refined, fantastic stage and acoustics. Eric played with the finest of jazz ensembles from JALC. The band was so tightly integrated and cohesive as if they had been playing together for years. The band consisted of Eric on guitar, JALC members three brass with Wynton on trumpet, clarinet, two keyboard players including Chris Stainton from Clapton's tour, bass, banjo and drummer. Taj Mahal opened and came on as guest on guitar and vocals. A traditional jug band washboard was brought out for the full delta blues and jazz authenticity.

The opening song "Ice Cream" was uplifting and fun setting the tone for the evening. It was evident with the first song that Eric was enjoying himself immensely smiling and laughing throughout the performance. With the exception of the most unique and, as Eric described, "finest in my humble opinion" version of "Layla," the [set list](#) comprised of New Orleans jazz and Delta blues was completely different than any other Clapton show. A favorite song early on in

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the program was introduced by Eric as a Howlin' Wolf's "Forty Four." Eric played a spine tingling guitar solo elevated to a new dimension and new level of complexity. The band members played and sang in fantastic harmony with a variety of different sounds. All of the band members were featured on solos in the final songs. The program lasted about 90 minutes with one encore "Corrine Corrina."

Eric was unusually verbose and spoke with eloquence to the audience at the Friday performance. He described playing jazz as the intelligent genre. He spoke throughout the evening at great length about the experience, rehearsals, picking the set list and his enthusiasm to play jazz as well as introducing the band members. Wynton had a wonderful sense of humor sharing a whimsical story about his interactions with Eric and "playing on the other side of the beat" which brought on great laughter from the band and audience. Eric shared that over the years he has known some of the greatest blues artists and they would always say to him that the greatest accomplishment for a blues artist would be to play jazz. It was a dream come true and meant fruition for Slowhand to play jazz in its purest form at the Rose Theater performance!

For fans, it was an unparalleled privilege to be in attendance at this unique show. The next best thing will be to have the recording on blu-ray!

Check out whereseric.com for the set list, band members and more reviews!

Click [HERE](#) for Eric Clapton official fan club ECACCESS