

AN EVENING WITH BRANFORD MARSALIS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022 | COBB GREAT HALL

Branford Marsalis
saxophones

Joey Calderazzo
piano

Eric Revis
bass

Justin Faulkner
drums

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.

This performance will run approximately 90 minutes,
with no intermission.

*All personnel, with the exception of Branford Marsalis, are subject to
change.*

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BRANFORD MARSALIS

Branford Marsalis continues to thrill audiences around the world while racking up achievements across diverse musical platforms, even after four decades in the international spotlight. From his initial recognition as a young jazz lion, he has expanded his vision as an instrumentalist, composer, bandleader, and educator, crossing stylistic boundaries while maintaining an unwavering creative integrity. In the process, he has become an avatar of contemporary artistic excellence winning three Grammy Awards[®], a Tony[®] nomination for his work as a composer on Broadway, a citation by the National Endowment for the Arts as Jazz Master, and a 2021 Primetime Emmy nomination for the score he composed for the *Tulsa Burning* documentary.

Growing up in the rich environment of New Orleans as the oldest son of pianist and educator, the late Ellis Marsalis, Branford was drawn to music along with siblings Wynton, Delfeayo and Jason. The Branford Marsalis Quartet, formed in 1986, remains his primary performance vehicle. In its virtually uninterrupted three-plus decades of existence, the Quartet has established a rare breadth of stylistic range as demonstrated on the band's latest release, *The Secret Between the Shadow and the Soul*.

But Branford has not confined his music to the jazz quartet context. A frequent soloist with classical ensembles, Branford has become increasingly sought-after as a featured soloist with acclaimed orchestras around the world, performing works by such composers as Copeland, Debussy,

Glazunov, Ibert, Mahler, Milhaud, Rorem, Vaughan Williams and Villa-Lobos. And his legendary guest performances with the Grateful Dead and collaborations with Sting have made him a fan favorite in the pop arena.

Branford's screen credits as a composer include original music for: Spike Lee's *Mo' Better Blues*; *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* starring Oprah Winfrey; *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* starring Viola Davis and the late Chadwick Boseman; and the History Channel's documentary *Tulsa Burning: The 1921 Race Massacre*. The critically acclaimed *Ma Rainey* is the Netflix film adaptation of two-time Pulitzer Prize winner August Wilson's play, produced by Denzel Washington. In reviewing the score *Vanity Fair* proclaimed, "*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is a story in which the music has to be authentic, and the details need to be correct. It requires the musical oversight of someone who has this history in his blood. It requires Branford Marsalis." While *The Guardian* noted, "Marsalis's work, both recreation and original composition, is as close to perfection as I could imagine." He recently received a 2021 Emmy nomination for the original music he composed and produced for *Tulsa Burning* in the Outstanding Music Composition for a Documentary Series or Special (Original Dramatic Score) category. His work on Broadway has garnered a Drama Desk Award and a Tony® nomination for the acclaimed revival of *Fences*. His previous Broadway efforts include music for the revivals of *Children of a Lesser God* and *A Raisin in the Sun*, as well as *The Mountaintop* which starred Angela Bassett and Samuel L. Jackson.

Branford has also shared his knowledge as an educator, forming extended teaching relationships at Michigan State, San Francisco State and North Carolina Central Universities and conducting workshops at sites throughout the United States and the world.

BRANFORD MARSALIS QUARTET

Saxophonist Branford Marsalis is one of the most influential and revered figures in contemporary music. The NEA Jazz Master, Grammy Award® winner and Tony Award® nominee is equally at home performing concertos with symphony orchestras and sitting in with members of the Grateful Dead, but the core of his musical universe remains the Branford Marsalis Quartet.

After more than three decades of existence with minimal personnel changes, this celebrated ensemble is revered for its uncompromising interpretation of a kaleidoscopic range of both original compositions and jazz and popular classics. After the Grammy®-nominated *Upward Spiral*, on which guest vocalist Kurt Elling was seamlessly integrated into the group, the Quartet has followed up with the Grammy®-nominated *The Secret Between the Shadow and the Soul*, its most emotionally wide-ranging and melody driven collection to date.

John Zeugner captured the impact of the Quartet in live performance in a recent concert review, calling it “casually confident, professional, cerebral, and supercharged with energy. The Branford Marsalis Quartet...was all of those adjectives and more.”

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