

EDMONDS CENTER *for the* ARTS



DELFEAYO MARSALIS & The Uptown Jazz Orchestra

February 27

Sponsored by Ray Liaw & Joseph Gregory

In 2007, NEA Jazz Master and Grammy Award winning trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis formed the Uptown Jazz Orchestra (UJO) for the purpose of keeping important jazz music traditions alive; such as riff-playing, spontaneous group improvisations, and collective New Orleans instrumental polyphony. At the time, Marsalis realized that the New Orleans music community was lacking the infusion of young homegrown talent outside of the great brass band tradition, and chose to form an orchestra that could present traditional, classic, and modern compositions. with authenticity. Since that time, UJO has grown into one of the premier large ensembles in the world, releasing three CDs to critical acclaim, and touring locally, nationally, and internationally.

In 2008, Marsalis founded the educational program, "Swinging with the Cool School" (a soft introduction to jazz for hip tots and adults), which was used as an experimental form of music therapy at the New Orleans Children Hospital. The Cool School has since expanded to introduce live instrumental jazz to students around the country, with the intent of helping young people develop a relationship with music that has gradually disappeared from mainstream radio and media at large. Through these performances, UJO is able to introduce students (and adults) to the wide emotional range of instrumental music.

Since 2021, UJO has produced the annual Jazz at Congo Square Festival (JACS) to celebrate New Orleans culture by presenting live performances of musicians, poets, dancers, and Black Masking Indians to local and visiting audiences. JACS Festival also features local food, arts & craft vendors. Marsalis and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra plan to continue using the great legacy of American music to engage and hopefully inspire the younger generations for many years.



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