

Nike to Sponsor Hip Hop and Contemporary Arts Programs for Young People at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

NEW YORK, NY (September 14, 2023) – Building upon the success of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts’ (LCPA’s) FREE and Choose-What-You-Pay access models – which have helped welcome hundreds of thousands of audience members over the past two years, many new to Lincoln Center – Nike will generously donate **\$2 Million in support of LCPA’s Hip Hop and contemporary arts programming for young people**, as well as access programs across campus that engage students with jazz, opera, ballet, and orchestral music.

Lincoln Center Presents’ year-round programming across genres includes a focus on Hip Hop, most notably recently this summer in a week of celebratory events marking the 50th anniversary of the genre.

Moving forward, Nike’s sponsorship will support LCPA programs for young people including:

- **Electric Root Presents: *The Sound of (Black) Music***, which brings together gospel, funk, soul, and Afrobeat in a concert reimagining of the beloved Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, curated by **Michael Mwenso** and **Jono Gasparro**;
- a **Hip Hop series** offered at the David Rubenstein Atrium each month this spring, curated by **Xavier “X” Jernigan**;
- **Works & Process Underground Uptown Dance Festival at Lincoln Center**, a celebration of New York City’s extraordinary club, street, and social dance artists that features commissioned projects resourced long-term from studio-to-stage by Works & Process. Artists include **Dance is Life, LayeRhythm, Underground Uptown Ball, Ladies of Hip-Hop, Ephrat Asherie Dance, It’s Showtime NYC!, The Beatbox House, MasterZ at Work Dance Family**, and **Les Ballet Afrik**. Part of the global performing arts gathering, JanArtsNYC;
- an upcoming **Hip Hop education conference and hackathon**; as well as additional programs across the spring and summer to be announced in the coming months.

“We believe in the power of movement and cultural expression to change the world,” said **Scott Uzzell, Vice President and General Manager of Nike North America**. “We’ll join with LCPA – a place where creativity, culture, and movement shine – to unlock access to the performing arts for kids and teens across the five boroughs.”

“We are grateful to Nike for its shared vision of cultural access for all and its investment in the next generation of arts audiences,” said **Henry Timms, President and CEO of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**. “Core to our mission is ensuring the arts are central to the lives of young people across New York City, and to break down as many barriers as possible

to do so. Nike’s support will help bring the arts to tens of thousands of young people across the City.”

Additional programs supported include:

- Jazz at Lincoln Center’s **Jazz for Young People’s Concert Series**, narrated hour-long concerts as part of the Jazz for Young People program, which serves thousands of kids and families each season.
- The Metropolitan Opera’s **Open Rehearsals for Students**, providing students in the tri-state area the opportunity to attend final dress rehearsals live at the Metropolitan Opera House.
- New York City Ballet’s **New York City Public School Residencies**, which engage, support, and inspire students in New York City and annually serve thousands of elementary students in 40 public schools across all boroughs.
- The New York Philharmonic’s **Young People’s Concerts for Schools**, empowering teachers to enrich student engagement through a guided – but flexible – curriculum to support preparing students for a live orchestral concert.

About NIKE, Inc.

NIKE, Inc., based near Beaverton, Oregon, is the world's leading designer, marketer and distributor of authentic athletic footwear, apparel, equipment and accessories for a wide variety of sports and fitness activities. Converse, a wholly-owned NIKE, Inc. subsidiary brand, designs, markets and distributes athletic lifestyle footwear, apparel and accessories. For more information, visit <http://about.nike.com/en/newsroom> and follow @NIKE.

About Jazz at Lincoln Center

Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. It produces an annual concert season in Rose Theater and the Appel Room and nightly concerts at Dizzy's Club, all located in Frederick P. Rose Hall on the 5th floor of the Deutsche Bank Center in Columbus Circle, NYC. JALC education programs include the Essentially Ellington High School Band Competition and Festival, Webop, Jazz for Young People, Swing U, and the Jazz Academy video library. JALC's advocacy initiatives include Blue Engine Records and Jazz Congress, a gathering of the jazz community. The mission of Jazz at Lincoln Center is to entertain, enrich and expand a global community for jazz through performance, education, and advocacy. We believe jazz is a metaphor for Democracy. Because jazz is improvisational, it celebrates personal freedom and encourages individual expression. Because jazz is swinging, it dedicates that freedom to finding and maintaining common ground with others. Because jazz is rooted in the blues, it inspires us to face adversity with persistent optimism.

About Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) is a cultural and civic cornerstone of New York City. The primary advocate for the entire Lincoln Center campus, our strategic priorities include: fostering collaboration and deepening impact across the Lincoln Center resident organizations; championing inclusion and increasing the accessibility and reach of Lincoln Center’s work; and nurturing innovation on stage and off to help ensure the arts are at the

center of civic life for all. LCPA presents hundreds of programs each year, offered primarily for free and choose-what-you-pay, including many specially designed for young audiences, families, and those with disabilities.

About The Metropolitan Opera

Under the leadership of Peter Gelb, the Met's Maria Manetti Shrem General Manager, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director, the Metropolitan Opera is one of America's leading performing arts organizations and a vibrant home for the world's most creative and talented artists, including singers, conductors, composers, orchestra musicians, stage directors, designers, visual artists, choreographers, and dancers. The company presents approximately 200 performances each season of a wide variety of operas, ranging from early masterpieces to contemporary works. In recent years, the Met has launched many initiatives designed to make opera more accessible, most prominently the Live in HD series of cinema transmissions, which dramatically expands the Met audience by allowing select performances to be seen in more in more than 50 countries around the world.

About New York City Ballet

New York City Ballet, one of the foremost ballet companies in the world, was founded in 1948 by the legendary choreographer George Balanchine and arts patron Lincoln Kirstein, and quickly became world-renowned for its athletic and contemporary style. Jerome Robbins joined NYCB the following year and, with Balanchine, helped to build its extraordinary repertory. Today NYCB continues to be inspired by its founders who envisioned an authentically American expression of ballet with a company that reflects the rich cultural diversity of our city and nation. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Jonathan Stafford, Associate Artistic Director Wendy Whelan, and Executive Director Katherine Brown, NYCB remains dedicated to its primary objectives: to preserve the ballets, dance aesthetic, and standards of excellence created and established by its founders; to develop new work that draws on the talents of contemporary choreographers and composers and speaks to the time in which it is made; and to make ballet accessible to the widest possible public through touring, education programs, the creative use of media, and other outreach efforts.

About The New York Philharmonic

The New York Philharmonic connects with millions of music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, broadcasts, streaming, education programs, and more. In the 2023–24 season – which builds on the Orchestra's transformation reflected in the new David Geffen Hall – the NY Phil honors Jaap van Zweden in his farewell season as Music Director, premieres 14 works by a wide range of composers including some whom van Zweden has championed, marks György Ligeti's centennial, and celebrates the one-hundredth birthday of the beloved Young People's Concerts. The Philharmonic has commissioned and / or premiered important works, from Dvořák's *New World* Symphony to Tania León's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Stride*. The NY Phil has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, and in 2023 announced a partnership with Apple Music Classical, the new streaming app designed to deliver classical music lovers the optimal listening experience. The Orchestra builds on a longstanding commitment to serving its communities – which has led to annual free concerts across New York City and the free online New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives – through a new ticket access program. Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in

the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Jaap van Zweden became Music Director in 2018-19, following titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler. Gustavo Dudamel will become Music and Artistic Director beginning in 2026 after serving as Music Director Designate in 2025-26.

Hip Hop and contemporary arts programming made possible by Nike

Major support is provided by the Shubert Foundation

*Additional support is provided by Barbara H. Block and
the DuBose and Dorothy Heyward Memorial Fund*

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dedication and generosity of our board members*

*Operation of Lincoln Center's public plazas is supported in part with
public funds provided by the City of New York*

*Programs are made possible, in part, with public funds provided by the New York City
Department of Cultural Affairs, Empire State Development, and the New York State Council
on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor, Mayor of the City of New York, the
New York State Legislature and the New York City Council*

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