



Friday | February 17 | 8pm  
Berklee Performance Center

**Jason Moran & the Big Bandwagon**  
***James Reese Europe and the Harlem Hellfighters:  
From the Dancehall to the Battlefield***

**Jason Moran** piano  
**Tarus Mateen** bass  
**Nasheet Waits** drums  
**Immanuel Wilkins** alto saxophone  
**Jose Davila** tuba  
**Darryl Harper** flute, clarinet  
**David Adewumi** trumpet  
**Brian Settles** tenor saxophone  
**Reginald Cyntje** trombone  
**Chris Bates** trombone

Cinematographer..... **Bradford Young**  
Film Editor ..... **Stefani Saintonge**  
Color Correction..... **Harbor Picture Company**  
Dramaturg ..... **John Akomfrah**  
Historian ..... **Stephany Neal**  
Still Photography ..... **Jati Lindsay**

*There will be no intermission in this evening's program,  
which will run approximately 90 minutes.*

2022/23 Season Sponsors  
**Amy & Joshua Boger**

## ARTIST STATEMENT

There is great beauty in the life of Lieutenant James Reese Europe. Within the scholarship of who he was and what his music is, it becomes clear that the history surrounding him is a complex and tightly woven knot. Each strand of the cord holds a uniquely American history, a history that also births another complex knot, JAZZ.

Europe becomes a freedom fighter. He learns aspects of this at an early age as his violin teacher is the son of the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass. An early lesson he understands is that sound and freedom aid one another. With his violin, he arrives in New York on a mission. Much of this mission revolves around music, but his greater mission will be that of demanding equality for African-American performers, PEOPLE. He finds fame by producing music for many societies: dances, parties, ceremonies, concerts. In 1910, he formed the groundbreaking Clef Club, a union for African-American musicians. His 1911 standing-room-only Carnegie Hall premiere of the Clef Club Orchestra was a sensation. His work developing dance music with the famous dancing duo, Vernon & Irene Castle, innovated the Fox Trot tempos and other dance steps. With each of these developments, Europe always found a larger stage. The “stage” will always be a portal for a place to test what is real and surreal.

In WWI, he found his largest and most dangerous stage. When he joined New York’s 15th Regiment, later becoming the 369th Infantry Harlem Hellfighters, he knew African-American soldiers could not fight alongside white soldiers. His writing partner Noble Sissle was shocked Europe signed up. Sissle asked Europe if he could get out of the war, would he? Europe replied, “If I could, I would not. My country called me and I must answer. And if I live to come back, I will startle the world with my music.”

He indeed startled the world. 100 years later we celebrate a brave individual among a company of soldiers, the Harlem Hellfighters, who predict a thought Martin Luther King, Jr. would write some 47 years later in his letter from a Birmingham jail: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Hear We Are.

Jason Moran

Did you enjoy the  
performance?  
Let us know your thoughts  
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Pianist and composer **Jason Moran** has established himself as a risk-taker and trendsetter for new directions in jazz. *Rolling Stone* calls him “the most provocative thinker in current jazz.” It’s that incomparable talent and unyielding drive towards innovation that earned Moran a prestigious MacArthur “Genius Grant” Fellowship and the title of Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz. Since 2000, Moran and his trio **The Bandwagon (Tarus Mateen and Nasheet Waits)** have dazzled audiences at elite venues worldwide. Moran has also performed with many acclaimed artists such as Charles Lloyd and Dave Holland; he composed a ballet for Alonzo King LINES Ballet; conceived a jazz and skateboarding collaboration; wrote the film score for *Selma*; and paid homage to two legendary pianists in his Blue Note album, *All Rise: A Joyful Elegy for Fats Waller*, and his multimedia program, *In My Mind: Monk at Town Hall, 1959*. A prolific composer, Moran released two albums in 2018—*Looks of a Lot*, which was commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Center, and *Music for Joan Jonas*, a collaboration with performance artist Joan Jonas containing excerpts from three of their major collaborations. *The Los Angeles Times* hails Moran, “a startlingly gifted pianist with a relentless thirst for experimentation.”

In addition to Moran, Mateen, and Waits, this exploration of the legacy of **James Reese Europe and the Harlem Hellfighters** includes a seven-piece horn section (the **Big Bandwagon**), contributions from artist / writer / film director / screenwriter **John Akomfrah**, and visual materials from acclaimed cinematographer **Bradford Young**.

*James Reese Europe and the Harlem Hellfighters is co-commissioned by 14-18 NOW: WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, Berliner Festspiele / Jazzfest Berlin, Serious, and the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, with support from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and from the Federal Agency for Civic Education, Germany.*

#### ***From the Celebrity Series of Boston archives...***

Jason Moran appeared on the Celebrity Series for the first time in March 2013 as a member of Charles Lloyd’s New Quartet. He made his debut as a headliner in April 2014 in a program entitled Jason Moran: Fats Waller Dance Party featuring Meshell Ndegeocello. At that time, his band included Tarus Mateen, making his Celebrity Series debut. Nasheet Waits made his Celebrity Series debut in March 2021 as part of Christian McBride’s New Jawn during the 2020/21 Celebrity Series At Home digital season. Celebrity Series welcomes the rest of the Big Bandwagon for their first appearance on the Celebrity Series today.





Celebrity Series of Boston

2022/23

FEBRUARY 2023

Chris Thile

Fri | Feb 3 | 8pm  
Sanders Theatre

Artemis

Sat | Feb 4 | 8pm  
Berklee Performance Center

*What Makes It Great?*  
with Rob Kapilow  
Copland's *Appalachian  
Spring* with *A Far Cry*

Sun | Feb 5 | 3pm  
NEC's Jordan Hall

Jessica Vosk,  
*My Golden Age*  
Sun | Feb 5 | 5pm  
Symphony Hall

Circa, *Sacre*

Thu – Sat | Feb 9 – 11 | 8pm  
Boch Center Shubert Theatre

NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS  
Sandeep Das & Mike Block  
*Where the soul never dies*  
Sat | Feb 11 | 4pm  
Harvard-Epworth Church

Emi Ferguson and Ruckus  
Sat | Feb 11 | 8pm  
GBH's Calderwood Studio

Jason Moran and the  
Harlem Hellfighters  
*James Reese Europe  
and the Absence of Ruin*  
Fri | February 17 | 8pm

DEBUT SERIES

Alexi Kenney, violin  
Wed | Feb 22 | 8pm  
Longy's Pickman Hall

Dreamers' Circus

Fri | Feb 24 | 8pm  
NEC's Jordan Hall

NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS

Sandeep Das: *Soundscapes  
of India* - Suhail Yusuf Khan  
with Boston City Singers  
Sat | Feb 25 | 3pm  
Multicultural Arts Center,  
Cambridge

MARCH 2023

Igor Levit, piano  
Sat | Mar 4 | 8pm  
NEC's Jordan Hall

Lawrence Brownlee, tenor  
Kevin Miller, piano  
*Rising*  
Sun | Mar 5 | 3pm  
GBH's Calderwood Studio

KODŌ, *Tsuzumi*

Sun | Mar 12 | 5pm  
Symphony Hall

JAZZ FESTIVAL

(Mar 8-11, 7pm)  
at Artists For Humanity EpiCenter  
Melissa Aldana Quartet  
Hiromi  
Nnenna Freelon  
Ambrose Akinmusire

Aoife O'Donovan

Fri | Mar 17 | 8pm  
Sanders Theatre

Chineke! Orchestra  
Andrew Grams, conductor  
Stewart Goodyear, piano  
Wed | Mar 22 | 8pm  
NEC's Jordan Hall

Terri Lyne Carrington +  
Social Science

Fri | Mar 24 | 8pm  
Berklee Performance Center

DEBUT SERIES

Fatma Said, soprano  
Rafael Aguirre, guitar  
Thu | Mar 30 | 8pm  
Longy's Pickman Hall

and many more... Center

Visit [celebrityseries.org](http://celebrityseries.org) to view the full season schedule