

***United We Play* Descriptive Transcript**

Marcus Roberts: I've been thinking a lot lately about the current state of the world and the current state of our country. This is a very difficult time in our history. We seem to be surrounded by pain and conflict and mistrust, but we are here today to show you in our own way how music can help us overcome. As musicians, we have had to learn to depend on and trust one another in order to create something greater together than any of us could have created alone. Through music, we can learn to work together, because every time we truly listen to someone else's voice, we become stronger—better musicians and better people.

MUSIC BY:
Marcus Roberts

United We Play

Marcus: *United We Play* is about bringing jazz and classical music together as a symbol of the need to bring our entire country together.

A PRODUCTION OF:
The American Symphony Orchestra
and
Marcus Roberts, J-Master Music

MARCUS ROBERTS & THE MODERN JAZZ GENERATION

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Marcus Roberts | Piano |
| Rodney Jordan | Bass |
| Jason Marsalis | Drums |
| Joe Goldberg | Alto Saxophone & Clarinet |
| Ricardo Pascal | Tenor & Soprano Saxophones |
| Stephen Riley | Tenor Saxophone |
| Tissa Khosla | Baritone Saxophone |
| Alphonso Horne | Trumpet |
| Tim Blackmon | Trumpet |
| Ron Westray | Trombone |

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Leon Botstein | Conductor |
| Cyrus Beroukhim | Concertmaster |
| Pauline Kim Harris | Violin I |
| Philip Payton | Violin I |
| Robert Zubrycki | Violin I |
| Richard Rood | Principal Violin II |
| Wende Namkung | Violin II |
| Ragga Petursdottir | Violin II |
| Dana Kelley | Principal Viola |
| Shelley Holland-Moritz | Viola |
| Debra Shufelt-Dine | Viola |
| Eugene Moye | Principal Cello |
| Maureen Hynes | Cello |
| Alberto Parrini | Cello |
| Jordan Frazier | Principal Bass |

NARRATION BY:

Marcus Roberts & Leon Botstein

Leon Botstein: Music is a meaningful means of human expression and action without being easily pinned down. I don't think we can live without music any more than we can live without language. For music really to survive it can't be through any box—not the computer, the audio device, not the smartphone—it has to be human-to-human and in real time, real space. Nothing has brought that home more vividly than this enforced isolation from doing that.

Marcus: The American Symphony is a great orchestra. We were rehearsing to do a concert together at Carnegie Hall right at the beginning of the pandemic. Unfortunately, just a few hours before the show, Carnegie Hall was closed and the show was canceled. So we hated to lose the chance to perform together, so we came up with the idea to do this remote performance for all of you.

Leon: Music, it demands our being together in a common space. This project, which is a stopgap between the times when we were actually able to perform in front of the public and with the public, and the time when we will be able to do so again.

Marcus: This pandemic is certainly an enormous problem. To overcome it, we're going to have to get to it by working together and looking out for one another. Each of the 10 jazz musicians, we rehearsed over Zoom, connected remotely.

Marlan Barry: *Are you guys there?*

Marcus: The classical players and the maestro recorded the string parts separately, and I was logged in from 1,500 miles away. *Contrabass was late at measure 21*. This pandemic has forced us, as people, into isolation. It's not natural. But, perhaps it's an opportunity for us to find innovative ways to collaborate remotely and to get together and work better together.

When I was writing *America Has the Blues* I was thinking about the many complex issues that our country is struggling with at this time in our history. In jazz music, we play the blues to defeat the blues in life. Our music sends a clear message that we never succumb or give up. This piece is a statement that together, we will overcome the blues in this very difficult time.

America Has the Blues [Musical Feature]

Marcus: *Seeking Peace* is a song that I wrote for piano and strings. Sometimes in the midst of chaos and turmoil, we just need to find a quiet place to reflect. I've been doing more of that than usual this year myself. The sound of the strings, it's a beautiful sound—my hope is that it will bring you a feeling of tranquility and a feeling of being settled.

Seeking Peace [Musical Feature]

Leon: The real demands of our life—whether it is about the water in our community or the schools in our community, whatever community you may be in, you're going to have neighbors who are not like yourself. They're of different religion, they're different belief, they come from different places, they're different color skin. You can't choose them the way you can on the Internet, and that's the demand of democracy: to listen, to compromise—and musical communication is connected to democracy. The role of the listener, the player, the performer, the spaces we have for music. What happens in a musical ensemble, what happens when we dance to music, we sing together at church. We use music as a kind of medium, a form of life by which we connect with other people, and we can express kindness to strangers.

Marcus: When we have 20 or 30 great musicians on the stage, especially at the same time, we have to find a balance between freedom and individual achievement and collaboration. If everybody is just concerned with being the star of the show, we likely would end up with chaos. So we have to listen to each other and make room for each musician's part to be heard. This is a very politically charged time in our history. It's so important that we do everything we can to listen to one another and work together. If we do, if we do the same in our families, our workplaces, and in our communities, I think we would have a much more peaceful society and a lot more satisfaction in our lives.

United We Play [Musical Feature]

Credits

UNITED WE PLAY

America Has the Blues
Seeking Peace
United We Play

Composed and arranged by Marcus Roberts
Commissioned by the American Symphony Orchestra
Published by Marcus Roberts, J-Master Music

Marcus Roberts, Executive Producer
Leon Botstein, Music Director

Featuring

Marcus Roberts & The Modern Jazz Generation

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| Stephen Riley | Tenor Saxophone |
| Tissa Khosla | Baritone Saxophone |
| Alphonso Horne | Trumpet |
| Tim Blackmon | Trumpet |
| Ron Westray | Trombone |
| Lynn Moore | Artist Manager |

American Symphony Orchestra

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
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| Pauline Kim Harris | Violin I |
| Philip Payton | Violin I |
| Robert Zubrycki | Violin I |
| Richard Rood | Principal Violin II |
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| Maureen Hynes | Cello |
| Alberto Parrini | Cello |
| Jordan Frazier | Principal Bass |

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|---------------------|---|
| Oliver Inteeworn | Executive Director |
| Ally Chapel | Marketing Manager |
| Katherine Peck | Director of Development |
| Catherine Williams | Operations & Audience Development Coordinator |
| Zachary Schwartzman | Assistant Conductor |
| Matt Dine | Personnel Manager |
| Sebastian Danila | Library Manager |
| Marc Cerri | Orchestra Librarian |
| Marielle Metivier | Production Consultant |

Film Production

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|------------------|--|
| Lynn Moore | Co-Director |
| Oliver Inteeworn | Co-Director |
| AJ Wilhelm | Director of Photography & Editor |
| Alexander Ariff | Senior Producer |
| Chelsea Solitrin | Senior Producer |
| Ally Chapel | Creative Director |
| Marcus Roberts | Audio Producer |
| Les Stephenson | Audio Engineer |
| Joe Goldberg | Assistant Engineer |
| Tissa Khosla | Assistant Engineer |
| Marlan Barry | Audio Producer & Engineer (ASO string section) |
| Damon Whittemore | Co-Engineer (ASO string section) |
| Kostadin Kamcev | Assistant Engineer, Studio Mozart (drums) |
| Danny Carr | Robo Cam |
| John Gasper | Robo Cam Operator |
| Denise Sinelov | Additional Camera |
| Alexander Ariff | Additional Camera |

SPECIAL THANKS

Sam Gellerstein - Jeff Bradshaw - Tre Lambert - Khalyl CE - Ben Gullett
 Julian Weller, Musicians United NYC - Marc Basch - Matt Dine - Gillian Maranga

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fishercenter.bard.edu