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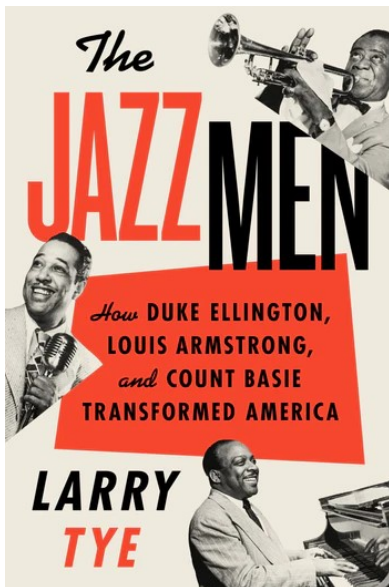
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***The Jazzmen* is a sweeping and spellbinding portrait of the longtime kings of jazz—Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie—who, born within a few years of one another, burst through racial barriers to become the most popular entertainers on the planet.**

Mariner Books is pleased to announce the forthcoming release of *THE JAZZMEN* (Mariner; 5/7/2024; ISBN: 9780358380436; \$32.50) from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Satchel* and *Bobby Kennedy*, Larry Tye.

This is the story of three revolutionary American musicians, the maestro jazzmen who orchestrated the chords that throb at the soul of twentieth-century America:

- **Duke Ellington**, the grandson of slaves who was christened Edward Kennedy Ellington, was a man whose story is as layered and nuanced as his name suggests and whose composing, piano playing, and band leading transcended category.
- **Louis Daniel Armstrong** was born in a New Orleans slum so tough it was called The Battlefield and, at age seven, got his first musical instrument, a ten-cent tin horn that drew buyers to his rag-peddling wagon and set him on the road to elevating jazz into a pulsating force for spontaneity and freedom.
 - **William James Basie**, too, grew up in a world unfamiliar to white fans—the son of a coachman and laundress who dreamed of escaping every time the traveling carnival swept into town, and who finally engineered his getaway with help from Fats Waller.



In *The Jazzmen*, Tye paints a vivid and immersive portrait of the birth of jazz, highlighting the resilience of its trailblazers as they opened America's ears and souls to the magnificence of their melodies. Each insisted he was a music maker first and last, when in reality all three were cultural and racial insurgents.

"The lives of these jazzmen resonate," Tye says, "in the way they quietly upended the way musical dynasties are constructed and how human rights are secured."

Whereas previous biographies focused on their music-making, Tye digs deeply into their lives off the bandstand, showing how this threesome framed their times even as they were framed by them. He conducted 250 interviews, including with bandmates, relatives, and friends, and drew on new materials unearthed from archives, libraries, and private collections.

Among the topics explored in the book that Tye can discuss in interviews:

- **How the lives of Duke Ellington, Satchmo Armstrong, and Count Basie were uniquely connected, not only by recasting the music scene but also by overcoming racial exclusion during the Jim Crow era of segregation.** In the end, this trio broke barriers by being known not as great Black jazzmen, but as great jazzmen. This side of their story is too little known and is especially resonant today.
- **Why, even as they traveled the world as America's jazz ambassadors, these extraordinary jazzmen had to take extraordinary steps to stay alive when they ventured below America's Mason-Dixon Line.** One way that Messrs. Ellington, Armstrong, and Basie coped was to hire elegant and expensive Pullman sleeping cars to remain with them around-the-clock to ensure they wouldn't get lynched when they looked for a place to sleep and eat.
- **The often-overlooked stories of such leading ladies of jazz as Mary Lou Williams, Lillian Hardin Armstrong, and Billie Holiday, who showed that women belonged on center stage rather than in supporting roles.** Tye makes clear that his trio of jazzmen fostered more than they challenged the sexism

of their era. As for their philandering, no three men in America did more of it – Armstrong full-throatedly, Ellington as a quiet libertine, and Basie in a way that was apparent mainly to the wife who repeatedly threatened to leave and did at least once.

- **How mobsters played instrumental roles in the success of this threesome and of jazz generally.** And it was no accident that these and other Black maestros had Jewish managers, given the central roles Jewish people played in jazz and the shared history of Black people and Jewish people in using music as an escape from repression.
- **The language of jazz:** Jazzmen had their own lexicon – *ofay* was a not-so-fond way Black musicians referred to whites, while a *handkerchief head* was a close relation to an Uncle Tom – that reflected their takes on music, life, and fellow artists.

With the masterful storytelling that Tye is renowned for, this book is an unmissable ode to the groundbreaking jazzmen who shaped the fabric of America and stood for the very racial justice that is in the spotlight today. Many thanks for keeping the book in mind for spring/summer 2024 coverage. Please let me know if you'd like more information or if you're interested in arranging an interview.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Larry Tye is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Bobby Kennedy* and *Satchel*, as well as *Demagogue*, *Superman*, *The Father of Spin*, *Home Lands*, and *Rising from the Rails*, and coauthor, with Kitty Dukakis, of *Shock*. Previously an award-winning reporter at the *Boston Globe* and a Nieman fellow at Harvard University, he now runs the Boston-based Health Coverage Fellowship. He lives on Cape Cod.

ADVANCE PRAISE

“Tye brings his subjects to life as both forces of social change and three-dimensional human beings who lived and breathed their art, from Ellington’s soulful, “Shakespearian” arrangements to Armstrong’s “heart as big as Earth” and Basie’s “Buddha-like” temperament. It’s a vibrant ode to a legendary trio and the “rip-roaring harmonies” that made them great.” –**STARRED review, *Publishers Weekly***

“The most striking aspect of the [Jazzmen] is the astonishing amount of research Tye conducted... The author’s vivid style brings readers front and center into the myriad of clubs and studios where Armstrong, Basie, and Ellington played, as well as the social vibe of the cities and towns where their music left an indelible mark. This thoroughly enjoyable musical journey is succinctly titled, yet the scope of Tye’s research demonstrates why and how Armstrong, Basie, and Ellington transcended jazz and even music itself to establish themselves in American culture forevermore in words that a young Ellington employed to describe himself: “beyond category.” For Ellington, ‘it wasn’t a contradiction to be an artist as well as a showman.’ A delightful read.” –***Kirkus***

“Like the best music created by Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Count Basie, *The Jazzmen SWINGS*. As Tye makes clear, their story is the story of America in the twentieth century.” –**RICKY RICCARDI, Grammy Award-winning author of *What a Wonderful World* and *Heart Full of Rhythm***

“The *Jazzmen* begins with colorful people and flows to rich history so beautifully it is musical.”
–**JUAN WILLIAMS, author of *Eyes on the Prize***

“Proud and important history, beautifully told.” –**DEVAL PATRICK, former governor of Massachusetts, assistant attorney general for civil rights under Bill Clinton**

“The *Jazzmen* reveals how these three musicians, when they express themselves through their instruments, become magical.” –**MERCEDES ELLINGTON, dancer, choreographer, and Duke’s granddaughter**

“Larry Tye has written a masterpiece. These three are not only the most important people in American music, but they changed the whole world in their individual ways.”
–**WENDELL BRUNIOUS, New Orleans bandleader and trumpeter**

“This is a very important story to tell, especially now, when times are so fractured. Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Count Basie are monumental people in America -- monumental. People aren't thinking about monumental things and we should be.” –**Sonny Rollins, legendary tenor saxman**

"Larry Tye has written a masterpiece. These three are not only the most important people in American music, but they changed the whole world in their individual ways. What he's produced is the best thing I've ever read, by the end I was in tears. Based on this book, I'll incorporate pieces of what these three did in how I lead and encourage my band members." –**Wendell Brunious, New Orleans bandleader and trumpeter**

“The Jazzmen introduces the Founding Fathers of Jazz — Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Count Basie — all born within a five year period at the beginning of the 20th century. These geniuses created jazz seemingly out of whole cloth, without obvious role models showing them the way, then towered over the jazz world for more than a half century. Author Larry Tye brings alive their accomplishments as he guides us through the intimate details of their careers and personal lives. I thought I was already well informed about these jazz heroes, but this book reveals so much more about their musical journeys and personal experiences. It's like meeting them all over again. I couldn't put it down.” –**Gary Burton, Grammy-winning jazz vibraphonist**

To the book: <https://www.harpercollins.com/products/the-jazzmen-larry-tye?variant=41103389261858>

Website with background articles written by Larry Tye at <https://larrytye.com/articles-op-eds/>