**Marcus Belgrave Legacy Ensemble**

**Bio**

The late Marcus Belgrave (1936-2015) was Detroit’s internationally recognized jazz trumpet great. He came to prominence in the late 1950s, touring and recording with the late great Ray Charles’ Orchestra, at the height of Ray’s hit-making era. Marcus is heard as a trumpet soloist on some of Ray’s most famous hits, on both albums and singles. At the young age of nineteen, Belgrave was mentored not just by Ray Charles, but by eminent trumpeter Clifford Brown. Belgrave was part of the modern jazz movement in New York, working and recording in the bands of such major innovators as Charles Mingus, Eric Dolphy and Max Roach. Many of these classic recordings (on Atlantic, Columbia and other major labels) have now been re-issued. Belgrave moved to Detroit in the early 1960s to join Motown Records as a staff trumpeter, providing the backbone of some of the era’s biggest hits, including the Temptations’ “My Girl”. His wide range of musical styles included traditional New Orleans, Swing, Bebop and of course, the Motown hits he recorded. He was an original member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. He was awarded the singular title of official **Jazz Master Laureate** for the City of Detroit, was awarded the Kresge Eminent Artist for his 46 years of service to the young musicians of Detroit, and in 2019 the City of Detroit honored him with a street naming at the corner of Aretha Franklin Way & Marcus Belgrave Avenue.
Despite all of these accolades, Belgrave was most proud of the musical legacy he left with his protégés – a veritable who’s who of jazz musicians. Belgrave’s protégés include violinist Regina Carter, bassists Robert Hurst and Marion Hayden, saxophonist Kenny Garrett, the late piano great Geri Allen, drummers Karriem Riggins and Ali Jackson, trumpeters Theo Croker, Dwight Adams and Sean Jones, guitarist/vocalist Ray Parker Jr. and many more. **The Marcus Belgrave Legacy Ensemble** comprises his protégés performing his compositions and the music he taught and performed with them.

In January 2020 the Legacy Ensemble as part of the Joan Belgrave Production, “From Detroit To The World” at the New York Winter Jazz Festival, performed and was met with rave reviews from the London Jazz News, The New York Times and more. It included, Karriem Riggins, Ali Jackson, Robert Hurst, Theo Crocker, JD Allen, Dwight Adams, Kasan Belgrave, Kasa Overall, Greg Glassman, and Kelvin Sholar (MD). The ensemble is presented by his widow and former musical partner, vocalist/producer, Joan Belgrave. **The Marcus Belgrave Legacy Ensemble** celebrates his music, his life and his mentorship.

London Jazz News – “Hurst’s mesmerising adventure in his improvisation through (the Belgrave composition) *All My Love* brought the house down. Engaging, precise, varied”

*All My Love* also saw **Dwight Adams** pick up Belgrave’s old horn – an honour – shadowed by Joan and Marcus’s son **Kasan Belgrave** on alto.