



JAZZ

AMBASSADORS

1 x 60 HD



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As Communism, the demise of colonization and the fight for civil rights reconfigured the world in the mid-1950s, U.S. State Department officials decided jazz musicians could help America win the Cold War. The government sent jazz legends to the U.S.S.R., Asia and Africa to celebrate and promote American diversity and culture. But the tours had a profound and unintended consequence; inspired by freedom movements around the world, jazz musicians began agitating for political change back home.

Jazz Ambassadors tells the little-known story of when Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Goodman, along with their mixed-race bands, were deployed to fight on the frontlines of the Cold War, giving the Civil Rights movement in the United States a voice on the world stage when it most needed one. Drawing on an archive of incredible musical performances, detailed personal accounts of the tours and cinematic re-constructions of crucial events, this film immerses viewers in this thrilling journey, accompanied by a truly swinging soundtrack.

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CREDITS

A co-production of Antelope South/Normal Life Pictures and WNET/Thirteen

Writer, Director: Hugo Berkeley

Producer: Mick Csáky

Image: Office of Special Collections at the University of Arkansas



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