



# RIDING ON DUKE'S TRAIN

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A PROPOSAL BY KEN KIMMELMAN

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER LETTER

BIOGRAPHY: KEN KIMMELMAN

Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to review this wonderful project and opportunity.

Emmy award-winning filmmaker, Ken Kimmelman, is seeking investors or tax-deductible contributions for an animated feature film titled Riding on Duke's Train, based on a book by Mick Carlon.

Tax-deductible Contribution: Consider supporting this project with a tax-deductible contribution made payable to: "Fractured Atlas", and sent to Imagery Film, Ltd. 91 Bedford Street, New York, NY 10014. Any amounts – small or large – will be greatly appreciated.

Investors: Anyone interested as an investor please contact Ken Kimmelman at Imagery Film, Ltd. 91 Bedford Street, New York, NY 10014. [ifl@mindspring.com](mailto:ifl@mindspring.com)

Help spread the word by forwarding this information to anyone you think might be interested.

Sincerely,

Sue Greutmann-Phillips  
Independent International Finder  
For Imagery Films Ltd. / Ken Kimmelman

**RIDING ON DUKE'S TRAIN**  
**A Proposal by Ken Kimmelman**  
**Imagery Film, Ltd.**  
**91 Bedford Street**  
**New York, NY 10014**  
**212-243-5579**  
**[ifl@mindspring.com](mailto:ifl@mindspring.com)**

I'm currently working on a very unique and exciting project, an animated feature film titled *Riding on Duke's Train*, based on a book for young adults by Mick Carlon. The book was sent to a friend of mine, an Ellington scholar and composer, who teaches at the Manhattan School of Music. He loved it and passed it on to me. I was so moved by it, I optioned the book to make into a film. I later found out that *Jazz at Lincoln Center* ordered thousands of copies of the book, which they were giving out to inner city schools. They want students to read it before they, the *JALC* band, come to these schools to play Ellington's music.

I contacted the Director of Education at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Todd Stoll, and he was thrilled to hear about my plans for the film and we met to discuss the possibility of collaboration on this project. *JALC*, as you well know, is very interested in preserving the culture of Jazz and educating the youth of today about it. They thought this film would be a great means of supporting that aim. *JALC* offered to record all the music for the film with Wynton Marsalis at the helm. I've enclosed the letter of support from them.

The story is about nine-year-old Danny, an African-American orphan, living in the backwoods of Georgia with his grandmother during the 1930's. When, in 1935, his granny dies he heads north with just his knapsack, and one night comes upon a silver train and sneaks aboard. It turns out to be Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington's private train! He and his orchestra are returning to New York with their singer, Ivie Anderson. They take Danny under their wing and he is invited to live with Duke Ellington at his home on Sugar Hill in Harlem. Through Danny's eyes, we meet Duke Ellington up close – his passion for music, his generosity, his energy – as well as his band, some of America's finest musicians. They teach Danny to play the trumpet and to copy Duke's music for the orchestra. The boy travels with the orchestra on a tour down South, which includes an intense and frightening racial incident, and Danny later accompanies the band on their exciting 1939 triumphant European tour. They travel to Paris and London; are briefly stranded in Nazi Germany and saved from a harrowing incident by young German jazz enthusiasts. The trip winds up

with Duke's majestic concert in Sweden celebrating his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. The story is told through flashbacks, by Danny, now in his seventies, living in Ireland.

Said the noted jazz critic Nat Hentoff: "I knew Duke Ellington for over 25 years. Duke was my mentor. The Ellington in this book is the man I knew."

I worked on the screenplay with Mick Carlon, the book's author, and Todd Stoll loved it. So did Nat Hentoff, who liked the screenplay so much he read it three times and enjoyed it more each time.

Because of its musical and cultural values, as well as its entertainment value, I hope this project is of interest to you and that you will consider supporting it with a tax-deductible contribution made payable to: "**Fractured Atlas**", and sent to Imagery Film, Ltd.

I would be pleased to further discuss the project with you.

Sincerely,

Ken Kimmelman  
Producer/Director

*Riding on Duke's Train* is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas a non-profit arts service organization. Contributions for the charitable purposes of *Riding on Duke's Train* must be made payable to "Fractured Atlas" only and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.



Wynton Marsalis, *Artistic Director*  
Greg Scholl, *Executive Director*

December 5, 2012

To whom it may concern;

On behalf of the Education Department at Jazz at Lincoln Center, I am pleased to offer this letter of support to providing resources for the film adaptation by Ken Kimmelman (Imagery Film, Ltd.) of Mick Carlon's delightful and engaging book "Riding on Duke's Train". Our resident orchestra was originally founded with the surviving members of the Duke Ellington Orchestra and we have published almost 100 previously unavailable Ellington scores that are played by thousands of high schools, colleges, and professional bands around the world. It is our mission to educate the larger community about the importance and impact of this great music, and when appropriate and agreed upon, we will provide support as needed.

I look forward to moving forward with this project as we continue the goal of educating every American about the legacy and triumph that is Duke Ellington!

In the Spirit of Swing,

Todd Stoll  
Director  
Education

Jazz at Lincoln Center  
Venue / Frederick P. Rose Hall / Time Warner Center, 5th Floor  
Offices / 3 Columbus Circle, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10019

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## BIOGRAPHY: KEN KIMMELMAN

Ken Kimmelman, award-winning filmmaker, is president of Imagery Film Ltd. (imageryfilm.com), and a consultant on the faculty of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation (AestheticRealism.org), a not-for-profit educational foundation in New York City. He produced films for the United Nations against prejudice and apartheid. He is the recipient of an Emmy Award for his anti-prejudice public service film *The Heart Knows Better*, airing nationally on TV, including CNN & ESPN. The U.S. Department of Defense's Armed Forces Radio/ Television Services has shown it in 58 countries. The New York Yankees have been showing it at their home games at Yankee Stadium since 1995. He also received a 1997-98 Emmy Award for his contributions to *Sesame Street*, and as a director on the animated TV series *Doug*, received Emmy nominations in 1992 & 1993, and a 1993 *Ace Award* nomination.

Mr. Kimmelman's latest film, *Thomas Comma* (2010), the animated adventure of a lonely comma looking for the right sentence, won many awards, including "Best Animation," New York International Film Festival; "Platinum Remi Award," Worldfest Houston International Film Festival. It is being broadcast on PBS stations. *Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana* (2006), based on the 1925 *Nation* prize-winning poem by Eli Siegel, won the "Best US Short," Avignon/New York; "Gold Remi Award;" "Grand Festival Award in the Arts," Berkeley Film Festival, among others, and airs on PBS. His public service film against homelessness, *What Does a Person Deserve?* received the Silver Cindy Award and airs nationally on TV and has been screened in movie theatres.

In 1968 he produced and directed the documentary *People Are Trying to Put Opposites Together* about Eli Siegel, the American poet, critic, and founder of Aesthetic Realism, televised on WNET-TV Channel 13. He also produced promotional films for NBC, political films, theatricals, TV commercials, and a film for New York City Opera's *Beatrix Cenci*, performed at Lincoln Center. He made numerous films for "Sesame Street," including *Elmo's World*, and was a director of the animated TV series *Clifford's Puppy Days*, *Daria* and *The Wild Thornberries*. He also produced films for the Children's Museum of Manhattan. He is currently in collaboration with Jazz at Lincoln Center on an animated feature-length film about Duke Ellington, and is in development on several documentaries: "Fascinating Rhythm: Dr. Jimmy Slyde," about the great tap dancer; a TV series titled "American Women Undercover," and Horn & Hardart's Automat.

Ken Kimmelman taught film and animation at New York University, the School of Visual Arts, teaches Film Studies at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation, and is on the Advisory Board of the High School of Art and Design. At the Modern Language Association's annual conference in Los Angeles in 2011, he gave a 'Special Presentation' titled *Aesthetic Realism and the Literary Cinema of Ken Kimmelman*. In 2006 in the *Artists Talk on Art* series given at SVA, he presented *Aesthetic Realism: The Opposites of Technique and Feeling in Film*. He also recently gave presentations of *Film – and 'The Art of Enjoying Justice'!* at the Masters Program at Syracuse University; the City University of New York; Stanford University, and Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada. His talk, *Can Contempt Be Animated?* was presented at the Flushing Library, and other institutions. He has been a guest lecturer at the Manhattan School of Music, and has presented papers on the lives and work of D.W. Griffith, Charlie Chaplin, Ingmar Bergman, and others. His articles have been published in journals and newspapers across the country. His work was part of the 2006 Whitney Biennial Peace Tower.

As a lecturer on the answer to racism and bullying he has spoken at the Brooklyn Children's Museum, the annual Queens Borough Public Library Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., the Flushing Library, in schools from New York to Oregon, and in colleges and organizations, such as the CSEA (New York City & State Employees Association) educational conference, and workshops at AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees).

A founding member of *Housing: A Basic Human Right* ([housingaright.org](http://housingaright.org)), he participated in presentations at many colleges, including at Boston University, where he was the Keynote speaker; Vassar; NYU; Pace; Dickinson, and at the American Institute of Architects 2000 Convention in Philadelphia, the annual conference of the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness at the University of Maryland; the Campus Outreach Opportunity Conference (COOL) at Harvard University; the Public Policy Institute at North Shore Community College, Lynn, MA, and more.