



**Foreword**

*“What we play is life.”  
– Louis Armstrong*

Forty years ago, a rising star on the national jazz scene elected to make the city of Detroit his home. Marcus Belgrave, master trumpeter, has “played life,” to paraphrase his early inspiration Louis Armstrong, captivating Michiganders, untold audiences across the United States and around the world, and legions of cherished students. In recognition of his essential contributions to American Jazz, to the cultural fabric of Metropolitan Detroit, and to the careers of current and future jazz musicians, The Kresge Foundation is pleased and proud to name Marcus Belgrave the 2009 Kresge Eminent Artist.

Between these covers, we attempt to capture the beat and virtuosity of the man we celebrate and showcase his influence on the ever-unfolding history of Detroit. Three chapters tell his story: Portrait of an Artist, Master of the Music, and Passing on the Tradition. Tucked into the back cover is a CD featuring Marcus on trumpet, playing nine of his favorite tunes. As you read these pages and listen to his CD, it is quickly evident that music is both the lifeblood and the voice of this remarkable man.

The Kresge Foundation established Kresge Arts in Detroit and its Eminent Artist Award to honor local artists of national acclaim who have chosen to pursue their careers as residents of Metropolitan Detroit. The benefits of their presence to our community are invaluable to us all.

On behalf of this community, we salute you, Marcus Belgrave, and thank you.

**Rip Rapson**  
President and CEO  
The Kresge Foundation