

In America

BOB HERBERT

Harmony or Discord?

Martin Luther King's dream was on television last week, and will be on again tonight.

The trumpet virtuoso Wynton Marsalis opened his four-part PBS series last Monday with the words: "I'm Wynton Marsalis and this is my jazz orchestra. We're in the Berkshires of Massachusetts visiting the maestro, Seiji Ozawa, and the Tanglewood Music Center artists. We've brought these two ensembles together to hear how fundamental elements are shared by different musical styles."

The series, a gem, is called "Marsalis on Music." It is designed to give young people an appreciation of both jazz and classical music. The set was a rehearsal barn at Tanglewood. Filled with the music of Tchaikovsky and Ellington and Strayhorn, and an enchanted audience of children 9 to 12 years old, the barn became a place where our most difficult and elusive of dreams could be realized, if only for a moment.

Some of the parents of those children were not yet born when Dr. King, in the simmering heat of August 1963 stood on the speaker's platform at the Lincoln Memorial and told us of his dream and his faith. "With this faith," he said, "we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

I could hear Dr. King as the television cameras scanned the faces of the children listening to Wynton Marsalis. The kids laughed and cheered and looked at one another in astonishment as Mr. Marsalis solved mystery after mystery and offered them one delightful musical insight after another.

"We dance, hop, skip, fly and tickle rhythms through the meter," Mr. Marsalis said. "And the measures are our points of reference."

Boys in baseball caps and girls with long blond hair and children with a million braids, their faces light and dark and in between, their heads and shoulders moving with the music, their knees and feet keeping time, stayed with Mr. Marsalis throughout.

On that long-ago August afternoon, Dr. King dreamed that some day children of all races could play together, learn together, live together. A nation listened as he said, "I have a dream today!"

Today there will be another gather-

bring seemingly disparate elements together — to explore, for example, the sameness of the rhythms that run through music and the human heart. And unlike the effort by Dr. King and his colleagues in 1963, it will not be an attempt "to transform the jangling discords of our nation" by celebrating, in blatant and brave defiance of all the odds, the ideal of brotherhood.

Today's gathering is the opposite of that. It is the theme of inclusiveness turned upside down. Whites need not apply, nor women of any hue. Instead of unity, it has promoted divisiveness on many fronts. As if whites vs. blacks were not conflict enough, Louis Farrakhan has succeeded in pitting blacks against blacks.

It takes no effort to understand why legions of African-American men will march with Mr. Farrakhan today. They encounter precious few welcoming arms elsewhere in society and Mr. Farrakhan is more than happy to receive them.

He understands what A. Philip Randolph told President Kennedy in

King's message upside down.

1963 about young people in the inner city. According to Taylor Branch, in his book "Parting the Waters," Mr. Randolph said to the President: "They have no faith in anybody white. They have no faith in the Negro leadership. They have no faith in God. They have no faith in the government. In other words, they believe the hand of the society is against them."

That absence of faith has grown a hundredfold in the past three decades and Mr. Farrakhan is a master at exploiting it.

There is an epidemic of grief and a shortage of hope among black Americans. But those afflictions will not be healed by marching in the footsteps of a flame thrower who has always wanted to be a big shot and now is getting his wish.

It will be extremely moving to see black men and boys turning out by the hundreds of thousands in a bold demonstration of strength and resolve.

But the taint of Farrakhan will