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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT FIRST  
PERFORMANCE OF RESTART STAGES AT LINCOLN CENTER**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Thank you so much. Thank you, Henry. Thank you, Leah. I want to start by saying it's so beautiful to have culture back in New York City. Do you feel it? Do feel the beauty of this wonderful city coming alive again? Because we live through our artists, our musicians, we live through the plays we go to, all the things that make our city special. First, it's one of the greatest cultural capitals in the world, and it's part of our identity. It's part of what we're proud of as New Yorkers. That's also part of what makes us whole, because arts and culture help us to make sense of the times we're living in. If we ever needed that at any point in our lives, it's now. So, the music you're going to hear is also a part of our healing. It's also part of our hope that we're going to find a way forward.

I want to thank everyone at Lincoln Center for what they've been doing. There's been a tremendous commitment to this city and to the comeback of the city. Henry, Leah, Sarah, all of your colleagues, thank you for what you're doing for New York City today. And thank you for focusing on equity, Leah said it, I want to amplify it. We come back together. The way New York City is going to recover is the way we've always thrived, a city for everyone, a recovery for all of us, no one left out, and Lincoln Center is truly committed to that and to being a place for everyone, and that means a lot, let's thank everyone at Lincoln Center for that commitment.

[Applause]

So, it's World Health Day and how fitting that the first performance here at Lincoln Center celebrates those who saw us through this crisis and inspired us and to every one of you who helped us to survive COVID, we don't have words. This is a literal and true statement, we will never have the right words or enough words to thank you, that we all try in every way we can, to take knowledge that what you did was purely [inaudible]. That you did was beyond what most of us could comprehend doing. The way you stood firm in the face of this great unknown, this crisis with no script, no precedent, and you saved lives and you saw the city through. So, please look around at those around you for a moment, all of whom contributed to our heroic ability as a city to fight all way back from COVID. Everyone here contributed. Please give your neighbor a round of applause.

[Applause]

Lastly, we know we're coming back when the great institutions of this city become a part of our lives again. When the artists we admire, we can see them, hear them again, it's kind of striking

that it takes scarcity and crisis sometimes to wake us up to all that's around us and no one would ever wish for that crisis. But seeing performances come back, allows us to see them in a new light, it allows us to really understand how precious they are. The New York Philharmonic plays a precious role in this city. The very best in the world and the work of these great musicians uplift us, inspires young musicians, helps us to feel the greatness of this place. Even with the sirens in the background. I want to have a decree that there would be no sirens during the performance, okay? I'm going to work on that. But I want to give a very special thank you to the New York Philharmonic. Some of you may have watched on March 14th when we had a memorial service for all those who we lost to COVID, it was very touching. It was near the Brooklyn Bridge and the faces of our loved ones were projected onto the bridge. It was very powerful, moving, and that memorial opened with a performance by the Philharmonic of a beautiful piece named Dectet. For everyone in attendance, I think for so many people watching, it brought us all into the spirit of that moment, of memory, but also of celebration of those we lost and commitment to move forward together, to honor those who are no longer here by moving forward together. So, I want to thank the Philharmonic because that was such a powerful moment, and a moment of giving back to the city, let's thank them for all they do.

[Applause]

And let's count our blessings that we are amongst the very lucky ones to say, welcome back, New York Philharmonic.

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