

## The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad Program Fact Sheet

- Since 2005, Jazz at Lincoln Center has produced the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad*, a touring program.
- Through performances, educational activities, and person-to-person interactions, *The Rhythm Road* promotes mutual respect and understanding with audiences worldwide.
- Since 2005, 150 musicians from 39 ensembles have toured with the program, visiting over 100 countries on five continents.
- Past *Rhythm Road* ensembles have toured Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Fiji, Honduras, Kuwait, Morocco, Nicaragua, Philippines, Republic of the Congo, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Turkey, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe, among other countries.
- Ensembles play jazz, urban/hip hop, and other American roots music such as blues, bluegrass, Cajun, country, gospel, and zydeco.
- For *The Rhythm Road's* 2011 season, 10 musical groups were selected from a pool of 110 applicants from across the United States.
- 2011 bands include *Ari Roland Jazz Quartet, Dennis Luxion/Michael Raynor Quartet, The Earth String Band, Jed Levy Quartet, Kate McGarry Quartet, Legacy, The Melvin Williams Group, Mountain Quickstep, Oscar Williams jr. and the Band of Life, Paul Beaudry & Pathways.*
- Each band will tour a region for four to five weeks in the period from May 2011 to February 2012.
- International tour activities include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, media appearances, and collaborations with local musicians.
- *The Rhythm Road* emphasizes community engagement in addition to performance. Jazz at Lincoln Center develops educational training sessions to prepare ensembles to engage diverse audiences during performances and outreach activities. Attendees range from general audiences to students and professional musicians in a variety of settings.
- In addition to touring internationally, *The Rhythm Road* musicians perform free public concerts in the United States. Jazz at Lincoln Center hosts the ensembles at

Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Frederick P. Rose Hall, its New York City home. In Washington, D.C., the concerts are presented by *National Geographic Live!* at the Grosvenor Auditorium.

- *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad* evolved from Jazz Ambassadors, a program conceived by U.S. Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. in 1955. The program began in 1956 with a tour by Dizzy Gillespie and an 18-piece band that traveled in southern Europe, the Middle East, and south Asia. Other Jazz Ambassadors include Louis Armstrong in 1956, 1960, and 1961; Dave Brubeck in 1958; and Duke Ellington in 1963, 1970, and 1972. The program has evolved over the years, eventually becoming *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad* in 2005.
- For tour dates and more information about the program, please visit [jalc.org/theroad](http://jalc.org/theroad) and [exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html](http://exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html).

**Jazz at Lincoln Center** is dedicated to inspiring and growing audiences for jazz. With the world-renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and a comprehensive array of guest artists, Jazz at Lincoln Center advances a unique vision for the continued development of the art of jazz by producing a year-round schedule of performance, education and broadcast events for audiences of all ages. These productions include concerts, national and international tours, residencies, a jazz hall of fame and concert series, weekly national radio programs, television broadcasts, recordings, publications, an annual high school jazz band competition and festival, a band director academy, jazz appreciation curriculum for students, music publishing, children's concerts, lectures, adult education courses, student and educator workshops and interactive websites. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis, Chairman Lisa Schiff, and Executive Director Adrian Ellis, Jazz at Lincoln Center produces thousands of events each season in its home in New York City, Frederick P. Rose Hall, and around the world. For more information, visit [jalc.org](http://jalc.org).

**U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs** promotes mutual understanding between the United States and other countries through a wide range of academic, cultural, private sector, professional, and sports exchange programs. Through its [Cultural Programs Division](http://exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html), the Bureau supports cultural exchanges that support U.S. foreign policy, foster America's artistic excellence, and demonstrate America's respect and appreciation for other cultures and traditions. The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program presents selected professional American performers on concert tours in countries with limited exposure to live American culture. For more information, visit [exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html](http://exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html).

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