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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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THE RHYTHM ROAD: AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD AFAR TOURS SOUTH AMERICA

October 24-November 24, 2007



AFAR

WHO/WHAT:

AFAR, comprising Demonterious “Double D.” Lawrence on bass, Che “BlackFist” Marshall on drums, Marc Baldwin on guitar and Jason “Jahah” Berry on vocals, kicks off the 2007-08 The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad season with a tour to South America from October 24 to November 24, 2007

The program, produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is designed to foster cultural exchange with audiences worldwide. Between Fall 2007 and Spring 2008, six jazz quartets and four urban music ensembles will visit such priority regions as Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Participating bands were selected from a national pool of applicants through a highly competitive audition process.

International tour activities include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, media outreach and collaborations with local musicians. The program also incorporates free

performances by each quartet hosted by Jazz at Lincoln Center at Dizzy's Club *Coca Cola* in New York and at The National Geographic Society in Washington, DC.

"Cultural diplomacy allows artists and audiences to share in a common experience that reaches beyond differences in culture, religion, language and generations and to connect as people without borders," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Professional and Cultural Exchanges Alina L. Romanowski.

Over the past two years Jazz at Lincoln Center has produced 17 Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad tours visiting 120 cities, in 66 countries, on 5 continents.

"In the historic tradition of such musical alumni as Armstrong, Ellington and Gillespie, these tours focus on diverse geographic audiences and the dynamic interaction born of music. The emphasis on education as well as performance leads to powerful exchange for our audiences and musicians alike," said Susan John, Director of Touring for Jazz at Lincoln Center.

WHEN: October 24-November 24, 2007*

WHERE: PARAGUAY: (October 24-28); COLOMBIA: (October 28-November 2); VENEZUELA: (November 2-7); ECUADOR: (November 7-13); BOLIVIA: (November 13-18); BRAZIL: (November 18-24)*

*Dates and locations subject to change

HOW: For more information on The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program, please visit the Jazz at Lincoln Center website at www.jalc.org/TheRoad/index.html. In addition, you can listen to music and stories about the program for free on **Jazz at Lincoln Center Radio** at <http://www.jalc.org/jazzcast/program.asp?programNumber=205>

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AFAR: is an instrumental hip-hop band with jazz, R&B and gospel influences. Committed to pushing the boundaries of the way hip-hop defines itself, the group focuses on three concepts: live music, unity and education. Through performances, recordings and educational workshops both nationally and abroad (including their participation in Jazz at Lincoln Center's The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad tour to Southern Africa in 2006), the band seeks to spread the message that in this age of electronic music, live instrumental performance remains the source of it all.

Marc Baldwin (guitar), a Raleigh, North Carolina native, has been performing, producing and educating since the age of 14. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in Jazz Performance/Composition at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, he moved to Atlanta, Georgia. He has performed at major sporting events

including games of the National Basketball Association's Atlanta Hawks and Major League Baseball's Atlanta Braves. As a music producer, he has worked with MTV, EA Sports, Fox Sports, Phife of A Tribe Called Quest and DNS. Baldwin currently teaches guitar and bass at Georgia State University, Music Life Studios, Day Jams Summer Camp and the Reach AFAR program.

Jason "Jahah" Berry (vocals, lyrics) is an emcee, singer, songwriter and producer who penned his first song at the age of 15. He has appeared as a guest on albums by GRAMMY® winning rapper, Speech, from the group Arrested Development. Berry's tracks have been featured on television networks including Fox Sports, MTV, VH1, UPN and programs such as The Super Bowl, Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association's Rhythm 'n Rims, as well as, in various video games. Berry also released an independent album entitled *Mama's Only Son* in 2004.

Demonterious "Double D." Lawrence (bass) is a completely self-taught musician. After an early introduction to gospel music in church, he began playing drums with such gospel artists as Viki Winans, Angela Spivey and The Williams Brothers. A few years later, Lawrence adopted the bass in order to expand his musical knowledge and versatility. He has since explored into the genres of hip-hop, R&B, jazz and rock and currently works as a session musician in Atlanta, Georgia.

Che "BlackFist" Marshall (drums) is a resourceful and inventive drummer from Atlanta, Georgia. Marshall taught himself to play on pots and pans before beginning his formal musical training in middle school. After honing his craft in the church, he played professionally with Julie Dexter a.k.a. "The United Kingdom's Queen of Soul."

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Jazz at Lincoln Center is a not-for-profit arts organization dedicated to 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, weekly national radio and television programs, recordings, publications, an annual high school jazz band competition and festival, a band director academy, a jazz appreciation curriculum for children, advanced training through the Juilliard Institute for Jazz Studies, music publishing, children's concerts, lectures, adult education courses and student and educator workshops. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis, Chairman of the Board Lisa Schiff, Executive Director Adrian Ellis and Jazz at Lincoln Center board and staff, Jazz at Lincoln Center will produce hundreds of events during its 2007-08 season. In October 2004, Jazz at Lincoln Center opened Frederick P. Rose Hall - the first-ever performance, education and broadcast facility devoted to jazz. For more information, visit www.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 international educational and exchange programs. Through its Cultural Programs Division, the Bureau supports a variety of cultural exchanges programs 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 of jazz and urban music on concert tours in countries with limited exposure to live American culture. Further information about Cultural Programs of the U.S. Department of State is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/culture/index.htm>.

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For more information please visit <http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad/index.html>

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