

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad?**

The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad, produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is a touring program designed to foster cultural exchange with audiences worldwide.

Through performance, education, and person-to-person interaction, The Rhythm Road program encourages mutual respect and understanding between the United States and the countries visited by its designated musical ensembles. International tour activities include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, media appearances and collaborations with local musicians.

### **What kind of music does The Rhythm Road feature?**

The Rhythm Road showcases America's unique contribution to the world of music. Ensembles chosen to tour in 2009 specialize in jazz, urban/hip hop, blues and bluegrass.

### **Who participates in The Rhythm Road?**

Ten musical groups were selected from a national pool of 89 applicants in a competitive audition process. This year, ensembles have roots in Brooklyn, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Durham, North Carolina; New York, New York; and Portland, Oregon, among other cities.

### **When will the ensembles perform?**

Each ensemble will tour internationally for four to five weeks within the period February to June 2009. Before and after their international tours, The Rhythm Road musicians perform free concerts in the United States. The Rhythm Road Web site, [www.jalc.org/TheRoad](http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad), will list U.S. and international tour dates for each ensemble.

### **Where do The Rhythm Road musicians perform in the United States?**

The Rhythm Road includes two free concert series in the U.S. In New York City, the ensembles perform at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center. In Washington, D.C., artists perform in the Grosvenor Auditorium at the National Geographic Society. Please visit [www.jalc.org/TheRoad](http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad) for a full schedule.

### **What types of educational activities do The Rhythm Road musicians present?**

The Rhythm Road emphasizes community engagement in addition to performance. The 2008-2009 Rhythm Road ensembles will present a variety of interactive, educational presentations.

Education is key to Jazz at Lincoln Center's mission and so The Rhythm Road ensembles are trained by Jazz at Lincoln Center to help them develop skills necessary to work with people of all ages, from general audiences to student or professional musicians in a variety of settings. Education activities range from presentations that encompass music, history and culture as well as interactive musical exchange including master classes, workshops and jam sessions.

**Many of The Rhythm Road musicians have performed as Jazz Ambassadors—a similar program—in years past. What is the relationship between Jazz Ambassadors and The Rhythm Road?**

The Rhythm Road evolved from Jazz Ambassadors. Jazz Ambassadors was a program conceived by U.S. Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. in 1955.

Originally, Jazz Ambassadors was an important part of U.S. diplomacy during the Cold War. It began in 1956 with a tour by Dizzy Gillespie and an 18-piece band that traveled throughout southern Europe, the Middle East, and south Asia. Other Jazz Ambassadors tours featured Louis Armstrong in 1956, 1960 and 1961, Dave Brubeck in 1958, and Duke Ellington in 1963, 1970 and 1972.

In 2005, the name changed to The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad and expanded to its current incarnation, featuring jazz, urban/hip hop and other American roots music such as blues, bluegrass, Cajun, gospel, zydeco and country.

**Who are The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad press contacts?**

To speak with a press liaison, please contact:

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**Where can I find more information about The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad?**

Please visit The Rhythm Road Web site, [www.jalc.org/TheRoad](http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad), for up-to-date international tour dates and locations, U.S. concert details, embassy resources, artist biographies and background information, digital content and next season's audition information for interested musical groups. The U.S. Department of State also provides information and highlights at <http://exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html>.

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