

The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad Fact Sheet

- Since 2005, Jazz at Lincoln Center has produced The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad touring program with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA).
- Through performance, education and person-to-person interaction, The Rhythm Road promotes mutual respect and understanding between the United States and the countries visited by ensembles.
- Over the past three years, 108 musicians from 28 ensembles have toured with the program, visiting 89 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 specialize in jazz, urban/hip hop and other American roots music such as blues, bluegrass, Cajun, country, gospel and zydeco.
- For the 2008-2009 Rhythm Road season, 10 musical groups from a pool of 89 applicants from across the United States were selected. Finalist bands are: Brian Horton Quartet, Chris Byars Quartet, Duende Quartet, Eli Yamin Blues Band, Hoppin' John String Band, Helen Sung & NuGenerations, Roseanna Vitro and the JazzIAm Band, Ryan Cohan Quartet, The Student Loan and Vice Verse All Stars.
- Each band will tour a region for four to five weeks in the period from February to June 2009.
- In addition to touring internationally, The Rhythm Road musicians perform in free concerts in the United States. Jazz at Lincoln Center hosts the ensembles at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola at the Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City. In Washington, D.C. artists perform in the Grosvenor Auditorium at the National Geographic Society.
- The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad evolved from Jazz Ambassadors. Jazz Ambassadors was a program conceived by U.S. Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. in 1955. The Jazz Ambassadors 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 were Louis Armstrong in 1956, 1960, and 1961, Dave Brubeck in 1958, and Duke Ellington in 1963, 1970, and 1972. The program changed over the years, eventually becoming in 2005 The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad.
- For specific tour dates and information, please visit www.jalc.org/theroad

About Jazz at Lincoln Center: 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, yearly hall of fame inductions, weekly national radio and television programs, 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 will produce nearly 3,000 events during its 2008-09 season in its home in New York City, Frederick P. Rose Hall, and around the world.

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 manages 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 on concert tours in countries with limited exposure to live American culture. For more information, visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/cultural>

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