

Frequently Asked Questions

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

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

Through performances, educational activities, and person-to-person interactions, *The Rhythm Road* program encourages mutual respect and understanding around the globe.

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 2011 specialize in various genres of American music including jazz, urban/hip hop and other roots music such as blues, bluegrass and gospel.

Who participates in *The Rhythm Road*?

Ten quartets were selected from a national pool of 110 bands in a competitive audition process, which focused on the artistic integrity and educational ability of each group. Finalists are *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*. Read more about the groups and their tours on jalc.org/TheRoad and exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html.

When will the ensembles tour and perform?

Each ensemble will tour internationally for four to five weeks within the period of May 2011 to February 2012. Before and after their international tours, *The Rhythm Road* musicians will perform in free, public concerts in the United States.

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

The Rhythm Road produces 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., the concerts are presented by National Geographic Live! at the Grosvenor Auditorium. Please visit jalc.org/TheRoad and exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html for a full schedule.

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, 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:

- Anna Kukowski, Burson-Marsteller, for Jazz at Lincoln Center, 212-614-4560, anna.kukowski@bm.com.
- Talley Sergent, U.S. Department of State, 202-632-6043, SergentRT@state.gov.
- Elizabeth Murphy, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, 202-632-9633, murphyEA2@state.gov.

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

Please visit The Rhythm Road website, jalc.org/TheRoad and exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html, for up-to-date international tour dates and locations, U.S. concert details, embassy resources, artist biographies and background information, digital content, and updates on upcoming seasons.

#