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THE 2009 RHYTHM ROAD: AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD PROGRAM ANNOUNCES HOPPIN' JOHN STRING BAND TOUR DATES

**HOPPIN' JOHN STRING BAND CHOSEN FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN TOUR
TO ADVANCE CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

For High Res photos: http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad_noFI/embassy.html#hoppin

Who/What:

Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs announced Hoppin' John String Band will tour Central America with The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program. The bluegrass band from Brooklyn, New York was selected from a pool of 89 applicants to travel abroad and promote cross-cultural understanding. International tour activities include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, media outreach and collaborations with local musicians.

Where/When:

Hoppin' John String Band will tour Nicaragua (April 17-22), Belize (April 23-28), Honduras (April 29-May 4), El Salvador (May 5-9) and Guatemala (May 10-16).

**Dates and locations subject to change*

How:

For more information visit **The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad** at www.jalc.org/TheRoad. In addition, you can listen to music and stories about the program free of charge on Jazz at Lincoln Center Radio at <http://www.jalc.org/jazzcast/program.asp?programNumber=262> and <http://www.jalc.org/jazzcast/program.asp?programNumber=205>

Sponsorship:

The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program is made possible with underwriting support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State.

For more information:

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Hoppin' John String Band

Brooklyn, New York

HOPPIN' JOHN STRING BAND performs and teaches music deeply rooted in the ballads, fiddle tunes, and traditions of the Appalachian Mountains of the United States. Through story and song, Hoppin' John String Band brings alive the experience of the American laborer, farmer and people from all walks of life. This music is made for bringing people together to sing, dance and to celebrate life. Comprised of two fiddles, guitar, banjo and bass, this band is sure to bring you to your feet and inspire you to sing along.

Ensemble members have hosted workshops on these traditional art forms internationally. With strong roots in Brooklyn, New York, this quartet actively performs for and educates local audiences of all ages. Constantly creating and innovating, the ensemble also writes original tunes inspired by classic melodies. "This music communicates the joy of being alive," says vocalist and fiddle player Alicia Jo Rabins. "It is music for stomping along with, for dancing and clapping. In its stories, American history comes through."

Alicia Jo Rabins (fiddle and voice) brings the history of traditional American music to audiences nationally and internationally. With a flair for bluegrass, old-time, Cajun and klezmer music, Rabins has toured countries such as Guatemala, England, Israel, France, Poland and Canada. In addition to performing, Rabins teaches the culture and technique of traditional American music to children and adults. Rabins was a founding member of The Mammals and is the fiddler in Golem, New York City's acclaimed klezmer-punk band. In 2003 she released *Sugar Shack*, a solo album of traditional American fiddle music. Her Brooklyn-based rock band, Girls in Trouble, will release their debut album of songs about women in the Old Testament on JDub Records in fall 2009. Rabins received a bachelor's degree from Barnard College and she has studied at the Peabody Conservatory.

Sarah Alden (fiddle and voice), a Brooklyn, New York resident, is an avid performer and community educator. In addition to her work with the Hoppin' John String Band, Alden has worked with Dan Zanes, The Woes and Jose Flatfix Stringband. For five years, she toured internationally with the Luminescent Orchestrïi and hosted workshops in Romanian and Hungarian violin. Alden earned a bachelor's degree in music from Brooklyn College and has travelled to Eastern Europe, The Balkans and the Appalachian region of the United States to study and collect traditional folk music.

Sean Condrón (guitar, banjo and mandolin), born and raised in Queens, New York, is skilled in many instruments. Condrón has performed with several ensembles, such as The Wooster Street Trolley Jazz Band, Tin Pan and his own Brooklyn Rhythm Masters. A spirited instructor, Condrón teaches in New York Public Schools through the program CREATE!, and works with other specialty education programs through Hospital, Inc. Condrón is the musical director of the Bindlestiff Family Cirkus Wild West Jamboree. In addition to his work in the tri-state area, Condrón has toured Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia, Russia, Guatemala, Belize, Canada and Mexico. Condrón has studied at New York University, S.U.N.Y. Purchase and the Manhattan School of Music.

Taylor Bergren-Chrisman (bass) is accomplished in many musical forms, including klezmer, Pan-Latin American and traditional jazz. He has toured internationally through Canada, Japan, Poland, Spain and Taiwan. In New York, Bergren-Chrisman has instructed students in bass technique and music theory, among other things. Bergren-Chrisman attended Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the Centre Informatique Musicale in Paris, France.

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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 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 www.jalc.org.

U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

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.

For more information, visit

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/culture/index.htm>.

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