

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:      APRIL 1, 2009**



**THE 2009 RHYTHM ROAD: AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD  
PROGRAM ANNOUNCES CHRIS BYARS QUARTET TOUR DATES**  
*CHRIS BYARS QUARTET CHOSEN FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND NORTH AFRICAN TOUR TO  
ADVANCE CULTURAL EXCHANGE*

For High Res photos: [http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad\\_noFl/embassy.html#byars](http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad_noFl/embassy.html#byars)

**Who/What:**

Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs announced the Chris Byars Quartet will tour the Middle East and North Africa with **The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad** program. The jazz quartet from New York, NY 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:**

Chris Byars Quartet will tour Bahrain (Apr. 1-5), Jordan (Apr. 6-10), Oman (Apr. 11-15), Kuwait (Apr. 16-19), Syria (Apr. 20-23), Morocco (Apr. 24-29)

*\*Dates and locations subject to change*

**How:**

For more information visit **The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad** at [www.jalc.org/TheRoad](http://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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**CHRIS BYARS QUARTET's** rhythms evoke Manhattan's bustling Times Square in its heyday. This New York-based quartet generates new, inventive music inspired by the 1950s Bop tradition—it has spent years developing relationships with and learning from musicians who thrived during the period.

The Chris Byars Quartet returns to The Rhythm Road after touring to the Balkans, Mediterranean and Central European regions with the program in February 2008. Three months later, the quartet was invited back to Cyprus to conduct an 11-day intensive workshop entitled "Jazz Futures," which took place in the United Nations Buffer Zone in the divided capital of Nicosia and featured musicians of both Cypriot communities. The Chris Byars Quartet has made it a practice to study the music and traditions of their touring regions while also continuing exploration of such musicians as Gigi Gryce. Gryce, an inspiration to the ensemble, was an American jazz musician who converted to Islam in the 1950s.

**Chris Byars (saxophone)** was born in New York City to a musical family. He began his career in opera and presently enjoys a varied career as a saxophonist, educator, composer and arranger. Winner of the Tanne Foundation Award and three Chamber Music America grants for education and composition, he combines a study of past jazz greats such as Lucky Thompson and Gigi Gryce with a deliberate thrust towards creation of new sounds in jazz.

**Ari Roland (bass)** grew up in downtown New York's Greenwich Village and benefited from early exposure to jazz through his proximity to the Village Vanguard, the iconic jazz club, as well as The Jazz Cultural Theater. He has played with many of today's most important jazz artists, including Barry Harris and Lou Donaldson. Ari has led cultural tours for the U.S. State Department in Russia and Central Asia, recording the album *Jazz Patterns* with the Turkmen-American Jazz Quintet in 2007. His recent CD release *And So I Lived in Old New York* has received critical acclaim.

**John Mosca (trombone)** is a native New Yorker, Juilliard graduate and musical director for the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, one of the world's most celebrated and historically significant large jazz ensembles. His extensive career has allowed him to share the bandstand with assorted musical luminaries in countries across the world. He has performed with Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan, Joe Williams, Barry Harris and Jimmy Heath. Tours for the U.S.

State Department have brought him to Egypt, Tunisia, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Montenegro and the Slovak Republic.

**Stefan Schatz (drums)** was born in New York City. His diverse talents have led him to perform with jazz greats Dakota Staton, Jon Hendricks, Arnie Lawrence, Herman Foster and Teddy Charles, in addition to Isaac Mizrahi, the Mark Morris Dance Company and the Broadway production of Bombay Dreams. He recently led a U.S. State Department-sponsored jazz educational tour to the Palestinian Territories.

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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 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. For more information, visit [www.jalc.org](http://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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