

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:      JANUARY 29, 2009**



**THE 2009 RHYTHM ROAD: AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD  
PROGRAM ANNOUNCES VICE VERSE ALL STARS TOUR DATES  
VICE VERSE ALL STARS CHOSEN FOR AFRICAN TOUR  
TO ADVANCE CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

For High Res photos: [http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad\\_noFI/embassy.html#vice](http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad_noFI/embassy.html#vice)

**Who/What:**

Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs announced Vice Verse All Stars will tour to Africa with The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program. The urban/ hip-hop group from 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:**

Vice Verse All Stars will tour Mauritania (Feb. 7-Feb. 12), Togo (Feb. 14-18), Cote d'Ivoire (Feb. 19-23), Mali (Feb. 24-27), Burkina Faso (Feb. 28-Mar. 2), and Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mar. 3 - 9).

*\*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:**

Bridget Wilson, Associate, Public Relations, Jazz at Lincoln Center (212) 258.9868, [bwilson@jalc.org](mailto:bwilson@jalc.org); Maury Donahue, (212) 614-4966, [maury.donahue@bm.com](mailto:maury.donahue@bm.com); David C. Grier, U.S. Department of State, (202) 203.7007, [GrierDC@State.gov](mailto:GrierDC@State.gov).

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**Vice Verse All Stars**

*Spring Valley, New York*

**VICE VERSE ALL STARS** crafts a timeless urban sound that conveys the passion of hip-hop music. Featuring rapping, singing, break dancing and beat boxing, this ensemble creates strong, conscious rhymes that bring hip-hop back to its essence. Vice Verse All Stars draws from greats such as The Roots, De La Soul, Jill Scott, Erykah Badu and others, and it offers audiences an authentic non-commercialized, diverse experience with the genre.

During The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad, Vice Verse All Stars looks forward to spreading hip-hop's message. Two musicians return from previous Rhythm Road tours. Members of Vice Verse All Stars have roots in The Bronx and Brooklyn and frequently perform throughout New York City venues.

**Chris Rel (voice)**, born in the Bronx and raised in Spring Valley, New York, has been rapping since age 12. In 2007, Rel participated in The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad by teaching hip-hop workshops and performing in cities throughout India, Malaysia and Burma. In addition, Rel has performed at the Redstar in London and the Swedish Music Festival in Malmo. Rel's rhymes and writing have been influenced by the likes of De La Soul, Ras Kass and The Roots. Rel served with the National Guard and he attended Stony Brook University.

**Denny Jackson (voice)** has been a solo R&B artist since 1995. Jackson has appeared at Long Island University, Sultana NYC and the 2007 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street All Star Game. In 2007, Jackson travelled to India, Malaysia and Burma for the Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad tours. Jackson recorded *The Voice of Truth* with Chris Rel.

**OMNI Blaize (voice/guitar)**, a Brooklyn, New York native, is a skilled keyboardist, guitarist, bassist, singer, emcee and producer. Currently, OMNI Blaize is the lead for 2 Shades Darker. While working with the hip-hop group KENEK, he performed at Nuyorican Café, Fat Baby and Solomon's Porch, among other venues. He has produced several studio recordings. From 2001 to 2008, OMNI Blaize was a science teacher in New York City's Department of Education.

**DJ PrettyNYCE (DJ)** spins at several venues in New York City and Brooklyn, including Club Fahrenheit, Club Vesta, Club Secrets, Club Dv8, Ragtop, Elite Ark and The Lab.

In addition, he has appeared on 99.3 Star FM. DJ PrettyNYCE is influenced by the big musical sounds from Jamaica and the Caribbean.

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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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