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The Kelley Johnson Quartet

WHO/WHAT: The Kelley Johnson Quartet, comprised of **Kelley Johnson** on vocals, **John Hansen** on piano, **Nathan Peck** on bass and **Jon Wikan** on drums, will tour with the 2007-2008 Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad season produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department. Over the past two years, the program has presented 17 tours visiting 120 cities, in 66 countries, on 5 continents.

WHEN: January 25 - February 24, 2008*

WHERE: **PANAMA:** (January 25-28); **NICARAGUA:** (January 29-February 2); **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:** (February 3-8); **SURINAM:** (February 9-13); **TRINIDAD and TOBAGO:** (February 14-19); **HONDURAS:** (February 20-24)*

*Dates and locations subject to change

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

BACKGROUND:

The program, produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is designed to foster cultural exchange with audiences worldwide. Between Fall 2007 and Spring 2008, six jazz quartets and four urban music ensembles will visit regions including Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Participating bands were selected from a national pool of applicants in a competitive audition process.

International tour activities include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, media outreach and collaborations with local musicians. The program also incorporates free performances by each quartet hosted by Jazz at Lincoln Center at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* (January 19 & 26, March 29, April 19, May 3, 2008) in New York and at The National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C (January 17 & 24, March 27, April 17, May 1, 2008).

"Cultural diplomacy allows artists and audiences to share in a common experience that reaches beyond differences in culture, religion, language and generations and to connect as people without borders," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Professional and Cultural Exchanges Alina L. Romanowski.

"In the historic tradition of such musical alumni as Armstrong, Ellington, and Gillespie, these tours focus on diverse geographic audiences and the dynamic interaction born of music. The emphasis on education as well as performance leads to powerful exchange for our audiences and musicians alike," said Susan John, Director of Touring for Jazz at Lincoln Center.

CONTACT:

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THE KELLEY JOHNSON QUARTET draws from the Great American Songbook and modern jazz repertoire, reworking standards in a creative and energetic way to feature the solo work of each member of the band. The quartet has recorded three albums in New York City, including *Live at Birdland* and the critically acclaimed *Music is the Magic*. They have

performed throughout the world, including a U.S. State Department sponsored tour to Russia and Central Asia in 2004.

Kelley Johnson (vocals) graduated magna cum laude from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and has been performing and teaching ever since. Inspired by players like Manty Ellis, Bryan Lynch and Melvin Rhyne, Johnson began her career in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and later relocated to Seattle, Washington where she studied with jazz vocal legend Mark Murphy. The winner of the 2002 International Jazzconnect Vocal Jazz Competition, Johnson has also been named “Best Northwest Jazz Vocalist” by *Earshot Jazz* magazine. She is currently working on her fourth album while teaching at both Cornish College of the Arts and Musicworks Northwest.

John Hansen (piano) grew up in Seattle and developed his craft on the bandstand with local luminaries including Chuck Metclaf, Jan Stentx and Julian Priester. A committed educator, Hansen mentored numerous young musicians over the years and continues to teach in the Seattle area. He has played and recorded with some of the leading ensembles on the Northwest jazz scene including the Jay Thomas Quartet, the Jim Knapp Orchestra and The Marriott Brothers. Hansen has also performed at renowned clubs and performing arts centers across the country including Birdland, The Jazz Standard, Blues Alley, Tula’s and the Kennedy Center as well as international festivals in France, Japan, Korea and Russia.

Nathan Peck (bass) decided to become a bassist at age 14 and was playing professionally with his family just one year later. Based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania during the early part of his career, he performed regularly with musicians such as Roger Humphries, Joe Harris and Jimmy Ponder. Peck also had the great fortune to play with visiting jazz greats including James Moody, Stanley Turrentine and Paquito D’Rivera. After an extensive tour with Maynard Ferguson and His Big Bop Nouveau Band, Peck relocated to New York City, where he has had the privilege to play with artists such as Bonnie Tyler, Victor Jones and Melton Mustafa. He is currently a full-time musician, composer and bandleader and can be seen performing all over New York City.

Jon Wikan (drums) started playing drums as a high school student in Seattle, Washington. He went on to attend Central Washington University but took time off to tour with the legendary Mills Brothers and Herb Jeffries and later with Ernestine Anderson. During his travels he studied with drum masters such as Chico Hamilton, Carl Allen and Jeff Hamilton. He later returned to Seattle and worked with multi-horn man Jay Thomas, Bill Ramsay and composer James Knapp. Wikan recently moved to New York and has since played with Geoff Keezer, Mark Murphy and GRAMMY® award winning New York Voices, among others. He currently teaches at The New School University while composing music for various large and small groups.

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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, weekly national radio and television programs, recordings, publications, an annual high school jazz band competition and festival, a band director academy, a jazz appreciation curriculum for children, advanced training through the Juilliard Institute for Jazz Studies, music publishing, children’s concerts, lectures, adult education courses and student and educator workshops. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis Jazz at Lincoln Center will produce nearly 2,000 events during its

2007-08 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 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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For more information please visit <http://www.jalc.org/TheRoad>

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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.

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