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**THE 2010 RHYTHM ROAD: AMERICAN MUSIC ABROAD
PROGRAM ANNOUNCES
LITTLE JOE MCLERRAN QUARTET TOUR DATES
LITTLE JOE MCLERRAN QUARTET CHOSEN FOR MIDDLE EAST TOUR TO PROMOTE
CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

[For High Resolution Photos](#)

Who/What:

Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs announced that the Little Joe McLerran Quartet will tour to the Middle East with *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad* program. The blues quartet from Tulsa, Oklahoma, was selected from a pool of 132 applicants to travel abroad and promote cross-cultural understanding. International tour activities will include public concerts, master classes, lecture-demonstrations, workshops, jam sessions, collaborations with local musicians and media outreach.

As part of *The Rhythm Road*, Little Joe McLerran Quartet will also perform two concerts in the United States. In Washington, D.C., the National Geographic Society will present the first concert on June 3, 2010 at 7:15pm at the Grosvenor Auditorium, 1600 M St. NW. The second concert will be presented by Jazz at Lincoln Center on June 5, 2010 at 2pm at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of

Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Where/When:

Little Joe McLerran Quartet will tour to Bahrain (March 29 – April 2), Saudi Arabia (April 3 – 11), Kuwait (April 12 – 15), Oman (April 16 – 21).

**Dates and locations subject to change*

U.S. Concert Dates:

- Washington, D.C.: June 3, 2010 at 7:15pm at the Grosvenor Auditorium, 1600 M St. NW
- New York City: June 5, 2010 at 2pm at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center

How:

For more information visit *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad* at jalc.org/TheRoad, now with additional elements including featured countries, bands, stories from the road, and more.

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.

Jazz at Lincoln Center proudly acknowledges *National Geographic Live* as the Washington, D.C. concert series partner. WPFW-FM is the media sponsor for this series.

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Little Joe McLerran Quartet is a collective of seasoned musicians drawn from the ranks of Tulsa's finest, who came together specifically for *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad*. The ensemble brings blues to life through the study and performance of this unique American roots genre, and all players are deeply committed to keeping the blues alive and bringing the music to diverse audiences. Little Joe McLerran Quartet believes that blues explores music from many cultures and is filled with possibilities. In its unique approach, this ensemble presents blues and American roots as a "Soup Recipe," which has been stirred, mixed, handed down, and revised by generations of people who brought their music from all over the world to America. Little Joe McLerran Quartet members describe their style as simple, supportive, inspired and, above all else, inventive.

Joseph McLerran (guitar) is a guitarist from Boulder, Colorado, who now calls Tulsa home. McLerran started playing the guitar at the age of eight, and has since released four albums: *Son Piedmont and the Blues Krewe*, *The Hard Way*, *Live at Last* and *I Believe I'll Make a Change*. This genuine, dedicated musician has devoted his life to learning everything he can about the blues. McLerran tours and plays at music

festivals around the country and throughout Europe. McLerran won first place at the 25th Annual International Blues Challenge in Memphis in February 2009, competing against 63 solo/duo acts from around the world.

David Berntson (harmonica) plays the diatonic and chromatic harmonica in the blues style, and describes himself as both musician and passionate educator. Berntson has played the blues harmonica for over 40 years and he is the recipient of the 2006 “Keeping the Blues Alive in Education” award from the Blues Foundation. In addition to performing and recording, Berntson regularly presents blues education and harmonica workshops in schools and at festivals throughout the United States and Europe. Berntson resides in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Robbie Mack (bass) is an acclaimed bassist and songwriter from Boulder, Colorado. A musician with many talents, Mack began as a drummer in the third grade school band before taking up the guitar in junior high. He finally discovered his niche as a bassist in 1960. Throughout an impressive 50-year career, Mack has achieved three major label recording contracts and toured internationally in the 1960s with the Astronauts (RCA Records). Mack gives private guitar lessons, and currently resides in Sapulpa, Oklahoma.

Ron McRorey (drums) is a drummer and percussionist from Tulsa, Oklahoma. He started playing at the age of nine and has since developed a style that is a mix of soul, roots, blues, and rock & roll. He has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Woodstock ten year reunion, and worked with an array of prominent musicians including Rick Danko, Paul Butterfield, Asleep at the Wheel, and Hank Ballard. McRorey was a 2007 regional winner in the band category in the International Blues Challenge, and he has played internationally in Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and at the Dutch and French Blues Festivals.

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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, a jazz hall of fame and concert series, weekly national radio programs, television broadcasts, 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 and classes, 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 thousands of events each season in its home in New York City, Frederick P. Rose Hall, and around the world. For more information, visit 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 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 on concert tours in countries with limited exposure to live American culture. For more information, visit exchanges.state.gov/cultural/rhythm.html.

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