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## **2005 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Guitar Competition** *September 18th and 19th*

*Sponsored by General Motors*

**Hosted by Herbie Hancock and Billy Dee Williams**  
**Special Tribute to George Benson**

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz will present its 18th annual Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition and Gala Concert, sponsored by General Motors, in Washington, DC on September 18-19, 2005. The Competition will feature 10 of the world's most outstanding young jazz guitarists who will be competing for over \$60,000 in scholarships and prizes. The Semifinals will be held on Sunday, September 18th at 1:00 p.m. at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, Baird Auditorium (10th St. & Constitution Avenue, NW). The Finals will be held on Monday, September 19th at 7:30 p.m. in the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater, where three finalists will perform and a group of Jazz All-Stars will pay tribute to legendary guitarist George Benson.

The Competition, compared in stature to that of the classical Tchaikovsky and Van Cliburn Competitions, is the most prestigious jazz competition in the world, and is widely known for discovering the jazz stars of tomorrow. It has launched the careers of vocalists Jane Monheit and Tierney Sutton, saxophonist Joshua Redman, and pianists Marcus Roberts and Jacky Terrasson, to name a few. These artists and dozens of others from past competitions have forged successful careers as performing and recording artists as well as music educators. They have earned worldwide respect and media attention while helping to preserve the legacy of jazz.

Each year the Competition shines a spotlight on a different instrument. Past Competitions have featured piano, bass, drums, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, and vocals. This year's young aspiring jazz guitarists will be reviewed by an illustrious panel of judges including renowned jazz artists Bill Frisell, Earl Klugh, Russell Malone, Pat Martino, and John Pizzarelli. Accompanying the guitarists will be a jazz combo featuring Chris Potter on tenor saxophone, James Genus on bass, Terri Lyne Carrington on drums, and Bob James on piano, who is also serving as Musical Director.



## **Page Two – 2005 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Guitar Competition**

The Hosts for the evening will be Herbie Hancock and Billy Dee Williams and they will be joined by Special Guest, Quincy Jones. Following the presentation of the three finalists, the event will feature a performance by this year's winner of the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Composers Competition, sponsored by BMI. The \$10,000 Composers Award is presented annually to the young, aspiring composer who best demonstrates originality, creativity, and excellence in jazz composition. This year's Composers Competition is devoted to compositions featuring creativity in jazz guitar. BMI is the world's largest performing rights organization, representing the work of Thelonious Monk and hundreds of thousands of other composers of all genres of music.

The second half of the event will feature performances by the guitar competition judges. They will be joined by Herbie Hancock, Thelonious Monk, Jr., Terence Blanchard, Wayne Shorter, Clark Terry, Jimmy Heath, Bob James, and others. The Institute's Maria Fisher Founder's Award will be presented to internationally acclaimed guitarist George Benson for his enormous contributions to jazz guitar.

The competition will be taped as a documentary for Black Entertainment Television and the BET Jazz cable network. The documentary will feature performances by the semifinalists, backstage interviews with the finalists and judges, and footage from the post-competition reception.

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz ([www.monkinstitute.org](http://www.monkinstitute.org)) was established in 1986 in memory of the renowned jazz pianist and composer. Its mission is to preserve America's legacy of jazz through performance and education. The Institute offers the world's most promising young musicians college level training by America's jazz masters and presents school-based jazz education programs for young people around the world. Additionally, the Institute provides scholarships, performance opportunities, and worldwide recognition to gifted young musicians through its many jazz education programs. The Institute's most recent project is *Jazz in America: The National Jazz Curriculum*, a free Internet-based curriculum for 5th, 8th and 11th grade public school students, located at [www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org).

Tickets for the September 18th Semifinals are free of charge and will be distributed at Baird Auditorium by the Smithsonian Associates (202-357-3030) on a first-come, first-served basis beginning 90 minutes prior to the 1:00 p.m. starting time.

Tickets for the September 19th Finals at the Kennedy Center Eisenhower Theater may be purchased at the Kennedy Center box office, by calling Instant Charge at 202-467-4600 or on the web at [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).

For information about Gala tickets, which include a VIP post-performance dinner and party, please call the Institute at 202-364-7272.