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2006 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition

Sponsored by GMAC

and

20th Anniversary Gala Concert

Made possible by General Motors and Northrop Grumman

Hosted by Quincy Jones, Phylicia Rashad, and Billy Dee Williams
September 16 - 17

Washington, DC – As part of its 20th Anniversary Celebration weekend, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz will present the 2006 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition and 20th Anniversary Gala Concert in Washington, DC on September 16-17, 2006. The Competition will showcase the talents of 12 of the world's most gifted, young jazz pianists. They will travel to Washington, DC from all corners of the globe to compete for scholarships and the prestige of winning this internationally acclaimed award.

The Semifinals will be held on Saturday, September 16th at 1:00 p.m. at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, Baird Auditorium (10th Street & Constitution Avenue NW). The Finals will be held on Sunday, September 17th at 7:00 p.m. in the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater. Three finalists will vie for a \$20,000 first place scholarship, \$10,000 second place scholarship, and \$5,000 third place scholarship. A stellar group of Jazz All-Stars will perform in celebration of the Institute's major accomplishments in furthering jazz performance and education over the past two decades.

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 pianists Marcus Roberts and Jacky Terrasson, saxophonist Joshua Redman, and vocalists Jane Monheit and Tierney Sutton, 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 and perpetuate America's legacy of jazz.

Each year the Competition shines a spotlight on a different instrument. Past Competitions have featured the saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, vocals, piano, bass, and drums. This year's young aspiring jazz pianists will perform for an illustrious panel of judges, including renowned jazz pianists Institute Chairman **Herbie Hancock**, **Andrew Hill**, **Danilo Perez**, **Renee Rosnes**, **Billy Taylor**, and **Randy Weston**. Bassist **Rodney Whitaker** and drummer **Carl Allen** will accompany the finalists.



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The evening's Hosts will include **Quincy Jones, Phylicia Rashad, and Billy Dee Williams**. Following the three finalists, the audience will be treated to a special performance of the winning composition of the 2006 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. The 2006 Composers Competition is devoted to jazz compositions that feature the piano. BMI is one of the world's largest performing rights organizations, representing the works of Thelonious Monk and more than 300,000 composers, songwriters, and music publishers in all genres of music.

The second half of the Competition finals will feature performances by some of the greatest jazz artists on the scene today, including **Patti Austin, Terence Blanchard, James Carter, Ron Carter, T.S. Monk, John Patitucci, Danilo Perez, and Wayne Shorter**, as well as past Competition winners saxophonist **Joshua Redman** and vocalist **Jane Monheit**. Keyboardist and producer **George Duke** will serve as the Musical Director.

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

The 20th Anniversary Gala Concert is made possible by General Motors and Northrop Grumman. The 2006 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Piano Competition is sponsored by GMAC.

Air transportation is provided by United, the Official Airline of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz.

Ticket Information

Tickets for the September 16th 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 17th 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 online at www.kennedy-center.org. For information about Gala tickets, which include a VIP post-performance dinner and cast party, please call the Institute at 202.364.7272.

About the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz

Established in 1986 in memory of the renowned jazz pianist and composer, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz (www.monkinstitute.org) celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. 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 public 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.