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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH  
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN  
“JAZZ IN AMERICA” EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

With generous support from Northrop Grumman and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, a non-profit educational organization, will introduce its *Jazz in America: The National Jazz Curriculum* to thousands of public school students in Mississippi. *Jazz in America* ([www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org)) is the Institute's Internet-based jazz curriculum that is being made available to all 5th, 8th, and 11th grade public school students in the United States. It is the first jazz curriculum to use state-of-the-art Internet technology and is offered free of charge on a national basis.

As part of Black History Month festivities, the tour will consist of a series of jazz assembly programs, jazz band clinics, and teacher training workshops. Each assembly program will feature a five-piece jazz combo, led by internationally renowned saxophonist Bobby Watson, a presentation called “What is Jazz?” by J.B. Dyas, Curriculum Project Director, and a question-and-answer session with students. In addition, jazz drummer Thelonious Monk, Jr., Chairman of the Institute's Board of Directors, will make remarks about jazz and its role as America's greatest musical contribution to the world.

**Members of the press are invited to attend any of the following events:**

**Monday, February 7: Callaway High School, 601 Beasley Road, Jackson**

9:30-10:30am: Assembly Program for 1,000 students in the auditorium

10:45-11:45am: Jazz Band Clinic in auditorium

1:00-2:00pm: Assembly Program for music students from Northwest, Chastain, and Siwell Road middle schools

**Tuesday, February 8: Jim Hill High School, 2185 Fortune Street, Jackson**

9:15-10:00am: Assembly Program for 800 students in auditorium

10:15-11:15am: Jazz Band Clinic in band hall

**Wednesday, February 9: Gulfport High School, 100 Perry Street, Gulfport**

9:15-10:15am: Assembly Program for 800 students in auditorium

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## **Thelonious Monk Institute Jazz Education Programs in Mississippi – Page Two**

### **Members of the press are invited to attend any of the following events (continued):**

#### **Thursday, February 10: Pascagoula / Gautier / Hattiesburg**

Pascagoula High School, 1716 Tucker Avenue, Pascagoula

8:30-9:30am: Assembly Program for 1,200 students in gymnasium

10:00-11:00am: Jazz Band Clinic in band hall

Gautier Middle School, 1920 Graveline Road, Gautier

1:15-2:15pm: Assembly Program for 400 middle and high school students

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg

7:30-9:30pm: Concert in Bennett Auditorium during All-South Honor Jazz Band Clinic

#### **Friday, February 11: Hattiesburg High School, 301 Hutchinson Avenue, Hattiesburg**

8:30-9:30am: Jazz Band Clinic in band hall

#### **About the Curriculum**

The *Jazz in America* curriculum ([www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org)) presents an introduction to jazz as it evolved in America and spread throughout the world. It defines the characteristics of jazz, explains how to listen to the music, details the many styles of jazz, and highlights some of the musicians who have advanced the art form. The curriculum also focuses on the development of jazz in America by highlighting the major cities that influenced the music. Further, each lesson plan explores the social, economic, and political contexts within which jazz evolved. In addition to the lesson plans, the curriculum website includes a teacher's manual, assessments, and a comprehensive Jazz Resource Library.

#### **About the Musicians**

The tour will be headlined by internationally renowned saxophonist and recording artist Bobby Watson ([www.bobbywatson.com](http://www.bobbywatson.com)), who rose to prominence as a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, and will feature vocalist Lisa Henry, a winner of the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition. The members of the rhythm section are Derek Nievergelt, bass; Otis Brown III, drums; and Richard Johnson, piano. Brown attended the Thelonious Monk Institute Jazz Colony in Aspen, Colorado in the summer of 1999. Nievergelt and Johnson are 1999 graduates of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance at the University of Southern California, a specialized graduate level college program that enables the world's most gifted young musicians to study tuition-free with the greatest living jazz legends including Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, and Clark Terry.

#### **About the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz**

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz ([www.monkinstitute.org](http://www.monkinstitute.org)) was established in 1986 with a mission 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 other jazz education programs.