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ARTISTS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE GRACE THE STAGE IN ISTANBUL FOR INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY 2013

EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN 196 NATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Istanbul, Turkey – In an unprecedented series of events worldwide, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz joined together to celebrate jazz as a universal language of freedom on April 30th. With events taking place in every country on the planet, International Jazz Day 2013 culminated in an evening concert at Istanbul's Hagia Irene that was viewed live by millions around the world and featured pianists Herbie Hancock, John Beasley (Musical Director), George Duke, Robert Glasper, Ramsey Lewis, Keiko Matsui and Eddie Palmieri; vocalists Ruben Blades, Al Jarreau, Milton Nascimento, Dianne Reeves, Esperanza Spalding (who also played bass) and Joss Stone; trumpeters Terence Blanchard, Hugh Masekela and Imer Demirel; bassists James Genus, Marcus Miller and Ben Williams; drummers Terri Lyne Carrington and Vinnie Colaiuta; guitarists Bilal Karaman, John McLaughlin, Lee Ritenour and Joe Louis Walker; saxophonists Dale Barlow, Igor Butman, Branford Marsalis, Wayne Shorter and Liu Yuan; clarinetists Anat Cohen and Husnu Senlendirici; violinist Jean-Luc Ponty; Pedrito Martinez on percussion; tabla master Zakir Hussain; trombonist Alevtina Polyakova; and special guest Martin Luther King III.

International Jazz Day brings together communities, schools and groups from across the globe to celebrate jazz, learn about its roots and highlight its important role as a form of communication that transcends differences. In partnership with the Republic of Turkey, the all-star evening concert was held at Istanbul's famed Hagia Irene. Dating back to the 4th century, the Hagia Irene, located in the outer courtyard of the Topkapi Palace – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – is regarded as an international treasure for music lovers because of its brilliant atmosphere and enchanting acoustics. In addition to being streamed live worldwide at www.jazzday.com and via the UNESCO, United Nations, U.S. State Department and Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz websites, the concert was also taped for future broadcast on public television stations around the world.

Herbie Hancock said, “Using jazz as a tool, I have faith that the music—either through playing an instrument, learning about its rich cultural history, or listening to the millions of recordings made over the past century— will demonstrate that barriers can be broken, unity can be achieved, new forms of expression can be created, and a dialogue between cultures can begin. From my decades long career as a jazz musician, I know first hand that inventive ideas can achieve the impossible, transform humanity, and make productive changes at the grass roots level.” “Jazz shows the wealth that rises from diversity,” remarked Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO. “This music draws strength from a rich mix of peoples and cultures, and it is woven today into the fabric of every society, played across the world, enjoyed everywhere.”

As the Global Host City for International Jazz Day 2013, Istanbul also featured concerts, lectures, round tables, workshops, and Q&A sessions with high-profile educators and musicians throughout the city. All of these daytime programs were free and open to the public with panel discussions focusing on “Jazz and Freedom,” “Jazz and Women” and “Jazz Festivals and the Art of Promoting Jazz.” Lectures included “The History of Jazz” and “Dave Brubeck and Diplomacy.”

In addition to the events taking place in this year’s host city, thousands of events in 196 countries in every region and continent of the world and all 50 of the United States celebrated International Jazz Day. Kigali, Rwanda presented a “Kigali Jazz 4 Peace” event at the MTN Center Building in Nyarutarama with a film screening and concerts. In Brazil, the city of Sao Paulo celebrated by organizing a special show at Jazznos Fundos to mark the day, with a quartet of great Brazilian musicians. In Italy, the Alexander Platz Jazz Club in Rome presented a concert featuring local artists; and in Malaysia, the Penang Philharmonic Jazz Section marked International Jazz Day with “A Celebration of Jazz 2013” featuring performances by five groups, each with its own unique style and brand of music at Gurney Paragon in Penang.

International Jazz Day was adopted by UNESCO Member States on the initiative of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock, in order to encourage and highlight jazz’s unique power for advancing intercultural dialogue and understanding across the world. International Jazz Day is recognized on the official calendars of UNESCO and the United Nations.

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz is working with UNESCO and its Member States, national commissions, UNESCO networks, UNESCO Associated Schools, universities and institutes, public radio, public television and NGOs, as well as jazz clubs, hotels, and restaurants to organize and promote International Jazz Day events worldwide every year. Libraries, schools, performing arts centers, artists and arts organizations of all disciplines throughout the world are being encouraged to celebrate the day through education programs, presentations, concerts and other jazz-focused activities.

UNESCO, the Republic of Turkey, and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz are pleased that the Istanbul Jazz Festival, organized by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV) served as the 2013 Host City Partner.

For more information about International Jazz Day, please visit the websites at: www.unesco.org/days/jazzday and www.jazzday.com

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