Thelonious Monk International 97 Jazz Trumpet Competition

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

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THELONIOUS MONK
INSTITUTE OF JAZZ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THELONIOUS MONK INSTITUTE OF JAZZ PICKS SEMIFINALISTS IN TRUMPET COMPETITION SPONSORED BY NISSAN MOTOR CORPORATION USA

(WASHINGTON DC, October 1, 1997) -- The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz has selected fifteen jazz trumpeters to compete in the semifinals of the prestigious annual Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition. This year's event marks the eleventh for the Institute, and the second instance in which the competition has put the spotlight on the quintessential jazz instrument, the trumpet. This event is sponsored by Nissan Motor Corporation USA.

The semifinals will be held on Thursday, October 23rd (2:30 pm) at the Eisenhower Rehearsal Room at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC and taped for a special broadcast. During the trumpet "wail-offs," the fifteen trumpeters will be narrowed down to five finalists. The next day, Friday, October 24th (8:00 pm) the finalists will vie for first position and the grand scholarship prize of $20,000.

Judges for the final contest include jazz greats Randy Brecker, Jon Faddis, Art Farmer, Wallace Roney, Arturio Sandoval, and Clark Terry. At stake is over $60,000 in scholarships and prizes, and exposure to the international jazz industry.

Vice President and Mrs. Gore will again serve as Honorary Chairmen for the competition.

The annual International Jazz Competition, first held in 1987, is a centerpiece of the Institute's mission to preserve and promote America's jazz legacy. The purpose of the event is to recognize talented young musicians and to support their continuing education through scholarships. The funds can be used either for tuition in college level jazz classes, or for private, specialized instruction.

The event provides an opportunity for representatives of major jazz labels to observe the bright new talent in the industry, and for prominent members of the business, entertainment, and political communities to support the principles of the Institute.

The finals will comprise a concert, open to the public, at the Smithsonian Institution's Baird Auditorium where the competition debuted in 1987. The winner will be featured at the Institute's Jazz Gala Celebration at the Kennedy Center on Sunday, October 26th (7:00 pm), as part of a weekend of Institute jazz festivities. The Gala will later air on ABC television on December 27.

The semifinalists are: Darren Barrett (Roxbury, MA), Kenyatta Beasley (New Orleans, LA), Avishai Cohen (Israel), John Daversa (Culver City, CA), Taylor Haskins (New York, NY), Christopher Kase (Spain), Roger Lent (Brooklyn, NY), Michael Leonhart (New York, NY), Riley Mullins (New Brunswick, NJ), Matt Shulman (New York, NY), Phillip Slater (Australia), Jonathan Sneider (New York, NY), Vance Thompson (Chicago, IL), Diego Urcola (Argentina), and Dontae Winslow (Baltimore, MD)

General admission tickets for the finals are $17.00 and can be purchased by calling (202) 357-3030.

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For press tickets and/or more information please call Lydia Borland at (202) 467-3900