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THE 32nd ANNUAL ATLANTA JAZZ FESTIVAL

Refusing to let the music die, the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs is inviting everyone to come and enjoy the 32nd Annual Atlanta Jazz Festival, Memorial Day Weekend, May 23rd & 24th, in Historic Grant Park, Atlanta.

The Atlanta Jazz Festival, an annual musical showcase, celebrates jazz legends and up-and-coming jazz greats in venues throughout metro Atlanta during the month of May and culminates in a music festival on Memorial Day Weekend. It is the mission of the Atlanta Jazz Festival to expose and entertain a diverse audience of jazz aficionados, young jazz enthusiasts and musical artists to the rich heritage and variety of jazz as an authentic form of traditional music. At its peak in 2007, the Atlanta Jazz Festival had an attendance of over 300,000 and contributed over \$20,000,000 to the economy of Atlanta and the State of Georgia.

Recent economic conditions and budget reductions threaten to interrupt a 32 year tradition of presenting authentic jazz to the residents and visitors of Atlanta. While city funding for the festival has been eliminated, local jazz enthusiasts and supporters of the Atlanta Jazz Festival overwhelmingly demand the continuation of what Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin has determined as "one of the city's proudest traditions."

"The City of Atlanta will continue to make a meaningful, long lasting and highly visible statement of the importance of the arts during these troubled times," says Mayor Shirley Franklin. "Jazz is America's indigenous art form and we have a responsibility to keep it alive for future generations."

This year's festivities will be held throughout the month of May in venues throughout the Atlanta as a part of *31 Days of Jazz*, with the culminating 2 day event Memorial Day Weekend, May 23rd - 24th, in Grant Park, 840 Cherokee Drive at Sydney and Boulevard in historic East Atlanta. The Atlanta Jazz Festival will feature local and national jazz greats, a Neighborhood Jazz Series, a Kids Zone, 31 Days of Jazz and many other family friendly events and activities.

"The festival will go on," declares Camille Russell Love, Director of the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs. "The Office of Cultural Affairs is passionate about jazz, committed to this community, and understands the importance of maintaining this tradition. We hope everyone will come out and participate in this cultural experience. We are grateful for the generous support of the Fulton County Arts Council, The Home Depot, Delta Airlines, The Coca-Cola Company, Coca-Cola Enterprises, Inc., Anheuser Busch, Publix Supermarket Charities, and JazzTimes Magazine. "

The 2009 Atlanta Jazz Festival will build on the success and heritage of previous festivals by continuing its expansion with a 31-day schedule. For more information about the Atlanta Jazz Festival, please contact David N. Mitchell, Public Relations Manager at 404-817-7957, or email DNMitchell@AtlantaGa.gov, or visit the website at www.atlantafestivals.com.