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- **Circuit Productions, Inc. presents Winter Programs of *Rhythm Journeys: Masters of Jazz and World music***

- February music performances highlight the work of composers and ensembles during Winter performances of *Rhythm Journeys: Masters of Jazz and World Music*
- Free concerts feature the Harlem Blues and Jazz Trio in Long Island, Sarah McLawler in Brooklyn and Andy Algire in Mt. Vernon.

**Brooklyn, New York, January 2008** – Circuit Productions, Inc., the recipient of the New York State Music Fund grant (“Music Fund”), announced today that Winter 2008 programs will feature the work of three featured music ensembles and two commissioned composers for ***RHYTHM JOURNEYS: MASTERS OF JAZZ AND WORLD MUSIC***. The project is a series of free and low-cost concerts showcasing jazz and world music throughout New York City and State in collaboration with local cultural and educational institutions.

Circuit Productions, through its community outreach series, ***RHYTHM JOURNEYS***, continues to provide new music and live performances presenting senior and emerging artists in a range of culturally relevant music programming aimed primarily at youth and family audiences in culturally under-served communities state-wide. “We are thrilled to advocate for and present such a diverse group of artists,” said **Susan Goldbetter**, Executive Director of Circuit Productions, “who bring their contemporary and world music to new communities.” The artists include the *Harlem Blues and Jazz Trio*, vocalist and Hammond organist, *Sarah McLawler* and percussionist *Andy Algire* with *Irene Koloseus’s Feraba: African Rhythm Tap Company*.

Kicking off Black History Month is the **Harlem Blues and Jazz Trio** who will be performing on Sunday, February 3, 2008, 2:30pm at Long Beach Library, 111 W. Park Avenue, Long Island, NY. For information contact **Long Beach Library: 516.432.720**. The trio - part of the larger, ***Harlem Blues & Jazz Band*** - stars veteran jazz and blues musicians their musical roots reaching back to the classic period of the 1920s and the 30s. The Band was founded in 1973 by Clyde Bernhardt (trombonist to King Oliver) and Dr. Albert Vollmer and included a core group of musicians who actually "jumped" at the Woodside and "stomped" at the Savoy with Duke Ellington, Cab

Calloway, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, "Fats" Waller, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday and other jazz greats. The band is based in Harlem, the symbolic home of swing, but they spend most of the year on tour throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Percussionist, Andy Algire's new work "Sound Bridges" will be heard during a free performance on February 8, 2008, 6-7 pm at Edward Williams Elementary School in Mt. Vernon. A week prior to the performance, a series of special free workshops and a short concert will be given to all 120 students enrolled in Williams' free after-school program. For details and travel contact, **Pelham Art Center, 914.738.2525 or info@pelhamartcenter.org**. In addition to the Music Fund, Algire's performance was made possible, in part, through Meet the Composer\* and Westchester Jewish Community Services.

**Andy Algire**, composer and performer plays drum set, congas, African drums and percussion, balafon (wood xylophone), kalimba (thumb piano), keyboards and piano. His performances include the Kennedy Center with Rhythm Exchange World Music Ensemble (REWME), Manhattan Tap, the Lakestreet Foundation and clubs, theaters, festivals both nationally and internationally. For the past five years Andy has worked closely with Irene Koloseus's Fériba: African Rhythm Tap Dance Company. Artistic Director, Koloseus - a prolific tap and African dance choreographer- creates unique rhythmic patterns using her feet as an additional percussive instrument.

**Sarah McLawler** will be featured on Hammond organ - a rare treat for local New York City audiences - on February 23, 2008, at Brooklyn Heights Branch Library, 280 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, New York. For details and time contact **Brooklyn Heights Library, 718.623-7100**. McLawler's earliest introduction to music was piano and organ playing in her father's church in Indiana. Later, she became interested in secular music – Jazz meeting both the famous Hampton family (Lionel and Slyde) and the Wes Montgomery family. Shortly after winning a music scholarship to Fisk University in the 1940's she began touring with the *Lucky Millander Big Band*. Striking out on her own she soon formed the "all-girls" band known as *The Syn-Co-ettes*. Their extraordinary popularity brought them to Chicago where they became the house band at the great Savoy Ballroom. Ms. McLawler's recordings for Brunswick and Vee-Jay Records include some of the greatest standards in jazz music. Sarah has been a recipient of a Meet the Composer grant; Outstanding Jazz Artist Award, St. Peters Church; WWRL's Jazz Woman of the Year; a Lifetime Achievement from *International Women in Jazz*; and the Music Danceology Award. In March 2005 she went to Virginia Tech University as part of a Ford Foundation grant award through Circuit Productions.

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**The New York State Music Fund** published guidelines and criteria and accepted grant applications in a number of categories, including music education and public performances of music by artists working in hip hop, reggae, fusion, jazz, classical and folk music of all cultures. Applications related to recording, distribution, or broadcast through traditional or new media were also eligible. Special emphasis was placed on reaching underserved populations and broadening awareness of artists, genres or styles with limited access to commercial broadcast or other mass distribution vehicles.

Advisory Panels comprised of recognized leaders from a cross-section of the music world evaluated and recommended applications based on criteria focusing on artistic merit and community impact. The award to Circuit Productions was among nearly 400 grants totaling more than \$35 million made by the Music Fund.

**Funding for *Rhythm Journeys: Masters of Jazz and World Music* was provided with funds from the New York State Music Fund, established by the New York State Attorney General at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors**

**\*Mr. Algire's performance was made possible, in part, with funding through Meet The Composer's MetLife Creative Connections program.**

**About Circuit Productions, Inc.**

Circuit Productions, Inc. was founded in 1986 as a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, production and preservation of the uniquely American art forms of jazz and tap dance. Our mission is to inspire, entertain and educate underserved audiences in New York through performances, public classes, workshops, and arts education programs featuring senior artists of color who are living legends of the city's rich tap and jazz history. Annually, Circuit provides booking and management services for senior and emerging artists; placing performers in museums, public libraries, community-based organizations, local colleges, public schools, hospitals and nursing homes.

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