

The Thelonious Monk Institute for Jazz Performance Moves to Birthplace of Jazz; USC Hosted Institute for Eight Years

Los Angeles, April 2, 2007 — The Thelonious Monk Institute for Jazz Performance at the USC Thornton School of Music will relocate to the campus of Loyola University in New Orleans in May.

The Monk Institute's move to New Orleans will continue its national tradition of educational enrichment and jazz outreach. It will also re-emphasize the close connection between the city of New Orleans and music and jazz culture in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The Thelonious Monk Institute for Jazz Performance came to USC in 1999 after four years at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music.

"The partnership between our institutions was a fruitful one, but it is fitting that the Monk Institute is returning to birthplace of jazz during its time of need," said Robert Cutietta, dean of the USC Thornton School of Music. "The Institute's extensive community outreach will help speed that city's recovery."

For the past seven years, the Institute has been under the artistic leadership of Terence Blanchard, noted trumpeter, prolific jazz and film-score composer and a New Orleans native. Blanchard last year wrote score for Spike Lee's critically acclaimed four-hour documentary on Katrina's devastation of New Orleans, "When the Levees Broke."

The Thelonious Monk Institute for Jazz Performance is the educational and performing arm of the Monk Institute for Jazz, which was founded by the Monk family in 1986 and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. Tom Carter, the cofounder and charter member of the Monk Institute of Jazz, was also a driving force behind its jazz performance program.

"The Institute's college program has grown enormously over the past eight years through our collaboration with the University of Southern California," said Carter. "In Los Angeles, our students had incredible opportunities to pursue careers not only in jazz performance and education but also to become part of the city's thriving recording and film industries. In keeping with our mission of education and community service, the Institute will now play a major role in the revitalization of New Orleans — the city where jazz was created."

The USC Thornton jazz studies will continue its innovative programs serving the community surrounding the campus.

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