

Performers announced for Harlem Meer performance festival presented by JPMorgan Chase

Sundays, May 28 – September 3, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

NEW YORK, May 3, 2006 – The Harlem Meer Performance Festival presented by JPMorgan Chase brings the swinging sounds of blues, jazz, salsa, and gospel music to the northeastern corner of Central Park. Currently in its 13th year, the festival showcases some of New York's top talents. Free to the public, the festival takes place on Sunday afternoons in May, June, July, August and September on the plaza of the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, located at 110th Street and Fifth Avenue.

"As the weather turns warm, one of the true joys of living in New York City is to hear great music in the jewel that is Central Park," said Kimberly B. Davis, president of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. "We take great pride in contributing to this wonderful series of concerts so residents throughout the region can enjoy the music and revel in the summer sounds and sights of the city."

The Central Park Conservancy, the not-for-profit organization that preserves, restores and manages Central Park for the City of New York, produces the Festival. The Conservancy restored the 11-acre Harlem Meer ("meer" is Dutch for lake) and built the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center in 1993.

"The Harlem Meer Performance Festival reflects the musical heritage of the neighborhood," said Douglas Blonsky, Central Park Conservancy president. "In addition to hearing great music at the festival, we hope New Yorkers will take time to explore the northern end of Central Park."

The Harlem Meer Performance Festival is just one of the many events and activities offered by the Conservancy. More information about the festival and other happenings in Central Park is available at www.centralparknyc.org or by calling 212.310.6600.

Harlem Meer Performance Festival Schedule

Sundays, May 8 – July 2, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. (no performance on Sunday, June 11)

Performances for Sundays, July 9 – September 3 will be announced at a later date.

- May 28** **DOMINIC KANZA GROUP** – Specializing in African rhythms, the Dominic Kanza Group is sure to make listeners want to dance. Bandleader, singer and guitarist Dominic Kanza provides dazzling melodic lines that circle above the group's rumba-spiced beats.
- June 4** **RAY MANTILLA QUINTET** – Jazz and Latin percussionist extraordinary Ray Mantilla describes his music as "Latin Jazz with authentic Latino rhythm." As a bandleader, he has performed at international jazz events including Sanremo, the JVC Jazz Festival and the Grande Parade du Jazz.
- June 18** **THE ALEX BLAKE GROUP** – A veteran of the New York Jazz Scene, bassist Alex Blake has toured and recorded with a who's who of jazz musicians including Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey and The Manhattan Transfer. During his band's sets of international jazz listeners can expect to hear everything from the rasgueo patterns of flamenco to the transcendence of the bass into a group of drums.
- June 25** **LOS MACONDOS**- Los Macondos is the one of the most sought-after vallenato groups in the United States. Vallenato, a Colombian genre of music blends Spanish-style prose with African-derived rhythmic patterns and is meant to be danced.
- July 2** **SWEET GEORGIA BROWN** – Raised in Harlem and described as "The Last of the Red Hot Mama's," Georgia is known for her high-energy performances of Blues, Gospel and R&B. She's starred in productions of "An Evening at the Cotton Club" and "Bubbling Brown Sugar," among other Broadway hits.