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**MIGUEL ZENÓN EXPLORES LIFE AND MUSIC ON AWAKE**

**Alto saxophonist's third Marsalis Music album, featuring his quartet plus strings and horns, to be released on April 1**

Miguel Zenón, one of the most exciting new voices in the jazz world, takes his most personal journey to date on *Awake*. This is the third Marsalis Music release for the alto saxophonist and composer, who was voted the overall Best New Artist award in the 2006 *JazzTimes* poll. It follows *Ceremonial*, a program of original compositions that appeared in 2004, and 2005's *Jíbaro*, a bold reinterpretation of the rural music of Zenón's native Puerto Rico. Now, the alto saxophonist and his talented quartet plus special guests present a program that is sure to bring even greater accolades.

The ten tracks chart what for Zenón has been a critical inner journey. "The focus is more personal and philosophical than *Jíbaro*," he explains, "although that album also has a central theme. I wrote all of the music for *Awake*, and the individual compositions fell into an order around one of the older tunes, 'Awakening,' which represents a period I went through that in many ways was about personal growth. What resulted was an awareness of my priorities, and how I want to portray myself as an artist."

One goal Zenón realizes on the disc is the incorporation of new colors, from the use of Fender Rhodes on four tracks to the addition of a string quartet and a three-piece horn section. "I felt that the Rhodes would create a different sonic flow and push the music in different directions," he says. "And once I realized that 'Awakening' would serve as a connection between the various elements of the record, I decided to add a string quartet for two tracks." Zenón also presents his "Awakening" theme as an unaccompanied alto saxophone solo at the close, and as a midpoint explosion with three additional horns. The members of Zenón's working band (Luis Perdomo, piano and Fender Rhodes piano; Hans Glawischnig, bass; Henry Cole, drums) are heard throughout, and display the empathy that has made them a true ensemble.

These forces have come together to create the strongest statement to date from Zenón, who has also been turning heads of late through his affiliations with the SFJAZZ Collective, Guillermo Klein Y Los Gauchos and Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra. "I feel I'm growing as both a composer and a communicator of ideas," Zenón notes. *Awake* captures that growth, as well as the passion, intellect and spirit that has become a Miguel Zenón trademark.

Marsalis Music will release *Awake* on April 1.

**2008 DOMESTIC TOUR DATES**

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| 04.07    | Humboldt State University - Arcata, CA           |
| 04.08    | Yoshi's - San Francisco, CA                      |
| 04.29-30 | The Jazz Standard - New York , NY                |
| 05.01    | The Jorge Hernández Cultural Center - Boston, MA |
| 05.09    | Firehouse 12 - New Haven, CT                     |
| 06.16    | Rochester Jazz Festival - Rochester, NY          |
| 06.21    | An Die Musik - Baltimore, MD                     |
| 11.13    | Outpost - Albuquerque, NM                        |
| 11.14    | The Jazz Lab - Edmond, OK                        |
| 11.15    | Da Camera Society - Houston, TX                  |

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