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Terence Blanchard's New CD *Choices* Set For Release August 18th on Concord Jazz

**Follow-up To Grammy Winning 'A Tale Of God's Will (A Requiem For Katrina)'
Is First Complete CD The World-Renowned Trumpet Player and Film Composer
Has Recorded In New Orleans and Features Guests Dr. Cornel West and Bilal**

"Life is all about expansion and evolution. We make choices every day, none of which are right or wrong. They are simply choices that allow us to explore the variety of what's before us." -- Terence Blanchard

New Orleans, Louisiana. *Choices*, the new CD from three-time Grammy award winning trumpet player and composer Terence Blanchard, is set to be released August 18th on Concord Jazz. Recorded in March in Blanchard's hometown of New Orleans at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, *Choices* addresses the choices we all make in life – both as a society and on a personal level. Blanchard will premiere *Choices* at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans on July 31st.

Accompanying Blanchard on the album are longstanding band members Fabian Almazan on piano, Derrick Hodge on bass and Kendrick Scott on drums, along with newcomer Walter Smith III on saxophone, all of whom wrote significant track contributions to the CD as well (a complete track listing is attached to this release.) Guest artists include writer, speaker, educator and activist Dr. Cornel West, critically-acclaimed guitarist and Blanchard protégé Lionel Loueke, and singer, musician and composer Bilal. West performs spoken word pieces on the album with Bilal providing vocals on several of the tracks.

Said Blanchard, "When the spoken word idea came to mind, Dr. Cornel West was the first person I thought of. I've always been a fan of his philosophy -- the stances he's taken and the causes that he has championed throughout his career -- and I thought what better person could I find to put a lot of these ideas into words that can work in this particular musical situation. Bilal on the other hand is a great vocalist and while recognized more as an R&B soul singer, he is a huge fan of Jazz and is very knowledgeable when it comes to the history of music. Bilal is an extremely accomplished, creative and talented musician and it just seemed natural that he should be involved with the *Choices* project."

Added Dr. West, "Choices...what kind of human being you're going to be. How are you going to opt for a life of decency and compassion and service and love. What goes into that kind of choice. That's the human challenge. To be part of this album is an unadulterated joy because no doubt about it, music for me is continuous of life -- to be able to live the kind of life that I live on the certain kind of Socratic calling of raising

unsettling questions. To be able to be in conversation and on an album with Terence Blanchard, that's serious business...I mean, that's...that's a beautiful thing."

The Ogden Museum of Southern Art's Patrick F. Taylor Library was chosen for the recording due to its outstanding acoustics as well as its historical importance to the city of New Orleans. The Library, completed in 1889 and a survivor of both hurricanes and decades of neglect, is the only existing building in the South designed by New Orleans native H.H. Richardson. "There couldn't have been a more perfect place to record this project," says Blanchard, "The Library itself is a survivor as is this city. While my last album (the Grammy-winning *A Tale Of God's Will (A Requiem For Katrina)*) stemmed from Katrina's pain and destruction, *Choices* will be a celebration of all that has survived and more."

Blanchard has established himself as one of the most influential jazz musicians and film score masters of his generation, a member of a jazz legacy that has shaped the contours of modern jazz today. With more than 29 albums to his credit, as a musician Blanchard is a multi-Grammy Award winner and nominee, winning earlier this year for his instrumental solo for "Be-Bop" on *Live At The 2007 Monterey Jazz Festival*. In addition to receiving the award, Blanchard performed live on the telecast along with other New Orleans artists including Lil' Wayne, Allen Toussaint and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, who were all joined on-stage by singer Robin Thicke. In 2008, Blanchard also won a Grammy for his CD, *A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)*, a beautifully haunting and impassioned song cycle about Hurricane Katrina and the ravages incurred upon the City of New Orleans and its residents.

As a film composer, Blanchard has more than 50 scores to his credit and received a Golden Globe nomination for Spike Lee's "25th Hour." In 2008 he completed the score for Lee's "Miracle at St. Anna," as well as the soundtrack for Darnell Martin's "Cadillac Records." Other film music written by Blanchard includes Kasi Lemmons' "Eve's Bayou" and "Talk to Me," Oprah Winfrey's "Their Eyes Were Watching God," Tim Story's "Barbershop" and Ron Shelton's "Dark Blue." He is currently working on the score for George Lucas' "Red Tails" and has already completed musical contributions for the score on Disney's "The Princess and the Frog," set for release this fall.

As Artistic Director of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, which he was instrumental in relocating from Los Angeles to New Orleans, Blanchard works with students in the areas of artistic development, arranging, composition and concert programming. He also participates in master classes around the world as well as local community outreach activities in his beloved hometown of New Orleans.

The release of *Choices* will be accompanied by a worldwide tour featuring Terence and his band.

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