BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

MacGillivray Freeman Films and Brand USA Celebrate the Paris Premiere of “America's Musical Journey,” the Newest IMAX® Documentary Starring Grammy Award®-Nominated Singer and Songwriter Aloe Blacc

PARIS - May 30, 2018

New film uses the universal language of music to welcome French travelers to iconic U.S. cities

Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, and MacGillivray Freeman Films, have rejoined forces, along with global presenting sponsors Expedia Group and Air Canada, to introduce their second giant screen film, “America’s Musical Journey ,” to audiences in France. Starring Grammy Award®-nominated singer-songwriter Aloe Blacc, the film will premiere in Paris on Wednesday, May 30, at La Géode where attendees will also be treated to a live performance featuring new music from the star’s upcoming album. At the gathering, musicians, filmmakers, influencers, and government officials will also join the celebrations for the film’s official launch.

The Paris premiere of “America’s Musical Journey” comes just three months after the film’s global release in February 2018 to a warm reception from critics and audiences alike in the USA, Canada, and Mexico. Uncovering the United States’ rich musical heritage, the film follows Aloe Blacc as he traces the USA’s unique musical roots, following the footsteps of Louis Armstrong through the colorful locales and cultures of the United States’ musical heritage. During the film, Blacc visits iconic music cities in the USA including New Orleans, La.; Chicago, Ill.; New York City, N.Y.; Nashville and Memphis, Tenn.; and Miami, Fla., exploring the collision of cultures that gave birth to American music genres such as jazz, blues, country, rock and roll, hip-hop, and more.

As audiences join Blacc on this joyful, tune-filled tour, they'll experience adventures like paddle-wheel boating up the Mississippi Delta, flash mob dancing in Chicago, and skydiving with Elvis Presley impersonators over Memphis in scenes shot exclusively for the giant screen. Audiences will also meet other iconic artists, musicians, and innovators who are currently shaping American culture, including Jon Batiste, bandleader and musical director of “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert,” Latin music icons Gloria and Emilio Estefan, and many more.

Academy Award®-nominated director Greg MacGillivray threads all these images together to create an immersive experience of culture and creativity with a soundtrack that showcases the United States’ passion for creative innovation at its purest. "America’s music has its roots in the diverse cultures that came together from different parts of the world, culminating in a unique blend of sound, culture, and innovation," said MacGillivray. "This creativity and trailblazing spirit is what makes American music such a treasured experience around the world. I hope people are inspired to explore their own creativity after seeing the film.”

"Music is an essential part of the human experience, and I look forward to helping audiences discover the unique cultural influences that gave rise to jazz, the blues, folk and other musical genres in the United States," says Blacc. "I love the freedom of expression in this country, which is a source of creativity and innovation unlike anywhere else."

Ranked ninth in international visitation, France remains one of the most important inbound markets for the United States. While the most popular itineraries include the West Coast, New York City, and Florida, French travelers are increasingly looking for opportunities to explore new people, places, and experiences beyond the major gateways. Being a repeat visitor market, France also benefits from new and frequent airlines routes. According to the most recent forecast from National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United States is expected to see a 20 percent increase in visitor volume over the next five years from France—from an estimated 1.67 million visitors in 2017 to 1.96 million expected annual visitors in 2022.

“France is a priority market for Brand USA in its marketing efforts to invite and welcome international travelers to visit the USA, and we are thrilled to share our second giant screen film which celebrates the rich and colorful tapestry of American musical culture with

French audiences," said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA. "France has a deep appreciation for music, art, and culture and 'America's Musical Journey' uses our shared passion point – the universal language of music – to welcome and inspire our friends from France to the United States."

"Music has the power to bring people together, especially here in the United States where diversity and creative freedom are such an important part of the culture," says Shaun MacGillivray, producer of "America's Musical Journey" and president of MacGillivray Freeman Films. "We're using the immersive, visual giant screen experience to tell the story of America's musical and cultural heritage in a new and powerful way."

"America's Musical Journey" is a cornerstone of Brand USA's marketing strategy to promote the United States as a world-class travel destination. Bringing a taste of local beats to the streets of Paris, Brand USA will work with Expedia Group and Air Canada to celebrate the musical heritage of iconic cities in the United States with surprise pop-up performances in high-traffic locations across the city. In addition, Brand USA will launch Interactive Billboards powered by Shazam at select locations, transporting consumers to the "America's Musical Journey" website to find screenings, purchase tickets, and register for a chance to win a trip the United States.

"As a longtime partner of Brand USA, we are honored to lend support and raise awareness as a global sponsor and exclusive online travel activation partner of this film," said Wendy Olson Killion, global vice president of Expedia Group Media Solutions. "We believe music has the ability to inspire travelers from all over the world to explore new places and cultures."

"Music expresses the richness of American culture, whose appeal makes the U.S. a popular destination for Canadian and international travelers alike," said Duncan Bureau, vice president, global sales at Air Canada. "As the largest foreign carrier serving the USA, our partnership with Brand USA is of great importance to Air Canada, as we offer 240 flights a day to more than 55 U.S. airports, with seamless connections via Canada for travelers from six continents."

Leveraging the immersive nature of the giant screen to show travelers the nearly limitless experiences that the United States has to offer remains an integral part of Brand USA's marketing strategies to drive international tourism to communities in all 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia. Brand USA's first giant screen film, "National Parks Adventure," now available on Netflix, was voted Best Film of the Year by the Giant Screen Cinema Association and became the highest grossing documentary film of 2016. In particular, the film is having a material impact on incremental visitation, per a March 2018 in-theatre study conducted by Brand USA, capturing insights from audiences in Toronto, Mexico City, Mumbai and Paris. The study found 57 percent of film viewers expressed a strong positive impact on their opinion of the USA as a travel destination and 20 percent now plan to visit the USA as a result of watching the film.

"America's Musical Journey" will play in select IMAX® and giant screen theaters across France. For a current list of theaters showing "America's Musical Journey" in France, please click here. To discover more about the USA's rich musical culture and the diversity of experiences the country has to offer, please visit Brand USA's consumer website VisitTheUSA.fr and follow Visit The USA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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About MacGillivray Freeman Films

MacGillivray Freeman Films is the world's foremost independent producer and distributor of giant-screen 70mm films with 40 films for IMAX and giant-screen theatres to its credit. Throughout the company's 50-year history, its films have won numerous international awards including two Academy Award® nominations and three films inducted into the IMAX Hall of Fame. MacGillivray Freeman's films are known for their artistry and celebration of science and the natural world. It is the first documentary film company to reach the one-billion-dollar benchmark for worldwide box office. For more information about the company, visit MacGillivrayFreemanFilms.com.

About Expedia Group

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Air Canada is Canada's largest domestic and international airline serving more than 200 airports on six continents. Canada's flag carrier is among the 20 largest airlines in the world and in 2017 served approximately 48 million customers. Air Canada provides scheduled passenger service directly to 64 airports in Canada, 60 in the United States and 98 in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Australia

the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and South America. Air Canada is a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network serving 1,300 airports in 191 countries. Air Canada is the only international network carrier in North America to receive a Four-Star ranking according to independent U.K. research firm Skytrax, which also named Air Canada the 2017 Best Airline in North America. For more information, please visit: AirCanada.com, follow @AirCanada on Twitter, and join Air Canada on Facebook.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.