

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
AUGUST 24, 2009**

**Contact: Carol Morse
Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
The University of Memphis
cmorse@memphis.edu**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®**

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

ASTRAL PROJECT BRINGS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ TO UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Astral Project, New Orleans' premier contemporary jazz group, will play in concert at the University of Memphis on September 16. The performance, presented by the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, will showcase the ensemble of four, considered by many to be the brightest, most energetic jazz musicians in the Crescent City. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, "Like New Orleans itself, Astral Project blends a thousand influences into an alluring identity all its own."

Now in its 30th year, the group rejects any clear-cut concept of what jazz should be. Instead, they have adopted an open approach to the ideas each member brings to the group. Their music, described as lean, tough and rhythmically unyielding, has captivated audiences from the Monterey Jazz Festival to Berlin's Jazzfest.

The group, which includes Tony Degradi on saxophone, John Vidacovich on drums, James Singleton on bass and Steve Masakowski on guitar, recently celebrated the release of its seventh CD, *Blue Streak*. The recording highlights their superb solos, tight ensemble passages and almost telepathic interplay. Covering a wide range of emotions, the 11 original compositions demonstrate the group's astonishing versatility and eclecticism.

Astral Project will appear in Harris Concert Hall (3775 Central Avenue) on the U of M campus on Wednesday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m. As part of the School of Music's Guest Artist Series, admission is free. For more information, visit <http://memphis.edu/music/calendar.php> or call the box office at 901.678.1651 or 901.678.5400.

###