



Youssou N'Dour to Tour and Record with Garifuna Musician Aurelio Martinez as Part of the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative

Prestigious grant unites African music legend with rising Honduran star for an exciting year of artistic collaboration

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For more information on the Rolex Mentor Protégé Arts Initiative, visit:
www.rolexmentorprotege.com

JUNE 2008 - With the help of luxury watch company **Rolex**, Afropop legend **Youssou N'Dour** and the rising Garifuna music star and Cumbancha/Stonetree recording artist **Aurelio Martinez** will be working closely together over the next year in an inspiring musical reunion between Africa and the Americas. **The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative** pairs highly talented young artists from around the world with great masters in film, visual arts, theater, dance, and music for a year of creative collaboration in a one on one mentoring relationship. West African superstar N'Dour, chosen by Rolex to be this year's music mentor, personally selected Martinez to be his protégé, inviting the Honduran musician to tour and record throughout the coming year.

Every two years, Rolex invites masters in dance, film, literature, music, theatre and the visual arts to provide individual guidance to gifted young artists. In six disciplines, a senior artist (the mentor) agrees to foster and counsel a young artist (the protégé) for one year. Previous mentors have included **Martin Scorsese, Wole Soyinka, Julie Taymor, Pinchas Zukerman, Toni Morrison** and other highly recognized figures in the arts.

Martinez is a Honduran born musician who is acclaimed as a central figure in the recent resurgence of the music of the Garifuna, an Afro-Amerindian community whose culturally threatened population lives primarily along the Caribbean coasts of Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. His debut album **Garifuna Soul** received critical acclaim worldwide and he is a member of the **Garifuna Collective**, a multi-generational group of Garifuna musicians whose work with the late **Andy Palacio** on the Cumbancha/Stonetree album **Wátina** is now legendary in world music circles. Currently, Martinez is fronting the **Andy Palacio Tribute Tour**, promising to carry the torch for Garifuna culture after Palacio's tragic and untimely death in January 2008. Martinez is the first member of his local Garifuna community to be elected as a representative to the Honduran National Congress, where he is a staunch advocate for the nation's minority populations.

The collaboration fulfills a life long goal of Martinez to reconnect Garifuna music with its African roots. "There is so much I would like to learn from Youssou N'Dour and from Senegal's musical culture," he says. "It is my dream to reconnect Garifuna music with our ancestral homeland." N'Dour also extended praise to his protégé remarking, "The man has talent. I told him that you may be here to learn something, but I tell you, I'm sure I'm going to learn a lot from you!"

The two artists plan to tour together in Europe this year and collaborate on new music in N'Dour's recording studio in Dakar. Producer Ivan Duran has already begun work on Martinez's next album, which will be released in 2009 on Cumbancha/Stonetree.

The Andy Palacio Tribute Tour featuring Aurelio Martinez, Umalali and the Garifuna Collective will be taking place in Europe this summer. For current tour dates, visit www.cumbancha.com.

