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Composer/Performer Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) Honors Black History Month by Performing *A Civil Rights Reader* with DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit and DJ Scientific

New York, NY--- Composer/performer Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) and the string quartet unit of his band, DBR & THE MISSION, launch a five-city nationwide tour performing DBR's *A Civil Rights Reader* program; a collection of his musical portraits of civil rights leaders. Starting January 24th in Oklahoma City presented by the Black Liberated Arts Center, followed by a mid-west tour, and culminating with a February 9th concert at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, *A Civil Rights Reader* tour celebrates iconic figures of the American civil rights movement in honor of Black History Month. "Rich in cultural references, elegant in form, and demanding in technique", these four soul-inspiring string quartets are influenced by DBR's civil rights heroes: Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Adam Clayton Powell Jr., and Maya Angelou.

As a young composer dedicated to creating relevant, socially, and politically conscious music, DBR believes there's a tradition of black composers looking at their own history. "I could have just as easily written six string quartets that had nothing to do with civil rights, but there's something provocative, relevant and timely about creating music that stands out, so that musicians as well as audience members think about what civil rights means for them." As a young Haitian-American living in Harlem, where Congressman Powell helped create America's civil rights legislation, DBR brings an added emotional layer of musical imagination to this truly personal exploration of civil rights. According to DBR, arguably, three men, Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (subjects of the first three *A Civil Rights Reader* string quartets) have influenced and informed much of the civil rights movement and its perception then and

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now. “I am proud to say I now live and work in Harlem, where I walk and frequent many of the streets and stores these three men visited only years ago. I am fortunate to be one small part of Harlem— living with these miraculous people, experiencing and participating in their fascinating lives.”

As composer, band leader, and violinist, Daniel Bernard Roumain will be joined on tour with DJ Scientific (turntables/laptop) and the string quartet (SQ Unit) division of his band, DBR & THE MISSION, which includes Earl Maneein (violin), Jessie Reagen (cello), Matthew Szemela (violin), and Jon Weber (viola).

String Quartet No. 1 *X* (1993), in honor of Malcolm X, combines the best of Bartok’s motifs with DBR’s own sense of funk. String Quartet No. 2 *King* (2001), featuring DBR on electric violin and DJ Scientific on turntables, grapples with the many complex questions and issues surrounding Dr. King’s alleged adulterous affairs. String Quartet No. 3 *Powell* (2003), was commissioned and premiered by the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at the Dia Center in New York City. DBR explains that “this is not a depiction of the man that was Adam Clayton Powell but instead, I tried to express the feelings of victory and injustice, pride and shame, community and isolation that he felt, with the range of emotions I often experience as a young, black person.” The 2005 Other Minds Festival in San Francisco, California, commissioned and premiered DBR’s String Quartet No. 4 *Angelou* (2004), performed by the Del Sol String Quartet. This marked the first of DBR’s quartets dedicated to a female civil rights icon, author Maya Angelou. Powerful though her words and poetry are for millions of Americans, they are not used in the work; instead it is the wondrous timbre of her voice- manipulated and edited, that forms the source material of the electronic soundscapes generated by DBR and DJ Scientific.

DBR embraces his classical music roots with a multicolored spectrum of contemporary black popular music peppered with his own vibrant musical imagination. His dramatic pieces range from orchestral scores and energetic chamber works to rock songs and electronica. He has collaborated with Philip Glass, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Vernon Reid, DJ’s Radar, Spooky, and Scientific, Savion Glover, Susan Sarandon, Cassandra Wilson,

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and an array of orchestras and chamber ensembles. The orchestras of Dallas, Memphis, San Antonio, St. Louis, and most recently the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the North Dutch Orchestra, have performed or commissioned his works. He also serves as the Music Director of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and as the Assistant Composer-in-Residence of the Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Founded in 2002, his nine-piece band DBR & THE MISSION is comprised of young, multi-cultural musicians from diverse musical backgrounds including an amplified string quartet, drum kit, keyboard, DJ, and a laptop. From a sold out performance with Philip Glass at Arizona's Gammage Auditorium, to electric, hybrid shows at New York City's Knitting Factory, DBR & THE MISSION presents lively, genre-jumping contemporary music that is a harmonic convergence of classical music roots with non-traditional performance techniques, instrumentation, and amplification effects. The band's multi-disciplinary performances have been applauded at Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center, Miami's Caleb Auditorium, Vermont's Flynn Center, Notre Dame, Northwestern University, Montclair's Kasser Theater, and Reno's ArtTown Festival, where the band played to an audience of over 2,000 dedicated friends and fans. DBR & THE MISSION recently received a stunning welcome to Los Angeles at the Cerritos Center playing works "from a woe-inflicted interpretation of 'Amazing Grace' to turntable-like scratching and deafening electric Jimi Hendrix riffs" (LA Times). DBR's *24 Bits: Hip-Hop Studies and Etudes* were highlighted at the group's sold out performance at Joe's Pub receiving critical acclaim—"true to form, these vary greatly in style, from slow, introspective Neo-Classical ruminations to rhythmically complicated, riffy pieces that would not be out of place in a dance club," (New York Times). This past Fall, DBR and DJ Scientific premiered DBR's *Sonata for Violin and Turntables* at the 2006 Melbourne Arts Festival followed by a regional tour throughout Australia featuring DBR on acoustic violin. Numerous coast-to-coast performances are scheduled for this upcoming year: a college-bound tour starting at UCLA; and a highly anticipated 2007 debut season at BAM's Next Wave Festival. For everything else, visit www.dbrmusic.com.

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Tour & Ticket Information:

Wednesday, January 24th, 9:30am, @ Douglas High School, Oklahoma City, OK

Featuring: Daniel Bernard Roumain, DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit and DJ Scientific
Location: Douglas High School, 900 N Martin Luther King

Friday, January 26th, 8:00pm, @ Edison Theatre, Washington University, St. Louis, MO

Featuring: Daniel Bernard Roumain, DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit and DJ Scientific

Location: Edison Theatre, One Brookings Drive on Washington State University campus

Tickets: Adults \$30, Seniors \$25, Students/Children \$8. To order tickets, call Edison Theatre Box Office 314.534.1111, or visit www.edisontheatre.wustl.edu.

Friday, February 2nd, 7:30pm, @ Lied Center, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

Featuring: Daniel Bernard Roumain, DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit and DJ Scientific

Location: Lied Center, 1600 Stewart Drive on University of Kansas West campus

Tickets: Adults \$20.50-29, Seniors \$23-28, Students/Children \$12-14.50. To order tickets, call Lied Center Ticket Office 785.864.2787 or visit www.lied.ku.edu.

Tuesday, February 6th, 7:00pm @ Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville, AR

Featuring: Daniel Bernard Roumain, DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit and DJ Scientific

Location: Baum Walker Hall, Walton Arts Center, 495 West Dickson Street

Tickets: General \$8-16. To order tickets, call Walton Box Office 479.443.5600 or visit www.waltonartscenter.org.

Friday, February 9th, 8:00pm, @ Library of Congress, Washington, DC

Featuring: Daniel Bernard Roumain, DBR & THE MISSION's SQ Unit, DJ Scientific, and Wynne Bennett

Location: Coolidge Auditorium in the Thomas Jefferson Building, 1st Street SE, Ground Floor

Tickets: FREE. To reserve a seat, call Ticketmaster 1.800.551.7328 or visit www.ticketmaster.com or www.loc.gov.

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