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For further information contact:

Publicity: **Mike Wilpizeski** at 718-459-2117

e-mail: mikew@headsup.com

Tour Publicity: **Kelly Johans-DiCillo** at 216.765.7381 ext. 247

e-mail: kjohanns@headsup.com

Electronic Media Kit

<http://www.headsup.com/ecards/3141/industry.html>

INCOGNITO RIDES THE WAVE OF HUMAN EMOTION ON ITS HEADS UP INTERNATIONAL DEBUT

Tales From The Beach Set For Release On June 24, 2008

Since the late 1970s, the UK unit known as Incognito has taken elements of American R&B, soul, funk, disco and other high-energy sounds and merged them with the multicultural sensibilities of founder and frontman Jean-Paul Maunick, the Mauritius-born guitarist/producer better known to fans worldwide as “Bluey.”

More than just a UK band copying U.S. grooves, though, Incognito has built a rock-solid reputation for diversity by borrowing music and musicians from a host of exotic cultural centers: South Africa, India, Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica, Israel, France, Germany, Russia and so many more. An ongoing work in progress more than a band in the traditional sense, Incognito is a creative melting pot that captures the most infectious, dance-oriented beats from around the globe and distills them into an upbeat, high-octane blend.

With three decades worth of innovative recordings and stunning live performances under their collective belts, Incognito joins Heads Up International with the June 24, 2008, worldwide release of *Tales From The Beach* (HUCD 3141), a 15-track set of refreshing and uplifting songs that capture the best elements of the band’s classic sound: driving rhythms, high-impact horns and stirring lyrics delivered by an array of expressive vocalists (including Maysa Leak, an intermittent but consistently popular member of the Incognito lineup since the early ‘90s).

The album title is a reference to Bluey’s musical evolution since his childhood on the small island of Mauritius (off the coast of Madagascar). “When I was a kid, my first taste of music came from the beaches of Mauritius,” he says. “I spent a lot of time listening to the hotel bands, or the bands playing around the bonfires and cookouts. It’s a small island, so there were beaches everywhere. I was always watching live musicians play. So for inspiration for this album, I went back to various beaches around the world – in Italy, Indonesia and elsewhere – and just let the music flow.”

But on a more metaphorical level, *Tales From The Beach* tracks the continuing ebb and flow of certain personal yet universal experiences that make up the emotional landscape of our lives. “I just took inspiration from what has come to pass in the last year of heavy touring that we’ve been doing as a band,” says Bluey. “Each of us has experienced a lot of changes in our personal lives.

Some of us have had relationships end. Some of us have entered new relationships. I think some of my best writing is on this record. In terms of lyrics and storytelling, I was able to get a lot of things out of my system.”

Tales From The Beach opens on a defiant note with “Step Aside,” a declaration of independence delivered by lead vocalist Joy Rose and propelled by a pulsating bass line, funky horns and the shimmering rhythm of the exotic-sounding African shekere.

The pop-flavored “When the Sun Comes Down,” sung by Tony Momrelle, examines the potential benefits and perils of making an emotional leap of faith. “I got goose bumps when Tony sang this song in the studio,” says Bluey. “It was a high point for me in the making of this record, a very emotional moment. It was a one-take vocal. He just took the lyrics, went into the booth and belted it out. When he finished, I was shaking. He said, ‘Was it okay?’ And I said, ‘Was it okay?! Are you kidding?’”

Maysa makes one of four lead-vocal appearances on the record with “I Remember a Time,” a poignant ballad co-written by Bluey and percussionist/keyboardist Matt Cooper, who had recently weathered a heart-wrenching breakup with his girlfriend. “I was writing songs with him while all this was going on, and he kind of confided in me,” Bluey recalls. “He’d written a piece of music – a skeleton of what the song would eventually become – and I came up with some lyrics. He took one look at the lyrics and he disappeared for a while. I later found him out in the garden crying. To me, this is what writing music is all about. Whether you like this song or not, I know we have achieved something great with this piece of music.”

Maysa reappears on “When Words Are Just Words,” a smoldering and soulful track co-written by Bluey, drummer/percussionist Richard Bull and keyboardist Graham Harvey – the sure-fire songwriting combo that weighed in on two previous Incognito releases, *Tribes Vibes & Scribes* (1992) and *Positivity* (1994).

The album closes with the title track, a brief interlude propelled by the formidable bass lines of Julian Crampton and the syncopated chugging riff of Bluey’s guitar. On top of this seamless combination is the lighthearted vocal scattling of Momrelle. The song is the satisfying final stretch of the journey to that place – in the mind and the heart, if not on the map – where the sand is soft and the ocean breeze is intoxicating.

Throughout *Tales From The Beach*, even in those moments that are melancholy or bittersweet, there’s an underlying message of hope and positivity. That message, says Bluey, is no accident. “When people come to Incognito gigs,” he says, “they’re saying, ‘Look, man, give us something.’ They come as if they’re in need of some kind of healing, or some kind of wisdom. I’m not a doctor or a prophet, so all I can do is give them something through the music and the message in the music. That ends up being part of the band’s greater goal, whether we’re on stage or in the studio – to bring people together, to be a platform to energize people.”

