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Poncho Sanchez Pays Homage to His Soul Heroes on His New Release
“Raise Your Hand” in stores May 22, 2007

Guest Artists Booker T. Jones, Steve Cropper, Andy Montañez, Maceo Parker, and Eddie Floyd Join the Latin Jazz King on His First Release in Two Years

GRAMMY® winner Poncho Sanchez will be releasing his first record in two years, **Raise Your Hand** (Concord Picante) on May 22, 2007. For **Raise Your Hand**, Poncho called on an array of guest artists to create a record that combines his bedrock Latin jazz style inherited from Cal Tjader, Tito Puente, and Mongo Santamaria with the funky brand of R&B and soul music that inspired him as a teenager in the 1960s. Poncho pays homage to his soul heroes as legendary Eddie Floyd, along with Stax icon Booker T. Jones and his Mgs guitar player, Steve Cropper, add their funky licks to Floyd classics “Knock On Wood” and the title track, “Raise Your Hand.” Puerto Rican *sonero* Andy Montañez, Cuban vocalist José “Perico” Hernández, and renowned saxophonist Maceo Parker all bring their unique flavor to the project.

The early career of Poncho Sanchez began as the youngest of 11 children listening to his older sisters groove on the mambo, cha-cha, and the other popular music of the day. He taught himself to play the congas and performed as often as he could. In his high school days in Norwalk, California, Poncho sang in an R&B group. Poncho’s real break came when he met Latin music luminary, Cal Tjader. Tjader, who inspired the formation of the Concord Picante label to promote and distribute his music, served as Poncho’s mentor and bandleader for nearly eight years. Poncho eventually started recording his own albums as a leader for the same label. Since then, he has become a world renowned percussionist and has been voted the number one percussionist in both DownBeat and Jazz Times reader’s polls for the past three years. He remains the preeminent Latin jazz leader on Concord Picante, carrying the torch for Cal Tjader and Latin jazz. Throughout his career, he has covered hits by James Brown and other soul gurus and has recorded with a long list of R&B royalty, including Ray Charles, Tower of Power, The Crusaders’ horn section, Sam Moore, and Billy Preston.

“**Raise Your Hand** demonstrates all the reasons that Poncho is so beloved,” says album producer and Concord Records’ Executive Vice President of A&R, John Burk, “He brilliantly and seamlessly combines authentic Latin jazz with roots soul music.”

“I love soul music -- the whole thing, from Motown and Stax to James Brown,” Poncho readily admits. But the conguero will always stay true to the Latin jazz style he has come to master and define. “When we perform, I tell people, ‘This is Poncho Sanchez and his *Latin Jazz Band*,’” he concludes, strongly accenting the words “Latin jazz.”

Raise Your Hand marks the conguero’s 22nd Concord Picante release. For more information, please contact:

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