



Embassy of the United States of America

Montevideo, Uruguay
October 10, 2002

To whom it may concern:

Francisco Yobino is the creator, producer, and general director of the Lapataia International Jazz Festival, which, for the last seven years, has taken place in Punta del Este, Uruguay, with great success.

With Paquito D'Rivera as artistic director, Lapataia has become a must of the summer season in Uruguay, occupying a privileged position among the cultural activities of the region. It has also earned recognition as one of the premier festivals in the international jazz scene, as witnessed by coverage in the magazines *Down Beat* and *Jazz Times*.

Lapataia's idyllic surroundings at the farm "El Sosiego," together with the artistic quality of the musicians and Mr. Yobino's careful attention to detail, have been instrumental to the festival's continued success.

Lapataia has come a long way since its beginnings in 1996, with festivals of recent years boasting more than seventy musicians over four days. Each of the seven years, the Festival has provided an added value to the cultural and tourist season of Uruguay. As for the U.S. musicians, it has provided them with the possibility of returning to other countries of the region, after their performances in Punta del Este.

The successes bear witness to a great deal of energy and work, and the organization of what will be the Festival's eighth season – scheduled for next January 9, 10, 11, and 12 – will require even more dedication, in view of the difficult situation in which Uruguay currently finds itself.

As in the past, this Embassy will have the privilege of sponsoring the Festival and we hope that other sponsors will join in to help accomplish the goal of disseminating one of the most defining aspects of U.S. culture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jean E. Manes".

Jean E. Manes
Public Affairs Officer