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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VOLKSWAGEN OF AMERICA, INC. CELEBRATES
THE ARTS, KICKS OFF YEAR OF THE BLUES**
*Automaker Joins Forces with PBS to Present
Martin Scorsese's The Blues™*

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Volkswagen's long-standing commitment to innovative ideas and artistic designs has contributed greatly to its status today as the best-selling European car brand in North America. Volkswagen also has a rich history of supporting a wide range of artistic endeavors that reflect the unique personality of the brand, from producing imaginative commercials with distinctive music to sponsoring nationwide film festivals, concerts and an art exhibition for young disabled artists.

Underscoring its commitment to music, Volkswagen is the exclusive sponsor of *The Blues™*, a seven-film series executive produced by Martin Scorsese that premieres on Sunday, September 28 at 9pm on PBS.

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The Blues series is the cornerstone of an integrated multi-media project that the Volkswagen sponsorship supports, including a Web site at pbs.org/theblues, a 13-part radio series on Public Radio International, educational initiatives, a traveling museum exhibit produced by Experience Music Project, a “Salute to the Blues” benefit concert that took place at Radio City Music Hall on February 7, as well as “On the Road,” a national schedule of film, music and heritage events celebrating the blues throughout the year. Additionally, the U. S. Senate has proclaimed 2003 Year of the Blues.

This year, in addition to its support of *The Blues* project, Volkswagen will act as the sole automotive sponsor and official vehicle provider for the famous Sundance Film Festival, the annual exhibition of independent filmmakers. Volkswagen is no stranger to artistry in film, with a history that involves the Atom Film Project as well as the ongoing Major Motion Picture Show (MMPS), a college campus tour bringing films and interactive fun to students nationwide.

Consumers have long identified Volkswagen with approachable yet cutting-edge advertising and exciting, off-the-wall events. When viewers took notice of Volkswagen’s decidedly original commercials and the music featured in them — such as Trio’s now-famous “DaDaDa” — they asked for more. Volkswagen enthusiastically responded, releasing two compilation CDs featuring aspiring musicians found during the creative search for advertising soundtracks. These same artists also enjoy a high-profile platform for their work on RadioVW.com, a Web site designed to deliver alternative sounds to fans everywhere.

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On the live music front, Volkswagen recently launched the year-long House of Blues tour for audiences at House of Blues venues across the U.S. Volkswagen also developed the Music Ed. Tour '02, a music caravan featuring concerts at college campuses with headliner Rusted Root, as well as various local groups.

Additionally, Volkswagen's support of Washington, D.C.-based *VSA arts* — a nonprofit organization dedicated to disabled artists — was highlighted last year with a national juried art competition and exhibition, open to disabled artists ages 16 to 25.

As Volkswagen celebrates its place in the automotive industry and in modern popular culture, it will continue its commitment to up-and-coming artists who bring new, refreshing perspectives to the music, film and art communities.

Founded in 1955, Volkswagen of America, Inc. is headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Volkswagen AG, the world's fourth largest automaker. As America's top-selling European brand, Volkswagen markets a full line of vehicles through a network of 600 dealers in the United States.

ABOUT *THE BLUES*TM

The Blues, executive produced by filmmaker Martin Scorsese and premiering Sunday, September 28 at 9 p.m. on PBS, anchors a multi-media project to help raise awareness of the blues and its contribution to American culture and music worldwide. *The Blues* is a seven-part television series of personal and impressionistic films viewed through the lens of seven world-famous directors who share a passion for the music. The films, by Scorsese, Charles Burnett, Clint Eastwood, Mike Figgis, Marc Levin, Richard Pearce, and Wim Wenders capture the essence of blues music and delve into its global influence — from its roots in Africa to its inspirational role in today's music. Sponsored by Volkswagen, *The Blues* project initiatives include an extensive Web site at www.pbs.org/theblues; a 13-part radio series; educational outreach; a companion book, and value-added DVDs, a CD box set, individual soundtracks for each show, a single "Best of" album and individual artist recordings. *The Blues* project will also go "On the Road," to a national schedule of film, music and heritage events celebrating the blues throughout the year. *The Blues* is a presentation of Vulcan Productions and Road Movies

in association with Cappa Productions and Jigsaw Productions; WGBH Boston presents the series on PBS; public television funding is provided by PBS and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Along with Scorsese, Paul G. Allen and Jody Patton of Vulcan Productions and Ulrich Felsberg of Road Movies are executive producing the series; Alex Gibney is the series producer; Margaret Bodde is the producer, and Richard Hutton is the co-producer.

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