

# Press Release

## **JVC Jazz Festival NEWPORT, R.I.**

**August 11, 12, 13, 14, 2005**

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Newport, Rhode Island

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For Immediate Release:

### **TRIO! TO PERFORM AT NEWPORT Stanley Clarke - Bela Fleck - Jean-Luc Ponty**

Bassist Stanley Clarke, banjo player Bela Fleck and violinist Jean-Luc Ponty, three of music's most influential innovators will have been breaking new ground for the first time together, debuting as a trio in the aptly named Trio! In a nationwide summer and fall tour Trio! will create some of the most exciting musical events in years. Genuinely worthy of the group's exclamation point will be their stop at this year's JVC Jazz Festival-Newport on Saturday, August 13.

"Miles Davis told me once that it takes a lot of courage to be different," says Clarke, who plays double bass in the acoustic group. "Heads will turn but our fans are so sophisticated and flexible given all we've done as individuals that I'm sure they'll love it. We're gonna kick butt."

Adds Ponty, "The stimulation of performing with such top musicians is fantastic. Within a couple of minutes of playing together, the music just took off."

Fleck calls the unusual instrumental lineup "an unholy alliance. I've never seen it except in combination with a guitar or mandolin. This is cool stuff."

Featuring songs written specifically for the triumvirate by each of the members plus rearrangements of past material, with room to improvise and for each to solo, Trio! brings together three bold and adventurous musical heroes.

Clarke gained mainstream fame in the pioneering jazz fusion group *Return To Forever* with Chick Corea, Lenny White and Al DiMeola. As a solo artist he became the first bassist to headline major tours, selling out shows worldwide. Undoubtedly one of the most influential bassists in history, Clarke recorded what is now considered the must-know bass anthem, "School Days," and accomplished and aspiring bassists continue to imitate his percussive slap funk technique. *Rolling Stone's* first Jazzman of the Year, he won *Playboy's Music Award* for Best Bassist 10 straight years.

Fleck reinvented the image and sound of the banjo in a remarkable career that has taken him all over the musical map, from progressive bluegrass band *New Grass Revival* to Bela Fleck and the Flecktones and its "blu-bop" (a mix of jazz and bluegrass). His most recent pair of Grammys® (of a total of nine) was in classical music for *Perpetual Motion*, a collaboration that evolved into a banjo/bass duo. With more than 20 nominations, Fleck holds the record for most nominations in more genres than anyone in Grammy® history.

Ponty is widely regarded as the father of modern jazz violin. With be-bop era phrasings and a punchy style influenced more by horn players than by anything previously heard on violin, his debut American appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival signaled a revolution. Since then, he has recorded and toured with Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention as well as John McLaughlin and the Mahavishnu Orchestra and collaborated with Chick Corea, George Benson and George Duke among others. A dozen consecutive solo albums reached the *Billboard Jazz Top 5*, establishing him as a leader in the jazz-rock movement.

In 1995, Ponty joined Clarke and guitarist DiMeola to record the acoustic album *The Rite Of Strings*. The all-stars then undertook a much-praised world tour (an opening act was Bela Fleck and the Flecktones). But following a 2004 Clarke-Ponty-DiMeola reunion that toured the U.S. and Canada, the bassist and violinist found themselves guitar-less. Clarke remembered

playing with Fleck at a 2002 Los Angeles concert for Clarke's scholarship fund, after which he had said, "We have to do something together someday."

That day arrived in March 2005 when Clarke and Ponty gathered at Fleck's Nashville home for two weeks of rehearsal. "It was like being asked to join a club you always wanted to be in," says Fleck, noting that he owns every Ponty album and the New Grass Revival used to cover his "New Country."

As for Clarke, Fleck says watching *Return To Forever* from the front row of New York's Beacon Theater in the mid-'70s changed his life. "It was a revelation. I discovered what I needed to do to be the musician I wanted to be. I'm pretty jaded after doing so many things but I still can't believe I'm playing with Stanley and Jean-Luc."

Among the tour dates for Trio! are bluegrass festivals as well as jazz-oriented venues. Fans of one genre who are unfamiliar with the other, fans old and new, will truly hear a brand new groove with Trio!

#### **The lineup for the JVC Jazz Festival Newport 2005 is as follows:**

**Thursday, August 11 at the Jane Pickens Theatre, 49 Touro Street, Newport, RI, 7 pm:** Jazz on Film: "Miles Electric: A Different Kind of Blue" Miles Davis - Live At The Isle of Wight - 1970. General Admission tickets: \$15.00.

**Friday, August 12 at The Newport Casino, International Tennis Hall of Fame, 194 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI, 8 pm: An Evening With Eartha Kitt with Musical Director Daryl Waters; Artie Shaw Orchestra Under the Direction of Dick Johnson.** All seats reserved: \$85.00, \$65.00, \$50.00 and \$30.00.

**Saturday, August 13, 11:30 am – 7:00 pm at Fort Adams State Park, Fort Adams Drive, Newport, RI: JVC Jazz Stage:** Wynton Marsalis Quintet; Charles Lloyd Quartet with Geri Allen, Reuben Rogers & Eric Harland; Patricia Barber; Medeski Martin & Wood; Saxophone Summit featuring Dave Liebman and Joe Lovano with Phil Markowitz, Cecil McBee & Billy Hart; Jon Faddis Quartet – "Gillespiana" with David Hazeltine, Kiyoshi Kitagawa and Dion Parson; **Pavilion Stage:** McCoy Tyner Trio featuring Charnett Moffett and Eric Gravatt with Special Guests Ravi Coltrane & Terell Stafford; T.S. Monk Sextet with Winston Byrd, Dave Jackson, Bob Porcelli, Helen Sung, Willie Williams and introducing Rachael Price; Carla Bley & Lost Chords with Steve Swallow, Andy Shepherd & Billy Drummond; Brad Mehldau; TRIO! Stanley Clarke – Bela Fleck – Jean-Luc Ponty; **Guitar Stage:** Kurt Rosenwinkel Group; Mark Whitfield Trio featuring Donald Edwards & Reuben Rogers; Romero; and The Newport All-Stars featuring Howard Alden, Warren Vache, John Allred, Nicki Parrott, Leroy Williams. General admission: \$65.00 in advance, \$70.00 on festival weekend, if available. Children under 12, \$5.00 at all times; under 2, free. On site festival parking, \$6.00 per vehicle. Reserved seating, JVC Jazz Stage: \$75.00.

**Sunday, August 14, 11:30 am – 7:00 pm at Fort Adams State Park, Fort Adams Drive, Newport, RI: JVC Jazz Stage:** Roy Haynes 80th Birthday Celebration featuring Chick Corea, Gary Burton, Joshua Redman & Christian McBride plus Roy Haynes' Fountain of Youth Band with Marcus Strickland, Martin Bejerano & John Sullivan; Dave Brubeck Quartet with Randy Jones, Bobby Militello & Michael Moore and Special Guest Wynton Marsalis; Steps Ahead (2005) featuring Mike Mainieri, Mike Stern, Steve Smith, Bill Evans & Richard Bona; Chick Corea Trio with Christian McBride & Jeff Ballard; Dave Holland Big Band with Robin Eubanks, Josh Roseman, Jon Arons, Taylor Haskins, Alex "Sasha" Sipagin, Duane Eubanks, Chris Potter, Antonio Hart, Mark Gross, Gary Smulyan, Steve Nelson, Nate Smith; Joshua Redman Elastic Band. **Pavilion Stage:** Don Byron Ivey-Divey Trio featuring Jason Moran & Billy Hart; Gary Burton's Generations with Julian Lage, Vadim Nesolovskyi, Luques Curtis & James Williams; Joe Lovano with the Hank Jones Trio featuring George Mraz & Lewis Nash; The Cannonball Legacy Band featuring Louis Hayes, Vincent Herring, Jeremy Pelt, Vincente Archer & Rick Germanson; Matt Wilson's Arts & Crafts with Terell Stafford, Gary Versace & Martin Wind. **Guitar Stage:** Bill Frisell Trio with Joey Baron & Sam Yahel; Larry Coryell; Russell Malone & Benny Green Duo; Julian Lage & Taylor Eigsti Duo. General admission: \$65.00 in advance, \$70.00 on festival weekend, if available. Children under 12, \$5.00 at all times; under 2, free. On site festival parking, \$6.00 per vehicle. Reserved seating, JVC Jazz Stage: \$75.00.

#### **TICKETS & INFORMATION:**

**TICKETS** are on sale via Ticketweb at <http://www.Ticketweb.com/>, by phone at 866-468-7619 and at the Newport Festival office located at 770 Aquidneck Avenue in Middletown, Rhode Island; cash, checks and major credit cards are accepted. **Call 401-847-3700 for more information and office hours.**

Tickets are also available by mail order. To order by mail, send a check or money order for the total ticket cost plus a \$4.00 handling charge per order to: Festival Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 605, Newport, RI 02840. Order forms are also available on the festival web site at: <http://www.festivalproductions.net/>.

- JVC, the jazz festival's sponsor, is celebrating its 21st year of jazz festival sponsorship. JVC is one of the world's leading manufacturers of high quality audio and video equipment.
- Borders is the official on-site book & music retailer of the JVC Jazz Festival-Newport.
- ABC 6, WLNE-TV is the official television partner of the JVC Jazz Festival-Newport.
- WGBH 89.7 is the Official Boston Radio Station of the JVC Jazz Festival-Newport.
- 99.3 Swing FM WJZS is the Official Rhode Island Radio Station of the JVC Jazz Festival-Newport.
- Festival Productions, Inc. has its own website at <http://www.festivalproductions.net/>

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