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VAIL JAZZ WORKSHOP ALUMNI ACHIEVE HIGH HONORS

Teenage jazz musicians recognized by the Brubeck Institute for exceptional talent

Vail, CO – June 19, 2009 – You may be familiar with the work of the Vail Jazz Foundation; perhaps you’ve enjoyed a Vail Jazz Festival concert, your kids may have told you about Jazz Goes to School, or you may have even heard of the Vail Jazz Workshop. But the Vail Jazz Foundation’s endless pursuit to support the jazz art form extends far beyond Eagle County, as do its results.

The Brubeck Institute, one of the most acclaimed jazz studies programs worldwide, recently announced The Brubeck Fellows for this coming year. Being named a Brubeck Fellow is one of the most coveted honors possible for a high school jazz musician. Prestigious indeed, since the Brubeck Fellows become members of the Brubeck Institute Jazz Quintet, five recently graduated jazz musicians who have been selected to study jazz at University of the Pacific for two years. The Brubeck Fellows perform together at over 25 concerts each year around the U.S., which affords them a unique opportunity to gain performance experience while continuing their formal education. And Downbeat magazine, which many consider to be the ‘bible’ of jazz, recently named the Brubeck Institute Jazz Quintet as the finest college jazz group in the nation.

So what is the big deal? Well, for 2009, the Brubeck Fellows have been named, and each and every one of them is an alumnus of the Vail Jazz Workshop, an educational program of the Vail Jazz Foundation. The Brubeck Fellows for 2009 are: Noah Kellman, piano, Zach Brown, bass, Corey Fonville, drums, Nick Frenay, trumpet and Chad Lefkowitz-Brown, saxophone

“We are absolutely thrilled that five of our Workshop alumni have been recognized with this tremendous honor”, said Howard Stone, chairman of the Vail Jazz Foundation. “It’s a testament to each of them, and to the dedication and skill of our educators, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for their years of service supporting these young jazz artists”, continued Stone.

For the past fourteen years, the Vail Jazz Foundation has produced a ten day long intensive jazz workshop in Vail that has helped shape some of the most promising young jazz artists of today. The program graduates a dozen students each year, each of whom has been chosen from hundreds of highly gifted high school aged jazz musicians in North America. Grammy award winning bassist, composer and educator John Clayton leads the Workshop, and he is joined by four other professional musician/educators, John's brother Jeff Clayton (saxophone), Bill Cunliffe (piano), Terell Stafford (trumpet) and Lewis Nash (drums).

"The entire staff is consistently blown away at the quality and talent of these young musicians", said Clayton, who also serves as Director of Education for the Vail Jazz Foundation. "It's a true privilege to teach these kids and watch as they go on to achieve great success in later years", continued Clayton.

Mia Vlaar, executive director of the Vail Jazz Foundation, said the 2009 Workshop students will be announced in a matter of days. "Once they've completed the workshop, we refer to them as the VJF All-Stars, in recognition of their accomplishment," said Vlaar. On September 3 in Vail Square, 2009 VJF All Stars will take the stage with the Clayton Brothers Quintet and will perform as part of the Vail Jazz Festival. "Last year the audience was mesmerized by the talent of these kids, and we expect the 2009 group will wow them as well," said Vlaar. The concert is free and takes place at 6pm in a tented venue just outside the Arrabelle Hotel in the Lionshead area of Vail, Colorado.

About the Vail Jazz Foundation

The VJF is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization whose mission is to perpetuate jazz through live performances that showcase the artistry and talent of great jazz musicians, and through jazz education, with a focus on young musicians and young audiences.

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