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**JAZZ GREAT CHICK COREA
JAMS WITH HIS NEO-FLAMENCO BAND TOUCHSTONE AT CAL PERFORMANCES
ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

BERKELEY, January 10, 2006 – Legendary jazz pianist and bandleader **Chick Corea** delivers his electric brand of genre-busting jazz to Cal Performances on **Saturday, February 11** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Twelve-time Grammy Award-winner and recently named National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, Corea's 40-year career reads like a history book of contemporary jazz. With his latest band **Touchstone**, he dazzles audiences with Spanish-influenced jazz. Bandmembers **Carles Benavent** (bass), **Jorge Pardo** (flute/sax), **Rubem Dantas** (percussion), and **Tom Brechtlein** (drums) have been instrumental in the expansion of traditional flamenco into a phenomenally successful blend of Afro-Cuban jazz, bossa nova and salsa. The concert, which features Spanish dancer **Auxi Fernandez**, will draw from Corea's new CD *Ultimate Adventure* due to be released February 7, 2006. With this intense group of like-minded individuals the performance promises to be "smoking from the get-go" (*Variety*).

CHICK COREA

Pianist **Chick Corea** has been making music all his life. Born Armando Anthony Corea, he got his start accompanying his dad, one of Boston's hottest jazz band leaders. After high school, Corea moved to New York to study at The Juilliard School, but immediately got caught up playing in the New York jazz scene. Early stints with Sarah Vaughan, Willie Bobo and Mongo Santamaria gave Corea plenty of exposure to Latin music and Afro-Cuban rhythms. Before long he was a sought-after sideman. In 1968, he replaced Herbie Hancock in Miles Davis's band. At that time, Davis was conceiving a new electric sound and insisted Corea plug in and use an electric keyboard. At first reluctant to play what he thought was an inferior instrument, Corea soon discovered it had wonderful possibilities, and after playing on such seminal albums as *In A Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew*, Corea became one of the electric keyboard's most visible proponents and a pioneer on other keyboard instruments designed in the 1970s. He formed a new group, Return to Forever, and turned up the volume with compositions

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that were complex, dynamic, electric mini-symphonies, thrilling audiences worldwide with their mind-blowing articulation and dexterity. A short time later, he began incorporating strings, horns and even vocals into Return to Forever and subsequent groups.

Throughout the 1980s and '90s, Corea effortlessly shifted back and forth from acoustic to electric settings, always surprising his fans with something new, including an original piano concerto. He never stays in one place very long, constantly searching for fresh sounds and taking on new challenges. With 12 Grammy Awards to his credit, he still shows no signs of slowing. Corea, now in his mid-60s, seems more prolific than ever with the release of *Rhumba Flamenco: Live in Europe* based on his 2004 tour, and his newest CD, *The Ultimate Adventure*.

TOUCHSTONE

Touchstone is named after a 1982 Chick Corea album that explored Latin music. On that album Corea collaborated with legendary flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucia. Twenty-one years later, at a concert in Madrid, Corea invited de Lucia's band onstage to sit in on the performance. Inspired by the immediate and positive connection among the musicians, Corea declared the concert "a glorious occasion" and decided to make more music with them. He christened the new band Touchstone to link it to his 1982 Latin project. The group set off on a tour of Europe, stunning crowds with a unique brand of jazz and flamenco, which is showcased on the 2-CD set, *Rhumba Flamenco: Live in Europe*.

Bass player **Carles Benavent** was born in the Poble Sec neighborhood of Barcelona, Spain. Essentially self-taught, Carles began playing with Paco de Lucia in 1978, a relationship that continues to this day. In 1995, Carles suffered a severely damaging accident to his left arm. With hard work he recovered, and for the past ten years has not missed a beat. He can be heard on de Lucia's and his own solo recordings, as well as those with Corea and Touchstone.

Saxophonist and flutist **Jorge Pardo** was born in Madrid in 1955 and began studying at the Conservatory of Madrid at the age of 14. He immersed himself in jazz and was one of the founding members of the band Dolores. Introduced to flamenco by Paco de Lucia, Pardo devised a hybrid language between jazz and flamenco. He has collaborated with nearly every

major figure in the world of flamenco, including Astrud Gilberto, Ketama and La Barberia del Sur.

Rubem Dantas was born in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, and studied piano with his mother. He soon turned to percussion, training under Vahindo do Gantois. In 1977, he moved to Madrid and entered the budding flamenco movement, joining the group Dolores. There he met Paco de Lucia, and the two formed one of the most influential flamenco bands in the world. Rubem has played with Vince Mendoza, Gilberto Gil, and Paquito D’Rivera, among others.

Tom Brechtlein is an innovative drummer with a crisp sound perfectly suited for Touchstone. Corea was one of Brechtlein's musical heroes while the drummer was growing up in East Meadow, Long Island. Brechtlein played with Corea through the 1970s until 1983, when he began playing with jazz-giant Wayne Shorter, guitar wizard Al Di Meola and violin master Jean Luc Ponty. In 1986, Brechtlein joined guitarist Robben Ford and the two collaborated for many years in The Blue Line band.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Chick Corea** and **Touchstone** on **Saturday, February 11** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$30.00, \$42.00** and **\$52.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, February 11 at 8:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Jazz

Touchstone

Chick Corea, keyboards
Carles Benavent, bass
Jorge Pardo, flute and sax
Rubem Dantas, percussion
Tom Brechtlein, drums

Program: Chick Corea's band Touchstone will perform his Spanish-influenced compositions from the soon-to-be released CD *The Ultimate Adventure*.

Tickets: \$30.00, \$42.00 and \$52.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door.

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