

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

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**THE GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING
JOE LOVANO NONET
COMES TO CAL PERFORMANCES FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY
SATURDAY, APRIL 24 IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

BERKELEY, March 18, 2004 – One of contemporary jazz’s most respected and lauded tenor saxophonists **Joe Lovano** brings the **Joe Lovano Nonet** to Berkeley **Saturday, April 24 at 8:00 p.m.** for an evening of high-octane jazz. Striking the balance between the powerful sound of a big band and the intimacy of a combo, Lovano’s nine-piece band will perform material from their recently released CD *On This Day...at the Vanguard*, their 2000 Grammy Award-winning CD *52nd Street Themes*, and present new arrangements of a three-song suite from Miles Davis’ all time best-selling jazz album, *Birth of the Cool*, reinterpreted for the tour by renowned jazz composer, and one of the original nonet musicians on Davis’ 1949 album, Gunther Schuller. “When we play gigs,” Lovano explains, “it’s going to be combinations of the nonet throughout the evening, not just the band sound all the time. Each personality in the ensemble emerges as a solo voice—everyone contributes to this joyous celebration.” The Joe Lovano Nonet features **Ralph Lalama** (tenor saxophone), **Steve Slagle** (alto saxophone) **Gary Smulyan** (baritone saxophone), **Larry Farrell** (trombone), **Barry Ries** (trumpet), **James Weidman** (piano), **Dennis Irwin** (bass), and **Billy Drummond** (drums).

JOE LOVANO

A Grammy nomination in 1994 for Best Jazz Small Group Recording for *Tenor Legacy* was just the beginning of **Joe Lovano’s** winning streak. Since then he has garnered dozens of accolades—many won more than once—including multiple *Down Beat’s* Critics and Readers Jazz Artist of the Year and Musician of the Year awards; four Grammy nominations; and the coveted Grammy Award for Best Large Ensemble for *52nd Street Themes*. Lovano has proven that he’s truly

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“one of the greatest musicians in jazz history” (*The New York Times*). Lovano was born into jazz (a photo from his family album shows baby Lovano cradled in his mother’s arms along with a saxophone), with his father, Tony “Big T” Lovano, schooling him not only in jazz basics but in dynamics and interpretation. Regular exposure to John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie, Gene Ammons, James Moody, and the jazz greats passing through his hometown of Cleveland inspired him to study at the famed Berklee College of Music in Boston where his jazz world grew exponentially. He met and began playing with future collaborators such as John Scofield, Bill Frisell and Kenny Werner, and discovered a way to incorporate the fire of idol John Coltrane’s late period with more traditional settings. “My training was all bebop, and suddenly there were these open forms with deceptive resolutions,” says Lovano. “That turned me on...I knew what I wanted to work on after that.”

After touring with Woody Herman’s Thundering Herd from 1976 to 1979, Lovano settled in New York, his early years filled with jam sessions and rent gigs, eventually playing with the Mel Lewis Orchestra where he joined the band’s regular Monday night concert at the famed Village Vanguard from 1980 through 1992. His first high-profile gig that brought him national attention was with guitarist and fellow Berklee graduate John Scofield’s Quartet, with whom he played and toured for three years. Lovano’s name became synonymous with versatility playing soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones, and occasionally the flute, in a multitude of styles from bebop to free jazz. Lovano began leading his own groups and has continued to do so since the early 90s when he was engaged as band leader at the Vanguard. Throughout his career he has collaborated with jazz legends like Herbie Hancock, Charlie Haden, Bobby Hutcherson, Billy Higgins, Dave Holland, McCoy Tyer, Jim Hall, Ed Blackwell, and many more. In 1994, twenty years after he graduated from Berklee, Lovano was awarded the prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award, and in 2001 he returned to Berklee as the Gary Burton Professor to lead student ensembles and share his impressive breadth of knowledge and experience with the next generation of jazz players.

As much a composer as a player, Lovano has long experimented with different ensembles constantly seeking new ways to express his musical ideas. He has produced 15 recordings on the Blue Note label, and his 52nd *Street Themes* and *On This Day...at the Vanguard*, both feature his four-year-old nonet. His newest CD due out this spring, *I’m All For You: Ballad Songbook*, is his

first all-ballad recording, and finds Lovano back in a quartet with long-time collaborators bassist George Mraz, drummer Paul Motian and pianist Hank Jones.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the **Joe Lovano Nonet** on **Saturday, April 24 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$22.00, \$32.00, and \$46.00**. Performance 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).

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, April 24 at 8:00 p.m.

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

Jazz

Joe Lovano Nonet

Program:

Striking a balance between a large ensemble and a small combo, tenor saxman Joe Lovano brings the **Joe Lovano Nonet** to Berkeley for an evening of jazz.

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