

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

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NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR
SWINGS THROUGH BERKELEY FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY
FRIDAY, MARCH 19 AT ZELLERBACH HALL

**PRESENTING A PROGRAM OF MUSIC AND STORIES,
JAZZ STARS OF TODAY PAY HOMAGE TO THE FESTIVAL'S LEGENDARY PAST**

BERKELEY, February 13, 2004 – Cal Performances welcomes a first tier roster of jazz greats to Berkeley to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival **Friday, March 19** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. The all-star line-up features **Terence Blanchard** (trumpet), **Cedar Walton** (piano), **Lew Tabackin** (saxophone, flute), **Ken Peplowski** (clarinet), **Lea DeLaria** (vocalist), **Howard Alden** (guitar), **Peter Washington** (bass), and **Karriem Riggins** (drums). History is a key element to the tour with the musicians doing more than just playing; each member of the band will talk about the history of his instrument and pay tribute to the great practitioners of the past. To celebrate this momentous occasion, a documentary film capturing the highlights of the Festival's first 50 years will screen continuously in the Zellerbach Hall lobby before, during intermission, and after the March 19 performance.

NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL

When jazz impresario **George Wein** was asked to organize an open-air festival in Newport, Rhode Island to complement the Tanglewood classical music festival in nearby Massachusetts, no one knew that the world of jazz would be changed forever, least of all Wein. "I called the first one the *First Annual Newport Jazz Festival*—I figured it was good for one year," recalled Wein, who has produced the festival for the past half century. The historic weekend of July 17 and 18, 1954 was the first time that an outdoor music festival was devoted entirely to the uniquely American musical form of jazz. It staked its claim as the grandfather of jazz festivals, assuming legendary status over five decades of operation. Over its long and illustrious history, the Newport Jazz Festival, currently known as the JVC Jazz Festival, has presented a pantheon of jazz immortals alongside rising young stars. The list includes Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davis, Billie Holiday, Lionel

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Hampton, Buddy Rich, Bobby McFerrin, the Count Basie Orchestra, Wynton Marsalis, Al Jarreau, and literally thousands of others.

THE MUSICIANS

The Newport Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Tour comes with an all-star ensemble featuring the Festival's trademark mix of youth and seniority. Pianist **Cedar Walton**, at age 70, is one of the great jazzmen who continues to influence a whole new generation of young talent. In a February 2000 review in the *Los Angeles Times*, music critic Don Heckman wrote, "Walton's solos were virtual instant compositions, spontaneously assembled into coherent musical structures, driven with an urgent sense of swing, and colorfully sprinkled with often whimsical quotes from other tunes." **Karriem Riggins** (drums), is at 28, the youngest musician on the tour, joining the band of legendary singer Betty Carter at the age of 19. Since then he has been heard live and on recordings with a variety of bands including those of Roy Hargrove, Eric Reed, Stephen Scott, Rodney Whitaker and Mulgrew Miller. In 1998 he joined the renowned bassist Ray Brown's trio, and when not touring the world with Brown, can be found in the studio with other major jazz acts.

Jazz trumpeter and composer **Terence Blanchard** is one of the leading musicians of his generation with Grammy and Emmy Award nominations for his work. Besides performing with his own quintet, Terence has a busy film and television scoring career, including extensive work with Spike Lee. **Lew Tabackin**, master of the tenor saxophone and flute and six-time Grammy-nominee, is acclaimed as a soloist, with his own ensembles, and as featured soloist with the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra, which he co-created in the 1970s. **Ken Peplowski** has been called "a clarinetist with a Benny Goodman tone and a Buddy DeFranco style." In addition to his prolific recording career—he has 16 solo albums with Concord Jazz Records—he is universally regarded as an extremely entertaining performer. Peplowski began his career in 1979 with the Tommy Dorsey band, under the direction of Buddy Morrow.

The New York Times calls vocalist **Lea DeLaria** "every inch a star" and critics from *Variety* to the *Los Angeles Times* compare her to a young Ethel Merman. Her role as Hildy in *On the Town* brought her national attention and an Obie Award. Her recent jazz CD, *Play it Cool*, won critical acclaim and marked an auspicious debut as a jazz artist. Grammy-nominated guitarist **Howard**

Alden's wide-ranging style and prolific catalogue of recordings have made him, according to the *Newark Star Ledger*, "the most impressive and creative member of a new generation of jazz guitarists." Notable recordings include those with George van Epps, Ken Peplowski, Benny Carter, and Joe Pass. **Peter Washington**, one of the most widely recorded bassists of his generation, has staked out a high point in the sparsely populated territory of master bassists. His strong, imaginative playing provides a solid pulse, unique phrasing and intelligent accompaniment, which keeps him in constant demand for ensemble work appearing at clubs, concerts and the leading jazz festivals across the United States, Europe and Japan. "Here's a group that [is made up of] great individual musicians," explained **George Wein**, founder and long-time producer of the Newport Jazz Festival. "They've all been involved with swing, bebop, modal music, and the concert will relate to all the musics that have been at Newport over the years."

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the **Newport Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Tour** on **Friday, March 19** 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

Friday, March 19 at 8:00 p.m.

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

Jazz

Newport Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Tour

Program:

A Golden Anniversary celebration of the venerable jazz institution featuring performances by today's jazz greats **Terence Blanchard, Cedar Walton, Lew Tabackin, Ken Peplowski, Lea DeLaria, Howard Alden, Peter Washington** and **Karriem Riggins**.

Tickets: \$22.00, \$32.00 and \$46.00, 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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