Free ‘Jazz in the Park’ Series Returns for 30th Year
Top-notch Talent Announced for 2019 Series

Clark County Parks and Recreation kicks off the spring with their annual Jazz in the Park Concert Series, which celebrates its 30th year. This year, the free series will feature Norman Brown on May 11, Tito Puente Jr. on May 18, Raul Midon on May 25, Althea Rene, Selina Albright & Kayla Waters on June 1 and Paul Taylor on June 15. Seating for those with picnic baskets, blankets and low-back chairs will begin at 5 p.m. with performances beginning as early as 6:30 p.m. at the Clark County Government Center Amphitheater, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway. Food and drinks will be available on site. Admission and parking are free.

“Jazz in the Park is a cultural institution in this town, a free event where we bring some of the biggest names in jazz here,” said former County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani. “It’s a great opportunity to enjoy great music in our beautiful amphitheater. Just bring a blanket, some lawn chairs and something to eat and drink and enjoy the music and the company of your neighbors and fellow jazz enthusiasts.”

Norman Brown was born in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1970 and grew up in Kansas City, Kansas. When he was eight years old, he was attracted to his brother's acoustic guitar. He was inspired by Jimi Hendrix and the Isley Brothers. Then when he heard Wes Montgomery, he began to play jazz. He attended the Musicians Institute in Hollywood. After graduating in 1984, he joined the staff and was an instructor until 1998. In 1991 he signed with Mo Jazz, a division of Motown. In 1992 he released his debut album, Just Between Us. Collaborators included Boyz II Men, Stevie Wonder, and Kenneth H. Williams. A portion of the album was produced by Norman Connors, a jazz drummer and producer who discovered Brown. In 1994 Brown released the album After the Storm, which gained critical success and was awarded best jazz album of the year by Soul Train Music Awards. It also won a Gavin Radio Award by remaining on the charts for over two years. He followed this album with the 1996 release Better Days Ahead, which earned him a broader audience and earned the American Jazz Award. In 1999, he returned from a three hiatus and signed with Warner Brothers releasing Celebration, which was produced by Brown, Paul Brown, Herman Jackson.

In 2002, he formed BWB with saxophonist Kirk Whalum and trumpeter Rick Braun, and they released Groovin’ supported by a successful U.S. tour.

During the summer of 2007, Brown had a No. 1 smooth jazz radio hit, "Let's Take a Ride", from the album Stay with Me, according to Radio and Records magazine. In 2008, the Verve Music Group re-released Just Between Us as part of its "Verve Originals" series. Brown's music can be heard during The Weather Channel's Local on the 8s segments. His song "Lydian" is included in their 2008 compilation album, The Weather Channel Presents: Smooth Jazz II. In 2011, Brown collaborated with Gerald Albright to
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record and released "24/7" which had a number one single "In the Moment" and earned him Grammy nomination.

Tito Puente Jr. New York-born Tito Puente Jr., son of a Latin music legend known as Rey del Timbal, studied music and composition at his native city, joining a heavy metal band, later, getting involved in Latin music, participating in different local numbers before moving to Miami. Tito Puente Jr.'s debut album called Guarachando, featuring classic "Oye Como Va," was released by EMI Latin in 1996, a year later, achieving a Billboard award for best video. Combining Afro-Caribbean rhythms, Latin jazz, and club/dance style, the talented musician returned with Sientelo, produced by A.B. Quintanilla and Larry Davis.

Raul Midon (born March 14, 1966) is a Grammy nominated American singer-songwriter and guitarist from New Mexico. He has received back to back Grammy Nominations in the Best Vocal Jazz Album category, 2017 Bad Ass and Blind and 2018 If You Really Want with Vince Mendoza conducting the Metropole Orkest. Midón was signed by Arif Mardin to Manhattan Records. In Mardin's long career, Midon was his first signing of an artist. Mardin and his son Joe produced Midon's debut album, State of Mind (2005). The album featured a guest performance by Stevie Wonder, one of his idols, another one with Jason Mraz, and a song written in tribute to Donny Hathaway entitled "Sittin' in the Middle." Midon is an avid amateur radio enthusiast, who used his call sign (KB5ZOT) using Morse code. Midon released the album A World Within a World on September 25, 2007.

Althea Rene/ Selina Albright / Kayla Waters -Flutist and bandleader Althea Rene is a dynamic, soulful performer with a bent toward contemporary jazz, funk, and instrumental R&B. A native of Detroit and daughter of trumpeter, saxophonist, and longtime original Funk Brother Dezie McCullers, Rene grew up in a musical family. Encouraged to study music from a young age, she eventually enrolled in a classical music program at Howard University in Washington, D.C. However, while at Howard she discovered her love of jazz, and eventually returned to Detroit. She entered the police academy and spent the next 11 years balancing her time between working as a Wayne County deputy sheriff and honing her musical skills playing jazz in local clubs. In 2000, she released her independently produced debut album, Flute Talk. More albums followed as her career took off, including 2003's Chocolate Rush, 2006's In the Moment, and 2008's No Restrictions. Along with her albums, she has made numerous festival appearances, including dates at the North Sea Jazz Festival, Austin Jazz Festival, Norman Brown All-Star Jazz Cruise, and others. In 2013, she signed with the Trippin 'n Rhythm label for the Michael Broening-produced In the Flow. Buoyed by the singles "Sunday Cruise" and "Free," it peaked at number one on the Billboard smooth jazz chart. Two years later she delivered the concert album Live in Detroit, showcasing a well-received performance at the Detroit Public Library.

Selina Albright’s R&B/Soul 2013 release entitled "Brighter" topped the UK Soul Chart for four weeks, and her sassy 2010 Jazz original "You and I," was featured on iTunes’ "Top 100 Downloads" list for the genre of Jazz in 2010! Her 2016 single release “Sun Comes Up” (2016) primed the market for her 2017 full-length R&B project entitled "Conversations," featuring Billboard chart-topping, Grammy-considered singles "Eat Something (feat. Kay-Ta Matsuno)" and "Possible." A Special Edition release of "Conversations" was released in 2017 throughout all Japanese territories, and remained on the Sapporo Hot 100 chart for weeks in a row, among artists such as Katy Perry and Rihanna! Aside from her R&B and Jazz releases, the artist has also joined forces with Electronic Dance Music artists, demonstrating yet another facet of her creativity. The world has responded strongly to her collaborations with the internationally-revered DJ duo Manufactured Superstars. A major highlight of her career was their performance of "Serious" for the Las Vegas Electric Daisy Carnival in 2011, before over 200,000 high-energy ravers and fans! Her creative relationship with Manufactured Superstars continues.

Kayla Waters is an elite pianist, composer, producer and music director. After landing a record deal with Trippin N' Rhythm Records (SONY), Kayla gracefully returns with her brand new radio single "Zephyr" from her sophomore album "Coevolve" set to release this Fall. Last year, Kayla's debut single "I Am" from her first record "Apogee" soared upward and hit #1 on Billboard's Smooth Jazz Chart just 10 weeks after its debut.

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After a very successful breakout year, both Kayla’s debut single and album charted on Billboard’s Smooth Jazz Songs and Albums of the Year. Kayla has eloquently found herself welcoming and utilizing a plethora of opportunities to play and work with musical legends, music directors and major recording artists worldwide. This distinctive list includes musical giants such as Stevie Wonder, Patrice Rushen, Avery*Sunshine, Maysa Leak, Kim Burse and Ray Chew to name a few. This past year, Kayla exploded on the music scene, gracing renowned stages across the country including the Derby City Jazz Festival, Rehoboth Beach Jazz Festival, Baltimore County African American Jazz Festival and the Catalina Island Jazz Festival. Kayla’s gifts also garnered her national recognition on the BET television networks highly acclaimed “Black Girls Rock” awards show. Kayla expertly played keyboards for the legendary Gladys Knight, Marsha Ambrosius, Corinne Bailey Rae, and Imani Uzuri. She was also a featured performing artist at the first annual Fender Rhodes Fest in Los Angeles, California along with a host of stellar music contemporaries.

Paul Taylor (born April 30, 1960) is an American smooth jazz saxophonist who has released eleven albums since his debut On the Horn in 1995. He is signed to Peak Records. Although originally from Denver, Colorado, he is based in Las Vegas, Nevada. He is known for his soulful sweet sound and innovative music. He also played as a special guest with the Rippingtons for a short time in 1999 and 2000, after Jeff Kashiwa left the group and before Eric Marienthal joined them. He collaborated with many R&B vocalists such as LaToya London, Regina Belle, Maxi Priest, Peabo Bryson and Terry Dexter.

Jazz In the Park Series is produced by Clark County Parks & Recreation and sponsored by Findlay Chevrolet, Nevada Public Radio and KUNV 91.5 The Source.

Those interested can call Clark County Parks and Recreation at (702) 455-8200 or visit the website at Clark County Parks and Recreation also can be found on social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook by visiting http://tinyurl.com/4dfw8ea.

Clark County is a dynamic and innovative organization dedicated to providing top-quality service with integrity, respect and accountability. With jurisdiction over the world-famous Las Vegas Strip and covering an area the size of New Jersey, Clark is the nation’s 14th-largest county and provides extensive regional services to more than 2.25 million citizens and 45.5 million visitors a year. Included are the nation’s 8th-busiest airport, air quality compliance, social services and the state’s largest public hospital, University Medical Center. The County also provides municipal services that are traditionally provided by cities to about 1 million residents in the unincorporated area. Those include fire protection, roads and other public works, parks and recreation, and planning and development.

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