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Lorenzo Nastasi – lorenzo@reachfortheheights.org

210-727-5340

30TH ANNIVERSARY BALCONES HEIGHTS JAZZ FESTIVAL

Blake Aaron and Will Donato to Headline

Nina & the Gypsies to Open the City's Summer Jazz Concert

BALCONES HEIGHTS, TX -- The Balcones Heights Jazz Festival will host its much-anticipated 30th anniversary season on Friday, July 19, 2024. Performances will take place at the Amphitheater at Wonderland of the Americas. Headlining will be Blake Aaron and Will Donato, featuring Erin Stevenson, with Nina & the Gypsies opening.

“We are excited to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Balcones Heights Jazz Festival in July; the evening features an outstanding line up of national and local artists at the Wonderland Amphitheater,” said Lorenzo Nastasi, Director Economic Development & Public Affairs for the City of Balcones Heights.

“One of the many elements that makes the Jazz Festival successful is that year after year, the concert is a FREE family-friendly jazz performance by top artists,” says City of Balcones Heights Mayor Johnny Rodriguez. “We have continued to provide the Jazz Festival event since 1994, keeping the beat for 30 years and counting.”

Opening the music at 7:30 PM will be Grammy award-winning percussionist Nina Rodriguez, Nina & the Gypsies are a circle of independent artists, a closely bonded group of friends who resonate with a shared love for the same genres of music. Discovering like-minded artists is truly a gift, characterized by humility, kindness, passion and creativity. “Together, we are the Gypsies;” says Nina Rodriguez. The performance will feature two local artists

After the Latin group’s performance, headliners Blake Aaron and Will Donato take the stage at 9:00 PM. Aaron launched his career as an LA studio musician. Named "a genius on the guitar" by the Los Angeles Times, Guitarist Blake Aaron has taken the Contemporary Jazz world by storm recently with a total of SEVEN #1 Billboard Singles as a solo artist. Three #1 Billboard Singles as a producer and two #1 Billboard Singles as a featured artist, including the #1 Billboard Song of the Year for 2022. Blake Aaron has recorded and/or performed with such artists as

Philip Bailey (Earth Wind and Fire), Carlos Santana (Womack-Save the Children), The Drifters, Marion Meadows (2023 Balcones Heights Jazz Festival headliner) and producer Bill Laswell. The latest release, ***“Love and Rhythm,”*** is his passion for creating music from a wide array of sounds and styles. Aaron wrote and produced with Billboard hitmakers Adam Hawley and Greg Manning and blends contemporary jazz, R&B, funk and pop music along with a couple of audacious departures that venture into fusion and Brazilian jazz. The album, released April 19, has already notched three Billboard No. 1 singles, “Dreamland”, “She’s the One”, and “Feels So Right”. ***“‘Love and Rhythm’*** is all about my musical journey and my love for all kinds of rhythm and music. I have spent my life in pursuit of exploring the beauty of every genre of music there is. I will probably never be bored!” says Aaron.

Will Donato is one of music’s most dynamic performers, gifted with the ability to bond and connect with his audiences. His latest radio single “GOOD ON YOU” was a Billboard #1 hit in Winter 2022. A previous single release “INFINITE SOUL” (January 2019) has over 3.5 MILLION streams to date on Spotify alone and reached the coveted #1 spot on the Billboard smooth jazz airplay chart in 2019.

A cancer survivor who truly celebrates each day and each person he meets, Will has headlined or shared the stage as a special guest at the Blue Note in New York City, the Seabreeze Jazz Festival, the Algarve Groove International Jazz Festival in Portugal, The Rehoboth Beach Jazz Festival, Humphrey’s By The Bay, The Capital Jazz Cruise, and Rick Braun’s New Year’s Eve.

Will has performed with some of the best-known musicians of the groove / smooth jazz genre, namely Al McKay of Earth Wind and Fire, Richard Elliot, Bruce Conte of Tower of Power, and Nick Colionne. He has worked in the pop music genre as well - most notably with Gerald Levert, Wynonna Judd, Toni Childs, and superstar Richard Marx. His music can be heard on the number one contemporary jazz legacy hit from Steve Oliver, “High Noon” as well as on the soundtracks from several movie scores including Thelma and Louise, The Wedding Planner, Under the Boardwalk, and No Man’s Land.

Balcones Heights Jazz Festival has captivated jazz aficionados from in and around Texas with a free stellar line-up in the festival’s laid back and family-friendly atmosphere. Festival regulars or as they call themselves, “jazz babies”, grab their favorite spots along the edge of the sparkling reflecting pool and fountain of the city’s main hub, Wonderland of the Americas.

The Balcones Heights Jazz Festival is produced through a partnership of the City of Balcones Heights, Wonderland of the Americas, and iHeartMedia. David Muñoz is back again to host the Jazz Festival, as he has every year since the event’s inception. Muñoz, known as San Antonio's

very own "Jazzman," is serving as emcee and co-producer of the festival. David also hosts "Smooth Jazz San Antonio" on KQXT/Q101.9 HD-2 and iHeart Radio App/Texas Central Region.

General admission to the festival is free and parking is free at Wonderland of the Americas, 4522 Fredericksburg Road, Balcones Heights, Texas. Wonderland of the Americas is located at the intersection of IH-10 and Loop 410, just a few minutes from downtown San Antonio, and minutes from the South Texas Medical Center.

Hillside seating around the Amphitheater is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fans sometimes stake out their spots as early as the Monday preceding the Friday concert! Food and beverage vendors will be on-site. Attendees can also visit the Food Court inside Wonderland of the Americas. No coolers and outside food and beverages are allowed at the Amphitheater.

For more information about the festival, visit [San Antonio Central: Balcones Heights | Jazz Festival \(reachfortheheights.org\)](#), and the event's [Facebook page](#).

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