Branford Marsalis Quartet Concert to Highlight Saxophone Conference at the University of Dayton
BRANFORD MARSALIS QUARTET CONCERT TO HIGHLIGHT SAXOPHONE CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

DAYTON, Ohio — When Willie Morris III agreed to host the 2001 North American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) regional conference at the University of Dayton, the music professor aspired to go into NASA’s record books as having signed the “biggest-name feature artist” in conference history. He’s confident Branford Marsalis fills that bill.

Marsalis, one of today’s hottest contemporary jazz artists, will close UD’s “The Multi-Colored Saxophone” conference with a concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 17, in the Frericks Athletic and Convocation Center on campus. The tenor sax great will be joined by his quartet, featuring pianist Joey Calderazzo, bassist Eric Revis and drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts. The Dayton Jazz Ensemble will join the Saturday night jam.

Tickets for the conference, which runs Feb. 15-17 and includes the Marsalis concert, range from $5 to $25 dollars and are available to conference participants and the public by calling the UD box office at (937) 229-2545.

The Marsalis concert is also being held in conjunction with the University of Dayton’s sesquicentennial anniversary and Black History Month celebrations.

“I’m very excited,” said Morris, who coordinated “The Multi-Colored Saxophone.” “Branford is the biggest-name feature artist in the history of this regional conference.”

The three-day saxophone conference is open to music professionals, students, educators and fans and features clinics, discussions, lessons, master classes, performance improvisation and concerts by some of the nation’s top performers and clinicians.

Though he’s well-known for his two-year stint as band leader for NBC’s Tonight Show in the early 1990s, critics attribute Marsalis’ true claim to fame to two decades of evolution as a jazz artist. From his roots of blatant imitation of some of the sax greats, such as Wayne Shorter of “Weather Report” fame, Marsalis gradually developed into an “adventurous, highly original...
improviser," according to Tom Moon, music critic for Philadelphia’s *The Inquirer*.

His most recent album, *Contemporary Jazz*, has been nominated for a Grammy Award in the category of best jazz instrumental album, individual or group. (Grammy winners will be announced during the 43rd annual ceremony beginning at 8 p.m. Feb. 21) A new disc, *Creation*, is scheduled for a March 6 release.

In addition to maintaining an active concert schedule with his quartet, Marsalis serves as the host of NPR’s *JazzSet*, an award-winning weekly jazz radio series featuring contemporary artists from around the world.

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For media interviews, call Willie Morris III at (937) 229-3994.