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Birdfoot Festival

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The seventh annual Birdfoot Festival returns to New Orleans celebrating the Tricentennial on May 21–June 2, 2018 with a series of concerts and events throughout the city.

New Orleans, LA – From May 21–June 2, 2018 the seventh annual **Birdfoot Festival** will fill venues across New Orleans with a week of “fiery, committed, intensely personal” music-making (Chris Waddington, *Times-Picayune* music critic). An international chamber music festival with New Orleans flavor, the 2018 Birdfoot Festival features an extraordinary group of artists performing chamber music that roves from timeless classics to cutting edge contemporary collaborations with broad appeal for listeners of all musical tastes.

The full 2018 Birdfoot Festival schedule, available at birdfootfestival.org, features a series of unique concerts and events ranging from world-caliber performances in intimate venues to open rehearsals and “backstage” experiences. The festival’s sixteen artists include British cellist David Waterman of the renowned *Endellion Quartet* (making his New Orleans debut), New Orleans native and clarinetist Jonathan Cohen, and *Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra* violinist Kate Withrow. Returning artists include *Borromeo Quartet* violinist Kristopher Tong, *Argus Quartet* violinist Clara Kim and cellist Joann Whang, and Grammy-nominated *A Far Cry* members violinist Alex Fortes and Michael Unterman. Guest artists include New Orleans jazz bassist James Singleton and Afro-Cuban percussionists Michael Skinkus and Dwayne Muhammad.

Treats in store for music lovers include a concert in tribute to the New Orleans tricentennial that explores the Afro-Cuban roots of New Orleans jazz and the influence of jazz on European classical composers, works inspired by Klezmer traditions and Hungarian gypsy music, and much more. Music by Wynton Marsalis, Paquito D’Rivera, Jelly Roll Morton, Joseph Haydn, Osvaldo Golijov, George Enescu, Igor Stravinsky, Maurice Ravel, Johannes Brahms, among others.

"Birdfoot is an important and unique festival in the New Orleans community because it brings local and international musicians and audiences together for a truly intimate and personal experience," says Jenna Sherry, Birdfoot Festival's Artistic Director. "Birdfoot brings extraordinary chamber music into the atmosphere of a New Orleans jazz club, creating a relaxed and riveting experience."

Before the stage lights come on, every Birdfoot Festival begins with an Artist Rehearsal Residency. "At Birdfoot, we believe that when musicians have time to fully engage in this creative process, audiences experience the exhilarating results—gripping performances that lift off the page and breathe life into old and new notes alike," says Sherry.

Birdfoot Festival's popular concerts and events include:

New Orleans 300: Creole Contradanzas — Wednesday, May 30, 2018, at 8 PM, at the New Orleans Jazz Museum at the Old U.S. Mint, 400 Esplanade Ave. In honor of the New Orleans Tricentennial, the Birdfoot Festival celebrates the Spanish and African roots of jazz with irresistible rhythms and hip-swinging beats.

Birdfoot Backstage — Thursday, May 31, 2018, 7 PM, at the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans’s Freeport-McMoRan Theater, 900 Camp Street. This popular and interactive event takes the audience “backstage” with Birdfoot Festival musicians for a lively exploration of Enescu’s ravishing Octet.

Late Night at the Ace — Thursday, May 31, 2018, at 10 PM, at the Three Keys in the Ace Hotel New Orleans, 600 Carondelet St. This late-night set features sizzling music by *Enescu* and *Golijov*.

Alla Zingarese Concert — Friday, June 1, 2018, 8 PM at the Contemporary Arts Center Theater, 900 Camp Street. This concert features works inspired by the music of the Hungarian gypsies and Klezmer traditions. The concert will be preceded by a 7 PM *Introduction to the Music* by renowned composer and speaker Patrick Castillo.

Season Finale: The Devil’s Violin — Saturday, June 2, 2018, 8 PM at the George and Joyce Wein Jazz and Heritage Center, 1225 North Rampart Street. The Birdfoot Festival wraps with a concert of fierce fiddling and French flavor. The audience is invited to stay for a post-concert celebration. The concert will be preceded by a 7 PM performance featuring student chamber ensembles from Birdfoot’s award-winning Young Artist Program.

Other Festival events include a free Community Chamber Music Reading Party, a free downtown Lunchtime Concert, Birdfoot’s annual Musical Feast dinner concert (hosted by Brennan’s Restaurant and James Beard Award finalist Chef Slade Rushing), Open Rehearsals at the Contemporary Arts Center, Young Artist Program concerts, and more. Artist photos, bios, and detailed descriptions of all events are available at www.birdfootfestival.org, or upon request.

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For interview requests please contact Tracey Sherry at 504.451.6578.

In its seventh season, the Birdfoot Festival has established itself as a top-rate international festival grounded in local culture. Sixteen dynamic musicians and performers spend ten days in New Orleans rehearsing, teaching, performing, and inspiring music lovers and the next generation of musicians alike.