

Sports & Entertainment



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Memphian Kirk Whalum releases ‘Bah-De-Yah’ single from upcoming album ‘Epic Cool’; Memphis concert on June 2

Collection is Whalum's First New Studio Work in Over Five Years

Award-winning Memphis-born jazz saxophonist Kirk Whalum announces the release of his newest single “Bah-De-Yah!” taken from his upcoming album Epic Cool which releases May 17th via Mack Avenue Music Group/Artistry Music. For nearly four decades, the Grammy-winning saxophonist has helped to define “cool,” whether blazing trails in contemporary jazz or infusing hits by Luther Vandross or Whitney Houston with an extra jolt of soul. His new album raises the bar once again, scaling up the hipness, vitality, soulfulness, and vibes to a monumental level.

While perhaps best known for having performed one of the most listened-to sax solos ever – for Whitney Houston’s version of “I Will Always Love You” – Whalum continues to push boundaries beyond genre and style. “I’m still on this path trying

to do something important,” Whalum insists. “At 65, I still feel very young. I feel like I have a mandate to be the very best version of myself and to push down some more doors.”

That life encompasses more than 25 albums under Whalum’s own name, including a Grammy-nominated collaboration with pianist Bob James; his faith-and-soul melding Gospel According to Jazz series; and a trio of albums with the super-group BWB, alongside guitarist Norman Brown and trumpeter Rick Braun. That’s in addition to his work alongside everyone from the late Joey DeFrancesco to such legends as Barbra Streisand, Quincy Jones, Al Jarreau, and Larry Carlton.

To achieve that goal Whalum partnered with Swiss-Nigerian producer/songwriter Greg Manning, whom he first encountered as a keyboardist with guitarist Jonathan Butler. “He’s European and yet he has an African soul,” Whalum says. “I wanted him to bring his classical training to-



Kirk Whalum releases his new work “Epic Cool” after a five-year period. (Photo Credit: Evelyn Freja)

gether with his understanding of traditional jazz for this project.” ““Bah-De-Yah!” represents what it feels like to LOVE LIFE! Co-writing this project with my brilliant Swiss soul brother Greg Manning, especially this song, felt like speed-gliding from my 19th year — studying in Paris — through my 29th year — first time performing in Switzerland — through my 34th year — moving to Paris with our four young kids — to my 37th year — playing alongside my boss, Whitney Houston, standing onstage with Nelson Mandela for the end of apartheid in S. Africa... ALL IN FOUR MINUTES! Joy, joy, a bit of gratitude, and an authentic croissant with S. African rooibos tea, and then just more joy... Can’t imagine what fun 66 will bring, but this record makes me more excited than ever!!”

The eleven tracks on the album span all the touchstones of the artist’s repertoire, kicking off with the funk of “Bah-De-Yah!,”

the finger-snapping sultriness of “Pillow Talk,” and the soaring balladry of “Through the Storm” and “You & Sunday Morning.” “Crusaderation” pays tribute to one of Whalum’s key influences, the Jazz Crusaders – Joe Sample, Wayne Henderson and Wilton Felder. Their importance to Whalum is reflected in the very special line-up for the track – the rare convergence of the saxophonist’s musical family, including son Kyle on bass and nephews Kameron on trombone and Kenneth III on tenor. All three bring a solid foundation from the pop world – Kameron tours with Bruno Mars and Anderson.Paak, Kenneth is a successful solo artist who has worked with Beyoncé and Kanye West, and Kyle plays in the house bands for The Voice and The Kelly Clarkson Show.

Whalum will bring his Epic Cool nationwide on his upcoming tour following the release.

Producer: Greg Manning, except

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Sidney Chism 24th Annual Community Picnic set for June 22 with free food and festivities for family fun

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—For the twenty-third year, former Shelby County Commissioner Sidney Chism will host his annual “Chism Community Picnic,” with music, recreation, a petting zoo, and college information for recent high school graduates. “We’re especially excited this year, as we are able to get back to 100 percent since the pandemic began,” said Chism.

The picnic is free and open to the

“My wife Lillie and I are thrilled to keep hosting this picnic to bring the community, friends, and families together in a safe and healthy environment. As long as I have breath in my body, it will continue.”

public, and for nearly two decades, the event has been a source of pride and community involvement for the Whitehaven and Westwood communities. Students and families across Shelby County are invited, with special features for children, music for all ages, free food, and refresh-

ments. Festivities begin at 12:00 noon and end at 5:00 pm.

Often referred to as “Chism Park,” the 10-acre greenspace is adjacent to the Horn Lake Learning Center, located at 3657 Horn Lake Road between Mitchell Road and Raines Road. The facility boasts rolling hills with plenty of shade and will feature a soundstage for live music, pony rides, and incredible cultural diversity.

Church groups, family reunions, neighborhood associations, County and city governments, and law enforcement agencies are encouraged to attend with as many guests as they like. Vendor spaces are also available with a reservation.

For more information please call 901.870.2085 or 901.502.0166.

Chism added, “My wife Lillie and I are thrilled to keep hosting this picnic to bring the community, friends, and families together in a safe and healthy environment. As long as I have breath in my body, it will continue.”

FedExForum joins Live Nation with Lionel Richie and Maxwell concerts

– Lionel Richie Plays FedExForum May 29; Maxwell Plays Memphis Oct. 16 –

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – As part of Live Nation’s highly celebrated Concert Week, tickets for two upcoming FedExForum concerts will be on sale for \$25 from now through Tuesday, May 14.

Fans can purchase \$25 tickets to see Lionel Richie + Earth Wind & Fire: Sing A Song All Night Long tour on May 29, and Maxwell: The Serenade Tour on Oct. 16, while inventory lasts.

Concertgoers can visit LiveNation.com/ConcertWeek to see the full list of participating events. The general onsale for Concert Week will begin Wednesday, May 8, at 9 a.m. CT through Tuesday, May 14, at 11:59 p.m. Concert Week tickets will include

all fees upfront in the \$25 all-in cost. Any taxes will be added at checkout as applicable to the city, state and venue.

FedExForum has a clear bag policy that limits the size and types of bags that may be brought into the venue for all events. Only clear bags made of plastic, vinyl, or PVC no larger than 6x8x2 inches will be allowed inside FedExForum. Clear bags may not have an all-over print or decoration that prohibits full view of its contents. Clear bags may contain a strap, but metal or chain straps are prohibited. Guests will be limited to one (1) clear bag per person. For more information, visit fedexforum.com/arena-policy-updates.

For additional information, visit www.livenationentertainment.com.

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