

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Hutchinson
Ann Arbor Blues & Jazz Festival
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THE ANN ARBOR BLUES & JAZZ FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES THE 2003 LINEUP!
Featuring Randy Weston and Deborah Coleman

The Ann Arbor Blues & Jazz Festival, is pleased to announce the lineup for the 2003 Festival, taking place **September 19, 20 & 21**. 2003 is a year of transition for the Ann Arbor Blues & Jazz Festival. Well known for its wide-ranging mix of blues and jazz music, the festival forgoes its long-standing tradition of outdoor concerts in Ann Arbor's Gallup Park. This year, the nationally renowned festival, relocates to downtown Ann Arbor with an eye on the future, to focus on showcases at our indoor partner venues, **The Bird of Paradise** and **The Firefly Club**. We are pleased to present two very special club shows featuring noted Jazz pianist and educator, Mutable Recording Artist **Randy Weston and his African Rhythms Trio** and **Deborah Coleman**, Blues guitarist and Blind Pig Recording Artist. **Festival Board President Joe Tiboni** said "We are really excited to have these two great performers this year. Together, they represent the mission of the festival pretty well." He added, "We firmly believe in the outdoor festival experience. We just don't have the wherewithal to do it this year. We were hoping to do something downtown this year but sponsorship and logistics didn't allow for it."

With a professional resume that goes back to the late 1940s, and includes such luminaries as Cecil Payne, Max Roach, and Kenny Dorham, **Randy Weston** began his career as a disciple of Thelonius Monk. AMG's Richard Ginell writes "Weston has gradually absorbed the letter and spirit of African and Caribbean rhythms and tunes, welding everything together into a searching, energizing, often celebratory blend. His piano work ranges across a profusion of styles from boogie-woogie through bop into dissonance, marking by a stabbing quality reminiscent of, but not totally indebted to, Monk." Of particular interest to Weston was his collaboration with the Gnawa, the traditional musicians of Morocco. Involved with their cultural traditions for more than twenty years, he continues to record and participate in international festivals with the master Gnawa musicians. Writer Langston Hughes once said of Weston; "*When Randy plays, a combination of strength and gentleness, virility and velvet emerges from the keys in an ebb and flow of sound seemingly as natural as the waves of the sea.*"

A rare opportunity to see one of the remaining giants of Jazz, **Randy Weston's African Rhythms Trio** take the stage in the intimate setting of The Bird of Paradise for two nights, with performances at 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. In keeping with the Festival's mission of providing access to our performers, a **Master Class** with area students is still in the planning stages; details will be forthcoming when finalized.

In 1993, Blues guitarist **Deborah Coleman** won a national amateur talent contest, and the rest, as they say, is history. The director recalls that Coleman delivered, "...a bone-rattling set to a capacity audience that almost shut down the contest..." Coleman is a highly charismatic stage performer who has earned a well-deserved reputation for raw energetic vocals, fiery guitar playing and crowd-pleasing shows. Making a return appearance at the Festival, she is electrifying performer and one of the hottest guitarists playing the blues today. This year, she received two nominations for the 24th annual W.C Handy awards in the categories of Blues Entertainer of the Year and Contemporary Blues-Female Artist of the Year. Deborah Coleman brings her high-energy live show to the Firefly Club, Friday, September 19th, for two performances, at 9:00 PM and 11:00 PM.

In addition to these nationally acclaimed performers, the Festival presents, in conjunction with the Firefly Club, the '**Easy Street Jazz Band**', Friday, Sept. 19th for Happy Hour, from 5 until 8 PM, featuring Paul Klinger, nationally recognized music scholar James Dapogny and the Firefly's own Susan Chastain. On Saturday, Sept. 20th, it's '**Brazil and Beyond**', Showtime 9 PM, with veteran bassist Rich Kowalewski who formed Brazil and Beyond five years ago. The group has two CDs, "Amanha" and "Beatles" (a recording of all-Beatles tunes done in a Brazilian style) to its credit. On Sunday, Sept. 21st, a **Gospel Brunch** with a special sumptuous Sunday breakfast offering concludes the Festival with the **Praying Hands Gospel Choir**, Showtimes at 10:00 AM and 1:30 PM.

Tickets for Randy Weston and Deborah Coleman go on sale Saturday, Aug. 30th, at 9 AM at the **Michigan Union Ticket Office** and at all **Ticketmaster** locations. To charge by phone, (734) **763-TKTS**. Tickets also available at the downtown **Borders** store and **P.J.'s Used Records and CDs**, in Ann Arbor. Randy Weston tickets are \$30 each and are also available at the **Bird of Paradise**, Deborah Coleman tickets are \$15 each and are also available at the **Firefly Club**. Easy Street, Brazil and Beyond and Gospel Brunch tickets at the door, only. Festival information at (734) 747-9955. Complete information at www.a2blue.jazzfest.org

The Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival strives each year to provide the community with a unique and spirited program of music that is truly American and worthy of its legendary status. It remains one of the region's premier showcases for authentic blues and jazz in its many roots and variations. The Festival is proud to have the corporate support of **WEMU 89.1, Main Street Ventures, the Metro Times, WDET, ArborFood, MondoDyne Web Works, Challis Road Development, LLC, Northridge Meadows Condominiums in Brighton, Hometown Newspapers, Downtown Home and Garden, Kinko's and Weber's Inn.**

Visit the **Ann Arbor Blues & Jazz Festival website**: <http://www.a2.blues.jazzfest.org/>

The **Bird of Paradise** is located at 312 S. Main Street, between Liberty and William Streets in Downtown Ann Arbor. Phone 734.662.8310. Website: <http://www.thebirdofparadise.com/>

The **Firefly Club** is located at 207 S. Ashley, between Liberty and Washington Streets in Downtown Ann Arbor. Phone: 734.665.9090. Website: <http://www.fireflyclub.com/home.htm>

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Deborah Coleman, The Firefly Club, Friday, September 19th, Showtimes at 9:00 and 11:00 PM. Tickets are \$15 each.

'Brazil and Beyond', The Firefly Club, Saturday, Sept. 20th, Showtime 9 PM, \$15 at the door.

Gospel Brunch featuring the **Praying Hands Gospel Choir**, The Firefly Club, Sunday, Sept. 21st, 10:00 am & 1:30 PM. \$15 at the door.

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