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Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival Adds Latin Jazz Artist to Lineup

“The Premier Jazz and Blues Festival in the Midwest”

It’s difficult to imagine the Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival bigger and better than last year’s, but the Clark Connection Group has the 2005 Festival poised to completely surpass the standards established over the past two years.

This fourth annual Jazz and Blues Festival is one of the most anticipated events of the Omaha summer. This is the premier jazz and blues event in the Midwest and is two days packed with live musical performances featuring some of the most celebrated local and national jazz and blues musicians. To add a twist to the lineup, the sensational sounds of Ray Obiedo and the Urban Latin Jazz Project will spice up the evening with the sizzling sounds of Latin music that is sure to get the crowd on their feet.

The festival is scheduled for July 8 and 9. All performances will be held outdoors at the Lewis and Clark Landing at the Downtown Riverfront (right next to Rick’s Boatyard Café). Performances begin at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, July 8 and last until 11:30 p.m. On Saturday, July 9, the entertainment starts at 3:30 p.m. and lasts until 11:30 p.m. Gates open one hour before the show.

This year’s top-notch performers include Kevin Eubanks from the Tonight Show, Jon Cleary, Brian Culbertson, Kirk Whalum, Diunna Greenleaf and Blue Mercy, Ken Ford, Brian Jack and the Zydeco Gamblers, Gulizia Brothers and Ray Obiedo and the Ultra Latin Jazz Project.

The soulful sounds of these musicians will permeate the air as you kick back and relax with family and friends while enjoying the lazy days of summer, food, drink and beautiful views of the Omaha skyline.

Midwest Airlines is giving away **2round trip tickets** on Friday AND Saturday, July 8 and 9. The first 500 attendees on both days will have their name placed in a drawing and will have the exciting opportunity to be the winner of **2 FREE round trip tickets courtesy of Midwest Airlines!**

Shuttle service will be provided by MAT. Park at Gallup Campus and ride the MAT shuttle for \$1.00. Schedule will be posted on www.metroareatransit.com

Presenting sponsor for the 2005 Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival is **US Bank**. Other major sponsors include: Mutual of Omaha, the Douglas County Visitors Improvement Fund, KETV Channel 7, The Reader, Budweiser, Pepsi, OPPD and Midwest Airlines.

Special hotel packages are available for those attending the Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival. For more information, contact Audrey Hulseley at Convention Meeting Services – info@CMSOmaha.com or call 888.339.1142/402.393.1142.

Complete festival information can be obtained through www.omahajazzandblues.com or by calling 402.884.1214. Tickets for the Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival may be purchased at the **Ticket Omaha Office** located at the Orpheum Theater, online at www.ticketomaha.org, by phone at (402) 345-0606 or (402) 341-1811 (TTY). Tickets can also be purchased at **all Homers locations, Leola's CD's & Tapes and Import Village**. Daily tickets purchased in advance are \$15, \$20 at the gate and \$25 for both days. Advance tickets are subject to service charges at the various outlets.

Cecil Bernard, commissioned artist for the Omaha Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival and a professional painter for more than 30 years, has become known as “an artist to the stars.” He specializes in jazz and abstract paintings and his paintings can be found in the collections of Wynton Marsalis, Magic Johnson and Steve Harvey. Cecil will be on-site to autograph his pieces.

The festival is managed by Omaha's Clark Connection Group and is produced by the Midland's Cultural and Historical Association. For more information: go to www.omahajazzandblues.com or call (402) 884.1214.