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BRANFORD MARSALIS AND JOEY CALDERAZZO BRING MUSICAL EXCELLENCE AND MELODIC BEAUTY TO THEIR NEW DUO ALBUM, *SONGS OF MIRTH AND MELANCHOLY*, JUNE 17th

CAMBRIDGE, MA – Marsalis Music is pleased to announce the June 7th release of *Songs of Mirth and Melancholy*, the new duo recording from Branford Marsalis and Joey Calderazzo. While their paired evolution has been a brightness at the core of an adventurous band that itself has added light and heat to the music of its time, on *Songs of Mirth and Melancholy*, Marsalis and Calderazzo reveal an ever deepening musical relationship and illuminate a shared belief in the importance of musicality over technicality. Featuring several original compositions by the artists, as well as two other selections, *Songs* is an inspired and intimate collection from these two highly acclaimed artists.

Marsalis has embraced the challenge of duo performances on albums with his father Ellis, family friend Harry Connick, Jr. and now pianist and long-time collaborator Calderazzo. “I have only played duo with Harry, my dad and Joey,” the saxophonist says, “and with Joey I can go in different directions.”

On *Songs*, the mutual admiration between Marsalis and Calderazzo is expressed through music that is the result of close listening, cooperation, and continuous adjustment to one another’s musical ideas. Branford says, “The duo is more like classical chamber music. You have to listen to each other or it doesn’t work.” Joey adds that they challenge each other to step up their playing; “I put myself out there now, painting myself into corners to see if I can figure out the puzzle.” The musicians both treat the duo performance as an opportunity for something completely unique from their performances together in the Branford Marsalis Quartet. “...the object is not to play in the same way that you play in other situations. You have to change the conversation as well as the setting. Once you know the form, you can just react to each other, which you can’t do when a group gets larger.”

Songs includes three original compositions from Marsalis, four from Calderazzo, a cover of a Wayne Shorter’s “Face on the Barroom Floor,” and Brahms’s “Die Trauernde,” which Marsalis identifies as “the inspiration for how we approach everything as a duo.” Marsalis and Calderazzo recorded *Songs* close to home at Durham, North Carolina’s Hayti Center. Marsalis describes the room as having qualities that “studios and concert halls pay millions to achieve. The sound is incredibly intimate, and very naked.”

The same could be said of the sounds that Branford Marsalis and Joey Calderazzo have brought forth on *Songs of Mirth and Melancholy*. Neighbors, golf buddies, teaching colleagues, longtime band members and friends, Marsalis and Calderazzo share with their listeners a passionate and profound duo collection.

About Marsalis Music

Marsalis Music is the creation of Branford Marsalis, one of the most celebrated jazz musicians of the past quarter century. Based upon his extensive experience as a saxophonist, composer and bandleader, Marsalis recognized the need to form a label that allows a diverse array of musicians to document their best effort. Launched in 2002, Marsalis Music has focused primarily on jazz, with a roster featuring such promising new artists as Miguel Zenón and Claudia Acuña as well as Marsalis himself and such established stylists as Joey Calderazzo and Harry Connick, Jr. The label also sponsors Marsalis Jams through its non-profit arm, Music Education Initiative, Inc. Marsalis Jams has presented ensembles in performance/jam session settings on college and high school campuses around the country, featuring such leading musicians as Sean Jones, David Sánchez, Miguel Zenón and the late James Williams. The label also conceived and has helped to realize the New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village project that has provided seventy-seven homes for displaced musicians and their families as well as other displaced residents of New Orleans.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE ARTISTS OR THIS PROJECT, PLEASE VISIT WWW.MARSALISMUSIC.COM
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