

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 9, 2005



**NEW PIANO ALBUM, OCCASION (CONNICK ON PIANO VOL. 2),**  
**FEATURING BRANFORD MARSALIS, TO BE RELEASED**  
**BY MARSALIS MUSIC ON JUNE 14**

**"THE HAPPY ELF" ANIMATED 3D SPECIAL STEAMS AHEAD: SPECIAL WILL BE  
RELEASED ON DVD BY ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT THIS FALL**

Cambridge, MA—Harry Connick Jr. has just completed a very special recording called "Occasion (Connick on Piano, Vol. 2)," featuring revered tenor saxophonist Branford Marsalis. Connick and Marsalis have known each other since they were young kids in New Orleans but because of grueling schedules for both musical giants, they have not had the opportunity, until now, to record as a duo. Marsalis Music will release the album on June 14, 2005. "Occasion" is the follow up to Connick's critically praised 2003 piano album on Marsalis Music, "Other Hours (Connick on Piano, Vol. 1)," which was chosen as one of the New Yorker's top ten jazz albums of 2003.

Recorded over a marathon weekend in March 2005 in Durham, NC, Connick likens the sound of his piano and Marsalis' saxophone on "Occasion" to a "spirited, spiritual game of tag where home base is but a melody away." The session was both informal and spontaneous which allowed Connick to come to the studio prepared with a few songs in hand; then, let the experience of being with his friend and fellow musician inspire him to write more. More intimate than its quartet predecessor "Other Hours," this new disc reminds us that as multi-talented as Connick is, he is at his core, a commanding pianist and composer. "Occasion" features 13 tracks with eleven written by Connick and two compositions from Marsalis.

Connick and Marsalis will make a few special appearances together to play music from "Occasion." The first will be June 24 in Ottawa, Canada at the Library & Archives Auditorium as part of the 25th Anniversary of the Ottawa Jazz Festival. The second will be at the closing evening of the JVC Jazz Festival in New York City at Zankel Hall on June 25.

Connick has also been very busy working on "The Happy Elf," a 3D animated special based on his original song from his platinum smash hit Christmas album, "Harry For The Holidays." Production on the special has been moving along at breakneck speed by Film Roman, an IDT Entertainment Company, the same animation company known for producing "The Simpsons." Connick has written the score and three new songs for the

show and the cast has been busy recording their parts. In addition to Connick as the part of the narrator "Lil Farley," cast members include comedian Lewis Black, Carol Kane, Rob Paulsen, Kevin Michael Richardson and Mickey Rooney. Negotiations for a broadcast deal are underway.

Anchor Bay Entertainment, a leading home video distribution company, will distribute "The Happy Elf" on DVD and home video in time for the Christmas season 2005.

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For album art and new photos, visit: <http://www.shorefire.com/artists/hconnick>