



BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES

March 2011

For Immediate Release:

BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE OF *ROCKET SCIENCE* ON MAY 17

FIRST RECORD WITH ORIGINAL LINEUP SINCE 1991

NATIONAL TOUR BEGINS MAY 29

eOne Music is excited to announce the May 17 release of Grammy Award-winning Béla Fleck & The Flecktones' new album, *Rocket Science*. For the first time since 1991, pianist/ harmonica player Howard Levy has returned to the fold alongside bassist Victor Wooten, percussionist/Drumitarist Roy "Futureman" Wooten and banjoist bandleader Fleck to create some of the most forward-thinking music of their long, storied career. While all manners of genres come into play – from classical and jazz to bluegrass and African music to electric blues and Eastern European folk dances – the result is an impossible to pigeonhole sound all their own, a meeting of musical minds that remains, as ever, utterly indescribable. Simply put, it is The Flecktones, the music made only when these four individuals come together.

"There were a lot of unfinished aspects to this line-up of the band," Fleck notes, "in that it stopped right when we were peaking creatively." For Fleck, Levy's return enables the Flecktones to follow through on the original concept of a band "where each person was reinventing their instruments, where every one of us was a kind of mutant."

"There's a special thing that happens when the four of us get together and play," notes Levy. "We all have the same attitude of trying to do things that we haven't done before and coincidentally, no one else has either."

Fleck first united the Flecktones in 1988, ostensibly for a single performance on PBS' *Lonesome Pine Special*. From the start, there was a special kinship between the four musicians, a bond forged in a mutual passion for creativity and artistic advancement.

Three breakthrough albums and a whole lot of live dates followed before Levy decided to move on in late 1992.

Béla Fleck & the Flecktones persevered, playing as a trio and with many special guests, before saxophonist Jeff Coffin joined the ensemble. A succession of acclaimed albums

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and innumerable live performances continued to earn the band a fervent fan following around the world, not to mention five Grammy Awards in a range of categories.

Still, by 2008, the band had grown somewhat restive and embarked on a temporary hiatus. The seeds of change began with what Futureman calls the “paintbrushes of fate” as Coffin was invited to join Dave Matthews Band after the 2008 death of saxophonist LeRoi Moore. Fleck encouraged him to accept, believing the decision would rejuvenate both DMB and the Flecktones themselves.

All agree that Flecktones music was beckoning them home. The band, which had always maintained a warm relationship with the gifted pianist/harmonica player, recruited Levy for a 2009 tour of the US and Europe, an experience he describes as “extremely invigorating and very energizing.”

“It felt just like it did back when we first started playing together,” says Wooten. “Just with a lot less hair.”

For many Flecktones fans, the return of the original line-up allows a chance to see a band that many had never gotten to witness before. Indeed, a certain segment of the band’s base discovered them during the Jeff Coffin era and may not even be familiar with Levy’s membership.

“There are people who don’t remember the very beginning of the Flecktones,” Futureman says. “It’s like people that started watching *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and never got to meet Captain Kirk. So here we go, the original crew of the Enterprise coming together on a new mission.”

Visionary and vibrant as anything in their already rich canon, *Rocket Science* feels more like a new beginning than simply the culmination of an early chapter. Where the band goes from here remains undetermined, but all four members agree that the promise of Béla Fleck & the Original Flecktones has yet to be fulfilled.

Béla Fleck & The Flecktones tour dates are below:

May

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|----|-----------------|------------------------|
| 29 | Chillicothe, IL | Summer Camp Festival |
| 31 | York, PA | Capitol-Strand Theater |

June

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|---|----------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Bethlehem, PA | MusikFest |
| 2 | Wilmington, DE | Grand Opera House |
| 3 | Hunter, NY | Mountain Jam Festival |
| 4 | Raleigh, NC | Carolina Museum of Art |
| 5 | Charleston, SC | Spoletto Festival |

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| 10 | Manchester, TN | Bonnaroo |
| 11 | Cleveland, OH | Cain Park |
| 12 | Burlington, VT | Burlington Jazz Festival |
| 13 | Lebanon, NH | Opera House |
| 14 | Rochester, NY | Rochester Jazz Festival |
| 17 | Telluride, CO | Telluride Bluegrass |
| Festival | | |
| 28 | Saskatoon, CAN | Saskatchewan Jazz |
| Festival | | |
| 30 | Toronto, CAN | |

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