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CLEARY DEBUTS NEW GROUP: PIANO, BASS & DRUMS

In the hallowed ranks of New Orleans “piano professors,” Jon Cleary is on the tenure track. With his new trio: **Piano, Bass & Drums**, Cleary utilizes an acoustic format as a vehicle for his varied compositions embodying the flavors of New Orleans Funk, Classic R&B, and tropical rhythms.

Cleary remarks, “I’ve long been harboring a hankering to drive a band from behind the wheel of an old acoustic piano to bash out a selection from my side stash of material. These include songs I’ve been writing, borrowing and stealing for swampy Caribbean drums and upright bass or Tuba.”

The lineup features Lafayette-native **Doug Belote** (Larry Carlton, Jerry Douglas) on drums, multi-instrumentalist **Matt Perrine** (Bonerama, The Nightcrawlers, Stanton Moore), and New Orleans stalwart **James Singleton** (Astral Project, Professor Longhair, James Booker) who alternate gigs on upright bass, with JC on acoustic piano.

For Cleary this is a chance to, “Paint from another palette, flexing a few other musical muscles, loading up with a different kind of ammunition. By virtue of the fact the guys making the music are products of the Big Easy, it goes without saying the ingredients of the music are going to include soul, jazz and funk. We’ll be squeezing Caribbean juice out of a bag of ‘back in the day’ grooves, working in a bunch of fresh new tunes and parading a second-line street beat, with some red-hot peppers to crank up the heat.”

Born in England and bred in New Orleans, Jon Cleary is a triple threat, combining soulful vocals, masterful piano skills, and a knack for composing infectious grooves with melodic hooks and sharp lyrics. He balances a career performing on solo piano, with noted funk band The Absolute Monster Gentlemen, and his new power trio Piano, Bass & Drums, alongside a career as a notorious hired gun with the likes of Bonnie Raitt and John Scofield. Cleary is featured on vocals and keyboards on the recently released, *Piety Street* by *John Scofield & The Piety Street Band*. Cleary has toured with Bonnie Raitt since 1999, and has appeared on the albums *Silver Lining and Souls Alike*. On these recordings, Raitt covered the Cleary originals, “Fool’s Game,” “Monkey Business,” “Unnecessarily Mercenary,” and “Love on One Condition.”

Cleary has produced five recordings to date including his latest, a live recording from Sydney, Australia called *Mo Hippa*, which features a mix of the styles that inform the New Orleans’ sound -- from island rhythms, to soul-drenched funk jams. Prior to this he released *Pin Your Spin* (2004), *Jon Cleary & the Absolute Monster Gentlemen* (2002), *Moonburn* (1999), and *Alligator Lips & Dirty Rice* (1994). Cleary has a long list of recording credits with artists such as Taj Mahal, Keb Mo, India Arie, and Ryan Adams.

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