



THE KIMMEL CENTER  
ACADEMY OF MUSIC  
MERRIAM THEATER

**Tweet It!**

15-time Grammy Award-winning @belafleckbanjo comes to the @KimmelCenter for a groundbreaking quartet performance with @TheFlecktones on 12/3. More info @ Kimmelcenter.org

**Press Contact:**

Lauren Woodard  
215-790-5835

[LWoodard@kimmelcenter.org](mailto:LWoodard@kimmelcenter.org)

Jessica Christopher  
267-765-3738

[jchristopher@alliedglobalmarketing.com](mailto:jchristopher@alliedglobalmarketing.com)

**KIMMEL CENTER CULTURAL CAMPUS PRESENTS  
GRAMMY® AWARD-WINNING GROUNDBREAKING QUARTET  
BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES FOR THEIR  
30TH ANNIVERSARY NORTH AMERICAN TOUR  
DECEMBER 3, 2019**

**“...Virtuoso musicianship and mastery of improvisation.”  
– WXPN**

**“The Flecktones [are as] spry as ever, each at the absolute highest level of craftsmanship on his instrument... the band led the audience through peaks and valleys with astounding proficiency”  
– GLIDE MAGAZINE**

**“The band is still inscrutable, bordering on mystical.”  
– CITY NEWSPAPER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (Philadelphia, PA, November 6, 2019) – The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus is proud to present the reunited **Béla Fleck & The Flecktones**. The original lineup of the quartet, led by 16-time Grammy® Award-winning banjoist/composer **Béla Fleck**, will grace the Verizon Hall stage on Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. For the performance, Fleck will be joined by **Howard Levy** on piano and harmonica, percussionist/Drumitarist **Roy “Future Man” Wooten**, and bassist **Victor Wooten**.

“The revolutionary musicians that comprise Béla Fleck & The Flecktones fuse all manner of genres to create some of the most forward-thinking music of their long, storied careers,” said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “Their sound is wholly unique, drawing inspiration from classical and jazz to blues and even Eastern European folk dance. This virtuosic music can be made only with these four individuals. We are proud of the artistic diversity they bring to the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus’ star-studded jazz season.”

Fleck, hailed by many as the world’s premier banjo player, formed The Flecktones in 1988 for a single performance on PBS’ *Lonesome Pine Special*, and began touring in 1989. “The band was so fresh and powerful that we all wanted more of it,” says Victor, who describes the band as a family. “I think we gave other musicians the courage to be different.”

Their debut album, *Béla Fleck and the Flecktones*, received a Grammy® nomination for Best Contemporary Jazz Album, as did their second album, *Flight of the Cosmic Hippo*. In 1998, The Flecktones album, *Outbound*, earned them a Grammy® for Best Contemporary Jazz Album.

“The band is a creative idealistic project, one that somehow connects with people in a profound way,” says Fleck. “Nothing about any of that has changed in 30 years. The Flecktones are touring for the sheer love of playing and celebrating our friendship. That’s why we get together these days.”

Each member had been quite busy with a variety of successful projects – including: Fleck’s duet collaborations with Chick Corea, a trio with Zakir Hussain and Edgar Meyer (sometimes with the Detroit Symphony), and his expansive adventures in African music, documented in the acclaimed 2009 film and CD, *Throw Down Your Heart*; Victor Wooten’s solo band tours, camps, recording sessions, clinics, and CD releases (including an incredible collaborative project with Stanley Clarke and Marcus Miller called SMV, which yielded the album *Thunder*); and Future Man’s creation of his amazing Black Mozart project and continued development of new instruments.

The band, which had always maintained a warm relationship with the gifted pianist/harmonica player, recruited Howard Levy for a 2009 tour of the US and Europe, an experience he describes as “extremely invigorating and very energizing.” Upon the tour’s conclusion, the four musicians agreed to further explore the band’s possibilities, sensing what Future Man calls, “an opportunity to revisit the original scene of the crime.”

“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.”

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. “We’re going to have to have this experience together and see how everybody likes it,” Fleck says. “I know that we haven’t even come close to exhausting the possibilities with this record, but we sure went deeper than we ever had before.”

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: **Ms. Lisa Fischer & Grand Baton with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra** (November 1, 2019, Verizon Hall), **Black Violin**:

***The Impossible Tour*** (November 8, 2019, Academy of Music) and **DRUMline Live** (January 10-11, 2019, Merriam Theater).

**BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES**

Kimmel Center Cultural Campus' Verizon Hall

*December 3, 2019, 7:00 p.m.*

**Tickets**

Tickets are on sale now starting at \$35.00. Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at [www.kimmelcenter.org](http://www.kimmelcenter.org), or at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling 215-790-5883. See [www.kimmelcenter.org](http://www.kimmelcenter.org) for more information.

**The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus**

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, our mission is to engage the region's diverse communities with art through performance and education. Our Cultural Campus serves more than 1 million guests per year and includes the **Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**, the **Academy of Music**, and the **Merriam Theater**- representing more than 160 years of rich history for the performing arts along Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts. We are home to eight esteemed Resident Companies: **The Philadelphia Orchestra**, **Opera Philadelphia**, **Pennsylvania Ballet**, **The Philly POPS**, **PHILADANCO**, **The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia**, **The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society**, and **Curtis Institute of Music**. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, we are the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. Our Cultural Campus serves as a preeminent and inclusive place to enjoy exceptional experiences that reflect the spirit of our region by cultivating a creative and socially-responsible environment where our community shares experiences that are delivered with pride, integrity, and respect. As a 501 c 3 nonprofit organization, we collaborate on, present, and produce a broad range of relevant and meaningful events, we serve as an active gathering space for social and community events, we educate the region's young people through access to quality arts experiences, and we provide support to artists in the creation of new work. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is our proud sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2019-2020 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit [www.kimmelcenter.org](http://www.kimmelcenter.org).

###

For photography, please visit <https://kcpress.smugmug.com>