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### **Third Annual Monty Alexander Jazz Festival to Deliver Lineup of Acclaimed Artists**

The third annual Monty Alexander Jazz Festival will take place in Easton on Labor Day weekend from August 31 through September 2, 2012. The Festival is presented by Jazz on the Chesapeake, a program of Chesapeake Chamber Music, and will be held at Easton's historic Avalon Theatre. The Festival headlines legendary jazz pianist Monty Alexander, the Festival's artistic director and namesake, leading the Monty Alexander Quartet. Alexander recently received a Grammy nomination for best reggae album for his recording "Monty Alexander HARLEM-KINGSTON EXPRESS: LIVE!" His music, which bridges the worlds of American jazz, popular song, and Jamaican reggae, twice topped the USA and world jazz charts in 2011.

The Avalon Theatre's intimate setting and the lineup of superb artists make the Monty Alexander Jazz Festival an Eastern Shore destination for Labor Day weekend. Trumpet player Dominick Farinacci, who kicked off last year's Festival in a duet with Aaron Diehl, will return with the Dominick Farinacci Group to open the Festival on Friday evening, August 31 at 8

p.m. Farinacci's horn recalls early Miles Davis and Chet Baker, among other trumpet greats. Dominick was recently featured on NPR's Jazz Rising Stars and recognized by The New York Times as "having the prepossessing charm and lyrical instinct of a jazz pop-star."

Chuck Redd, a Shore favorite, will lead a Salute to Duke Ellington with the University of Maryland Jazz Ensemble on Saturday, September 1 at 4:00 p.m. Redd, who has performed with the Charlie Byrd Trio and the Mel Torme All-Star Jazz Quintet, has toured with such jazz greats at Dizzy Gillespie, Dick Hyman, Frank Vignola, and Monty Alexander. The "Washington Post" recently admired Redd's "melodic sparkle," while "Jazz Times" called his vibes work, "Exquisite!" He continues to please audiences year after year. Redd will perform with The University of Maryland Jazz Ensemble, one of only three elite bands invited to perform annually at Washington, DC's UDC Calvin Jones Big Band Jazz Festival.

On Saturday night, September 1 at 8 p.m. the Monty Alexander Quartet, led by Monty Alexander will entertain the audience with the joyous side of jazz in the historic Avalon Theatre's intimate venue. Alexander's early career included recording sessions with Bob Marley's first backing band, the Skatalites. He has toured the globe over the last five decades and collaborated with vocalists such as Natalie Cole and Bobby McFerrin. The "Wall Street Journal" quotes Alexander as saying, "My music is the product of having experienced different cultures and different vibrations." Monty Alexander will bring an energetic blend of cultures to Easton on Labor Day weekend that will leave audiences wanting more.

To wrap up the weekend of jazz, a new event will be added on Sunday, September 2 at 2 p.m. when Dee Daniels and her Trio, along with surprise guests, will headline a jazz gospel concert, "A Salute to Mahalia Jackson." The "Los Angeles Times" says, "Daniels' hardy tones, jazz-wise phrasing and triumphant scat showed why she's considered among the cream of mainstream jazz singers."

This year's lineup of top-notch artists makes The Monty Alexander Jazz Festival an Eastern Shore destination for Labor Day weekend. Weekend packages are available at Easton's Tidewater Inn and the Tidewater Inn will once again join in the festivities by offering a Jazz Brunch on Saturday, September 1 at 11 a.m. (<http://www.tidewaterinn.com/>). Local restaurants will also have special offers for Festival participants.

This year, a Festival Pass will be available for \$140 for premium seats, \$110 for orchestra seats, and \$65 for balcony seats. All Festival Passes include entrance to the Sunday concert. For a direct link to tickets, go to <http://www.instantseats.com/events/MAJF>. For further information about Jazz on the Chesapeake, [www.chesapeakejazz.org](http://www.chesapeakejazz.org) or call the CCM office at [410-819-0380](tel:410-819-0380).