



The Clayton Brothers

Litchfield Jazz Festival-



The Clayton Brothers, John and Jeff Clayton, prove conclusively, that while blood is thicker than water, it can still carry an unimpeded flow of pure creativity. Their Grammy© nominated quintet, The Clayton Brothers, was originally founded in 1977, and while their musical paths sometimes diverge, they continue to share a common vision that draws them back together. Their most recent recordings “The New Song and Dance” and “Brother to Brother” were both nominated for Grammy© awards. Both John and Jeff are also dedicated jazz educators who travel extensively to participate in workshops around the world. In the fall of 2004, The Clayton Brothers were featured on the cover of the JazzTimes Education Resource Guide, which named them jazz educators of the year.

Grammy winner John Clayton began serious study of the double bass at age 16 under the tutelage of Ray Brown. He has since gained prominence in both the classical and jazz fields. He served as the Artistic Director of Jazz for the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1998 to 2001 and held the principal bass chair in the Amsterdam Philharmonic for five years. He is a composer/arranger/conductor who counts among his mentors, in addition to Brown, Count Basie, Johnny Mandel, Henry Mancini, and Quincy Jones. He has written and arranged music for Milt Jackson, Nancy Wilson, McCoy Tyner, Carmen McRae, Quincy Jones, Diana Krall, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Gladys Knight, Natalie Cole, and many others.

Reed player Jeff Clayton began his career as a touring and studio musician. He recorded with, among others, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Kenny Rogers, Michael Jackson, Patti Labelle, Earth Wind & Fire, and Madonna. As a jazz musician, he has worked with Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Lionel Hampton, Lena Horne, McCoy Tyner, and Dee Dee Bridgewater.

Currently, the Quintet consists John Clayton on bass, Jeff Clayton on sax, John's son, Gerald Clayton (twice nominated for a Grammy in 2009) on piano and Obed Calvaire on drums. Terell Stafford, the highly regarded trumpeter and band leader, rounds it out. This is a first appearance on the Festival for both John and Jeff, a second for Gerald, who appeared on the 2010 lineup as a leader. For Terell, an LJF favorite, it's too many to count.