Charleston Gaillard Center Presents
Black Violin’s 20th Anniversary Tour:
BV20: Then & Now

November 15, 2024

May 21, 2024 – Charleston, SC – Prepare for an extraordinary evening at the Charleston Gaillard Center on November 15 as Black Violin commemorates 20 years of musical innovation with their BV20: Then & Now tour. This groundbreaking duo, renowned for their genre-defying fusion of classical music and hip-hop rhythms, is set to captivate audiences with live performances across the country once again this fall. In celebration of the bands 20th anniversary, their new single “Legends in the Making” is out now.

BV20: Then & Now will showcase the incredible 20 year journey of Black Violin so far, featuring Kev Marcus on violin and Wil Baptiste on viola/vocals, joined by Nat Stokes on drums, DJ SPS on turntables, and Liston Gregory on keys. This talented ensemble will deliver a performance that transcends genres, combining the elegance of classical strings with the dynamic beats of hip-hop.

Kev Marcus from the group shares, “Fans can expect us to illustrate our journey from high school to headliner, and we plan to celebrate all of it: Then and Now. We want our fans to feel energized, inspired, and more driven to chase their dreams.” Kev reflects on the band’s anniversary saying, “I am very excited about the 20th anniversary of Black Violin. In some ways, it feels like it flew by, but we took the stairs and did it our way, and for that, I am extremely proud.” Wil Baptiste also shares his excitement, “This BV20: Then & Now tour is going to be incredible! New music and also revitalized classics. Our fans are going to experience the 20 years of growth of Black Violin.”
The band has lots to be proud of from their humble beginnings as highschool orchestra classmates, to triumphant winners of Showtime at the Apollo, to now being two-time Grammy-nominated, internationally touring musicians. Black Violin is also known for being strong advocates for music education. Kev Marcus states, “We take pride in staying true to ourselves and inspiring others to do the same. Our foundation's mission of providing music education opportunities for children nationwide is a source of great pride. Our dedicated band members have been with us for almost a decade, and our entire team shares our passion and values.” In 2019, Black Violin launched the Black Violin Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth by providing access to quality music programs in their community.

Don’t miss the opportunity to experience Black Violin live and celebrate two decades of music that has inspired and uplifted fans around the globe. Be part of an evening filled with celebration, inspiration, and the enduring power of dreams with Black Violin's BV20: Then & Now.

Download photos here.

Listen to “Legends in the Making”:
https://found.ee/BV-Legends

Tickets on sale Thursday, May 23, at 10 AM EST at gaillardcenter.org. Gaillard Center Members receive presale access! To learn more about our Membership program, please contact our Advancement Office at info@gaillardfoundation.org or (843) 718-1578.

ABOUT BLACK VIOLIN
For nearly two decades, Black Violin has been merging string arrangements with modern beats and vocals and building bridges in communities along the way. Members Kev Marcus and Wil Baptiste first met in orchestra class at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, becoming classically trained on the violin and viola through their high school and college careers. Post-college, they reconvened to produce beats for South Florida rappers, and began building an audience in local clubs. They later went on to win Showtime at the Apollo in 2005, and eventually sold out headline performances at venues across the country, including a sold out two-night headline run at The Kennedy Center in 2018. NPR took note and declared “their music will keep classical music alive for the next generation.” Black
Violin's 2019 album release, *Take the Stairs*, earned a Grammy Award nomination for “Best Contemporary Instrumental Album”. The band also recently received their second ever Grammy Award nomination for the track “The Message” as Best Americana Performance, in collaboration with The Blind Boys of Alabama.

Black Violin plays roughly 200 shows a year; many of which are performances for young, low-income students in urban communities. In the last year alone, the group has played for over 100,000 students with the goal of challenging stereotypes and preconceived notions of what a “classical musician” looks and sounds like. “The stereotypes are always there, embedded so deep in our culture,” says Wil. “Just by nature of our existence we challenge those ideas. It’s a unique thing that brings people together who aren’t usually in the same room, and in the current climate, it’s good to bring people together.”

In 2019, the group launched the Black Violin Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth by providing access to quality music programs in their community. BVF believes that music and access to music programs should not be determined by race, gender, or socio-economic status. Black Violin Foundation’s inaugural program, the Musical Innovation Grant for Continuing Education, will provide scholarships to young music students to attend a program of their liking that fosters musical creativity and innovation.

For more info on Black Violin: [http://www.blackviolin.net](http://www.blackviolin.net)
For more info on the Black Violin Foundation: [http://www.blackviolinfoundation.org](http://www.blackviolinfoundation.org)
Discography: [http://blackviolin.net/albums/](http://blackviolin.net/albums/)

**ABOUT THE CHARLESTON GAILLARD CENTER**

A leader in the performing arts in the Southeast, the Charleston Gaillard Center commissions, supports, and presents ambitious, multidisciplinary cultural programming and provides access to the best local, national, and global artists and companies on its stage. Deeply rooted in the community, the Gaillard Center committed to elevating local and regional voices and partnering with Charleston institutions to reflect the city's diversity, both on stage and off. Through programming on its public campus and extensive arts education initiatives, the Gaillard Center serves as a platform to participate in community building and essential dialogue.

Established as a nonprofit in 2015, its campus includes the 1,818-seat Martha and John M. Rivers Performance Hall, a 16,000 square-foot exhibition hall that is home to artistic
activations, community and corporate events, and celebrations, and an adjacent park space that was recently activated for artistic presentations. Behind the scenes the Gaillard Center also fosters a culture of excellence and inclusion, employing a robust and talented staff, and providing opportunities for growth and engagement across the arts sector. Find more information and upcoming programming at gaillardcenter.org.

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