April 1, 2004

CONTACT: LISA WOSKE  
(805) 756-7110

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joe Lovano and Nonet To Perform Miles Davis Tribute April 25

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Grammy winner and Down Beat Critic and Reader's Poll jazz favorite saxophonist/composer Joe Lovano and the Joe Lovano Nonet will perform "Birth of a Cool Suite - A Tribute to Miles Davis" on Sunday, April 25, 2004 at 7 p.m. at the Cal Poly Theatre.

"Lovano plays with a balance of imaginative abandon and technical control that has not been heard since John Coltrane." (Down Beat)

Cal Poly Arts presents the tenor saxophonist Lovano and his saxophone-rich Nonet in an evening that explores Miles Davis' seminal masterpiece, "Birth of the Cool Suite." Torrid solos and hard-driving classic bop are featured in the arrangements by the legendary Gunther Schuller, an original member of the nonet that recorded "Birth..."

Nonet musicians include George Garzone, Gary Smulyan, and Steve Slagel on saxophones, Tim Hagans on trumpet, Conrad Herwig on trombone, pianist John Hicks, bassist Dennis Irwin, and Lewis Nash on drums.

New Yorker Lovano has worked with such jazz masters as John Scofield, Herbie Hancock, Elvin Jones, Charlie Haden, Carla Bley, Bobby Hutcherson, Billy Higgins, Dave Holland, Ed Blackwell, Michel Petrucciani, Lee Konitz, Abbey Lincoln, Tom Harrell, McCoy Tyner, Jim Hall, and Bob Brookmeyer.

Scofield says, "(Lovano is) very sonically aware - he thinks about the effect different instruments and different personalities will have...his sense of swing and his tone reminded me of the older guys, in a really positive way."

Lovano's early years were filled with jam sessions and rent gigs, but eventually he joined the Mel Lewis Orchestra for its regular Monday night concert at New York City's famed Village Vanguard, playing from
1980 to 1992 and recording six albums with the Orchestra.

Beginning in 1981, he gained further exposure and renown - particularly in Europe - through his work with the Paul Motian Trio, which also featured former Berklee College of Music classmate, guitarist Bill Frisell.

Lovano's debut 1991 Blue Note release, "Landmarks," featured guitarist John Abercrombie; Lovano's first engagement as a leader at the Village Vanguard coincided with the release of that record.

The critically acclaimed "From the Soul" followed with Michel Petrucciani, Dave Holland, and the legendary Ed Blackwell. Readers of AllAboutJazz.com voted "From the Soul" #34 in their all-time "Top 100 Jazz CDs" poll.

"Universal Language" features the soprano voice of Judi Silvano, as well as trumpeter Tim Hagans and pianist Kenny Werner. Lovano's 1994 release, "Tenor Legacy," features tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman and received wide critical acclaim, culminating in a Grammy nomination for "Best Jazz Small Group Recording."

1995's "Rush Hour" showcases his tenor saxophone with voice, string and woodwind ensembles arranged and conducted by Gunther Schuller in compositions by Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Thelonious Monk, Duke Ellington, Schuller and Lovano himself.

As CD Review's "Disc of the Month" stated, "Music doesn't get any better than this. ("Rush Hour") is a wonder." Lovano and Schuller subsequently collaborated on the score for a Showtime movie, "Face Down."

"Joe Lovano Quartets at the Village Vanguard" earned two Grammy nominations and won Jazz Album of the Year in the 1996 Down Beat Readers Poll. Recorded at two separate engagements at the historic club, the special set features Lovano with Mulgrew Miller, Christian McBride, and Lewis Nash on one CD, and with Tom Harrell, Anthony Cox and Billy Hart on the other.

Down Beat Magazine's 5-star review says simply, "The Vanguard sessions are extraordinary."

Lovano's eagerly anticipated "Joe Lovano Celebrating Sinatra" followed in 1997 and garnered another Grammy nomination. In 1998, "Flying Colors" offered a duo album with the great Cuban pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba.


Lovano jumped into the new millennium with "52nd Street Themes," Lovano’s tribute to the days when swing and bebop co-mingled freely.
The acclaimed session features compositions by some of the art form's greatest composers and won the Grammy for "Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album."

In 2001, Lovano received "Jazz Artist of the Year" honors for the third time in both Critic's & Reader's polls in Down Beat magazine spurred by his acclaimed return to the trio format on "Flights of Fancy: Trio Fascination, Edition Two."

2002's "Viva Caruso" finds Lovano investigating many of the popular melodies made famous by the Italian tenor. Lovano notes, "In the tradition of Bird's 'White Christmas' and Sonny Rollins' 'Toot Toot Tootsie', the challenge was to take these well-known melodies and try to make them my own."

His latest, "On This Day...At the Vanguard" is a critical favorite and marks Lovano's 22nd release as leader, his 15th album for Blue Note, and as he points out, "My third recording as a leader live at the Vanguard."

A pre-concert lecture will be held by Cal Poly Music professor Paul Rinzler, beginning at 6 p.m. in the Philips Recital hall.

Tickets for the performance are $32 & $38, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088. Order on-line at www.pacslo.org.

Sponsored by American Airlines/American Eagle and KCBX 90.1 FM.

For audio and video samples of Cal Poly Arts events, visit www.calpolyarts.org.

- 30 -