PRESS RELEASE

SEASON 4 ABOUT TO BEGIN!

The fourth season of the 'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award' will launch on August 1st, 2020!

While a global pandemic has brought the live music industry to a standstill, the '**LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award**' offers a glimpse of hope to aspiring musicians who have seen their concerts and tours vanish into thin air. The award presents an opportunity to win two readymade tours: 7 shows at major jazz festivals in Europe for the European winner and 10 shows at major jazz festivals in the USA and Canada for the winner of the North American edition. Both tours will take place in **2021**.

Who can apply?
All jazz musicians can submit their material (3 soundsamples & 1 video) on our dedicated website www.l1risingstarsjazzaward.com and a jury will then select the next RISING STAR/s. The submission period begins on August 1, 2020 and ends midnight on October 31, 2020. The winners will get announced in mid-January 2021.

For the fourth consecutive year the '**LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award**' aims to propel the careers of outstanding young jazz musicians in Europe and North America and to enable them to quickly find an audience. First and foremost by providing and accommodating concerts for the winners on major European respectively North American jazz festivals. Secondly the award offers a full year of PR and marketing support provided by the award winning Air Artist Agency with offices in London and Los Angeles. Open to artists from all over Europe and North America, the award is considered to be a golden opportunity for musicians to be catapulted onto the international scene – an opportunity that is needed now more than ever!

The '**LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award**' started out in Europe in 2017 and has - thanks to overwhelming positive response - since expanded into North America. Inaugural winner, French guitarist Tom Ibarra, performed for an audience of over 40.000 people at 7 major European festivals: Leopolis Jazzfestival (UA), Kongsberg Jazzfestival (N), Love Supreme Festival (GB), Jazzopen Stuttgart (D), Umbria Jazz (I), Nice Jazzfestival (F) and the Heineken Jazzaldia San Sebastian (E) and appeared on TV and radio shows across Europe, and even guested on stage with bass legend Marcus Miller! Vibraphonist Sasha Berliner, inaugural winner of the North American edition, performed at legendary North American festivals such as the Blue Note Jazz Festival in New York, DC Jazz Festival in Washington, San Francisco Jazz Festival, CGI Rochester International Jazz Festival, TD Ottawa Jazz Festival, Festival International de Jazz de Montreal, Coastal Jazz TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival, Iowa City | Summer Of The Arts, Monterey Jazz Festival and the Earshot Festival in Seattle, and even made it onto FOX News in the USA.

Last year's winners – **Kathrine Windfeld** (Europe) and **Giveton Gelin** (North America) were announced during a star studded award ceremony in London. The event was hosted by none other than pianist, singer, band leader and TV presenter **Jools Holland**, and included performances by **Jamie Cullum, China Moses** and **Sarah McKenzie**.

In 2019/20 the legendary Grammy Award winning artist **George Benson** was the chairman of the jury for the award (in 2018/19 Dee Dee Bridgewater and in 2017/18 UK superstar Jamie Cullum had chaired the jury). Furthermore, the jury included journalist and author Michelle Mercer, record producer and A&R Brian Bacchus, Radio France presenter Alex Dutilh, the arts editor of 'The Guardian' newspaper Imogen Tilden, and the sponsor of the **'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award'** Mikhail Fridman.

Since the launch of the annual award in 2017 the **'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award'** has received global recognition and support from many Jazz heavyweights including Quincy Jones, Wayne Shorter, Gregory Porter, and organisations such as the Lincoln Center in New York or Berklee College of Music in Boston.

The **'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award'** is an investment in the brightest jazz talents in Europe and North America and it hugely benefits from the sponsorship and dedicated backing of Mikhail Fridman – a philanthropist and the founder of the LetterOne Group. Most importantly in this case, Mikhail Fridman is a huge Jazz fan too – he is a frequent visitor of Jazz festivals across the world and the founder of the renowned Leopolis Jazz Fest (formerly known as 'Alfa Jazz') in Lviv.

Commenting on the award, Mikhail Fridman said:

"This year due to COVID - the Jazz industry has been on pause; festivals have been postponed – as we start to emerge from lockdown, we want to find the next generation of Jazz artists and enable them to realise their potential. We are looking for up and coming jazz musicians – for new talent, who are just starting as young professionals – and want to help them on their way to become the jazz stars of tomorrow."

Producing the **'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award'** is the award-winning AIR ARTIST AGENCY, whose director Burkhard Hopper has a long-standing experience in introducing new artists. For 9 years he was running the Rising Stars concert series which – among others – introduced artists such as Diana Krall, Brad Mehldau, Nicholas Payton, Kurt Elling, Jane Monheit and Esbjörn Svensson to audiences in Europe.

Commenting on the award, Burkhard Hopper said:

"My whole life I have worked to further the career of young and upcoming artists. I am very happy that with the support of Mikhail Fridman it will be possible to continue with the RISING STARS scheme that was so successful from 1996 to 2004 and started the careers of artists such as Diana Krall, Brad Mehldau, Esbjörn Svensson, Nicholas Payton, Kurt Elling, Jane Monheit and many more in Europe."

For artists wishing to be considered for the '**LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award**' there are three steps to consider:

1. Submission

To be considered by the jury artists can submit biographical material, photographs, three sound samples and one video link via web upload. The submission period starts on August 1st and ends on October 31st 2020 at midnight. The material should illustrate their music. The website for submissions and uploads is www.l1risingstarsjazzaward.com

2. Voting

The voting process of the jury will begin on November 1st. In the first round of voting the participating festivals will have their say and reduce the number of entries to approximately 30 candidates. In the second round a jury of music industry professionals and musicians will select their individual favourites after which they will finally also select the winners.

3. Announcement

The winners of 2020/21 season of the **'LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award'** European and North American edition will be announced in mid-January 2021!