

For Immediate Release

**ARUN SHENOY – GRAMMY® NOMINATED COMPOSER, PRODUCER AND GUITARIST -  
UNLEASHES HIS EXPLOSIVE “BANSURI FUNK” VIBE ON THE DYNAMIC NEW CONCEPT  
ALBUM  
A STAGEY BANK AFFAIR**

Following Up His Breakthrough Album *Rumbadoodle*, the Singapore Based Artist Joins Forces with **The Groove Project Band** to Create a Funk/Jazz/Rock/Global Fusion Experience Driven by the Metaphorical Imagery of Childhood Fairgrounds and The Wonderland of Innocence in Us All

Infectious Lead Single “**Sugar Free (feat. Uziel)**” enjoyed 2 weeks at **#1 Most-Added** on Billboard Smooth Jazz National Airplay”, **Most Increased Play** status on **Groove Jazz** Music chart, **Most Added on SmoothJazz.com**, and is **SmoothJazz.com’s VIDEO HOT PICK** for July!

Truly a musical citizen of the world, Arun Shenoy’s passion for and rich exploration of Spanish Flamenco music on his dynamic 2012 debut recording *Rumbadoodle* earned him a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album – a breakthrough that catapulted him to international renown and opened a wide range of creative possibilities.

For a follow-up, the easiest approach for the Indian born, Bangalore bred and Singapore based composer, producer and guitarist would have been to delve further into the journey of Flamenco from Spain to the New World. Instead, he set his sights Eastward to unleash his high octane, multi-faceted “Bansuri Funk” sound on a full length collection whose title, ***A Stagey Bank Affair***, is as intriguing as the music is infectious, soulful and exotic. The album’s infectious and jazzy, playfully grooving lead single “Sugar Free” (feat. guest keyboardist Uziel) released on June 3, ahead of the project’s drop on July 1.

As described in the colorful, clowns and carnival art illustrated packaging, “Bansuri Funk” is sound stylized by the fusion of funk, jazz and rock with a spicy hint of world pleasures, the latter being a reference to the blazing performance on the traditional Bansuri (an Indian woodwind, historically revered as Lord Krishna’s divine instrument) by acclaimed flautist Ravichandra Kulur. Kulur is a globally-renowned master who has performed over 1,000 concerts, including dates with the legendary Ravi Shankar and his daughter, Anoushka Shankar.

The music on ***A Stagey Bank Affair*** is largely inspired by the funk influences Shenoy inherited from his longtime friend and collaborator, bassist Duke Purisima. In 2014, Kulur, Purisima and the guitarist introduced the Bansuri Funk sound via “Soul’d,” an eponymous single they recorded as a trio. “This direction with Soul’d was a very interesting decision for me – that is, to project the flute as the lead instrument in a rather atypical setting,” Shenoy says. “There have been many others like Ian Anderson who have taken the instrument to great heights and across styles, but here I was trying to push it further by actually using the traditional world music flute. When I heard Ravi’s electrifying performance against the very groovy funk score, everything just sounded like it was always meant to be. So I decided to take it forward, and on ***A Stagey Bank Affair***, though I am the main artist, the flute of Ravichandra Kulur has top billing as the soloist across the record.”

Kulur and Purisima are two of the prominently featured members of The Groove Project, a new musical ensemble that Shenoy created, which currently includes many of the brilliant artists and dear friends he has

been working with over the years, and who have been an integral part of his signature production sound. The band also showcases a few new artists who bring their own unique sound to the project. Technically, Shenoy is not a part of the band. The album is rather a collaboration of him with the group, billed as “Arun Shenoy & The Groove Project.” The line-up for the future could change depending on the production direction for subsequent projects.

Currently, the ensemble also includes Jeff Coffin and Nick Stefanacci on saxophone; Ed Roth, Jonathan Anand Wesley and Dave Gross on piano and keys; Felipe Praino, Owen Gurry and Jim Kimo West on guitar; Ian Cameron on violin; Don Hart on live string and horn orchestration; and Jerry Chua on drums. Chua also mixed and mastered the music on the album, as he has done on most of Shenoy productions in the past. “For a large part, it has been a studio album based effort,” the guitarist says, “and we are now working on how best we can take the music live. That should be interesting.”

To paraphrase the reflective yet whimsical, metaphor rich liner notes – penned by its Art Director, Roshni Mohapatra – the basic premise of the album is about keeping alive the inner child in all of us. These notes begin, “**A Stagey Bank Affair** is a labour of love; of a wonderland that we have, and representative of the inherent sadness and chaos that we take up every day as adults.” The album title is an historical reference to an agricultural fair circa early 20<sup>th</sup> Century at Stagshaw Bank in the Northeast of England. Legend has it that over the years, the farming side dwindled and the fair became more associated with gambling and drinking. Renowned for its rowdy and notorious reputation, the fair was eventually closed in the 1920s, and the phrase “Stagey Bank Fair” passed into common parlance as a euphemism for “mess.”

Connecting this cultural background to the album’s 10 tracks and elaborate carnival art packaging, Shenoy says that the music and visuals on the album are meant to represent the wonderland that we all have within us, along with the inherent sadness and chaos that we take up every day as adults. He adds, “**A Stagey Bank Affair** is a metaphor for a place which used to be a fun fair, and now means a messy affair, kind of like adulthood is. Growing up just means we stop growing and stop having fun. Fairgrounds are where our inner child finds play and a place where we can say ‘whee’ and spin around in circles, become dizzy and life’s worries don’t matter. So yes, there is enough happiness in music, even when we’re sad or are afraid of clowns.”

Another facet is the concept is the theme of the Sad Clown, represented by the wistful, reflective and slightly melancholy track of that name). It adds a slightly darker counterpoint to the funky, fun sound of the album. To quote an excerpt from the pantomime clown Grimaldi’s “The Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi,” edited by Charles Dickens: During a visit to the surgeon John Aberthemy dating back to the 1820s, Grimaldi, hoping to find a cure for his depression, asks Aberthemy for advice, and unaware of his client’s identity, the surgeon prescribes the diversions of “relaxation and amusement.”

“But where shall I find what you require?” said the patient. “In genial companionship,” was the reply; “perhaps sometimes at the theatre – go and see Grimaldi.” “Alas!” replied the patient, “that is of no avail to me; I am Grimaldi.” Shenoy says, “Like Grimaldi, for many of us, laughter and misery becomes the balance-beam on which our existence is constantly weighed as every career triumph is paid for with a proportionate personal agony, and every moment of joy countered by grief.

“This album,” he adds, “is a journey of that sad clown, who goes through the randomness of being in a colourful fairground, which is life. It has many layers. It is about multiple influences, being full of joy, experimentation, taking risks, feeling scared, getting old, it getting messy, doing too many things in a short span of time, yet having so much fun that it leaves a lasting impression. The visual aesthetic used for the fairground concept is presented in the format of vintage poster illustrations, and serves as a metaphor for what this album stands for.”

In addition to the single “Sugar Free,” featuring the brilliant piano improvisations of Boston and Los Angeles based pianist Uziel, highlights on **A Stagey Bank Affair** include the brass-fired, funk driven title track, featuring the quirky sound of Jeff Coffin’s sax; the high energy “Speedway Rush,” driven by Ravi’s blazing, percussive flute and lush, vibrant string and horn arrangement; the soulful and emotionally intense “Pirate of the Seven Seas (Unplugged),” centered around an intimate duet between Jim Kimo West’s guitar and Jonathan Wesley’s piano and supported by a rock solid groove; another barnburner in “High Striker,” a duet showcase by Nick Stefanacci on sax and Ravi on flute; and the edgy dance jam “Hot Head Balloon,” which is driven by Owen Gurry’s funky guitar riffs.

The artwork, under the direction of Roshni Mohapatra, creates an intrinsic duality in conveying the overall concept of **A Stagey Bank Affair**. Mohapatra, Shenoy’s wife, has done the art direction for most of his productions in the past, including *Rumbadoodle* and “Bliss,” a single he released that is intended to be part of a future Indian World Fusion album. She worked with the talented team at Actuality Films in NYC, which took her ideas (a combination of detailed concepts and sample drawings) and translated them into the rich visuals that illustrate the project. The team has created two animated music videos for the project, and Shenoy hopes to create more for the other songs in the coming months. This is in line with his plan of eventually releasing all the music on the album as singles.

“I have to admit there was a lot of pressure for this recording given the success I was fortunate to have with the first album,” Shenoy says. “But I kind of enjoy this pressure, as it inspires me to push the perceived boundaries of my own imagination to take my craft further. I believe this is a very important process of evolution for every artist. Change is the only constant and we need to keep re-inventing ourselves all the time in order to create something fresh and interesting.”

Links

“Sugar Free” Video: <https://youtu.be/9n0NSkAGuxU>

“A Stagey Bank Affair” Video: <https://youtu.be/zOmCYUyesyA>

Website: <https://arunshenoy.com>

Amazon: <https://amzn.com/B01GIEI3LE>

iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/a-stagey-bank-affair/id1101838279>

For more information or requests, please contact the appropriate party:

Public Relations & Interviews: The B Company, Beth Hilton: [bethhilton\(at\)thebcompany\(dot\)com](mailto:bethhilton@thebcompany.com)

Radio airplay: Gorov Music Marketing, Cliff Gorov, [cliff\(at\)gorovmusic\(dot\)com](mailto:cliff@gorovmusic.com) or (702) 492-4965

Physical Distribution: CPI Distribution, [claypinc\(at\)cs\(dot\)com](mailto:claypinc@cs.com), or 440-333-2208

Digital Distribution: DashGo, [Geoff\(at\)dashgo\(dot\)com](mailto:Geoff@dashgo.com)