

For Immediate Release



HUNTERTONES TRANSCEND BORDERS WITH EMPOWERING NEW ALBUM *PASSPORT*, INSPIRED BY GLOBAL TOURS TO SOUTH AMERICA, EUROPE & AFRICA

Produced by Magda Giannikou (Banda Magda), Passport Features Special Guests Justin Stanton & Keita Ogawa of GRAMMY Award-Winning Snarky Puppy, Zimbabwean Vocalist/Mbira Player Hope Masike, and Irish Multi-Instrumentalist Fergal Scahill (We Banjo 3)

Brooklyn, NY – Monday, July 30, 2018 – Seven-piece sound-sculptors **Huntertones** are having quite the year of their rising career on the Brooklyn instrumental music scene with a viral mash-up **Michael Jackson** tribute video hitting more than 550k views on Facebook. Obscure covers of pop songs only scratches the surface of this highly inventive, sonically fearless ensemble. Come October 5, 2018, Huntertones will nationally release *Passport*, the band's first studio album since moving to Brooklyn (circa. 2014). A deep dive into the endless inspiring possibilities of global collaborations, *Passport* is an ambitious documentation of Huntertones' tours throughout South America, Europe and Africa.

Produced by **Magda Giannikou** – vocalist of the cinematic outfit **Banda Magda**, *Passport* is a reflection of unity, movement, and a diversity of cultures bonded together by the virtues of the universality of music. GRAMMY Award-winners **Justin Stanton** (keyboards) and **Keita Ogawa** (percussion) of **Snarky Puppy** join Huntertones on an array of *Passport's* original compositions, while two of *Passport's* standout singles are collaborations cultivated during the ensemble's extensive touring featuring Zimbabwe's **Hope Masike** ("Hondo") and Ireland's **Fergal Scahill** of **We Banjo 3** ("Fergal's Tune). Huntertones' **Chris Ott** contributes the impassioned composition "Change" (Track 9), which won the **Herb Albert ASCAP Young Composers Award** (2017). *Passport* is mixed by **Nic Hard** (GRAMMY winner for Snarky Puppy's *Culcha Vulcha*).

For Huntertones, transcontinental travel goes well beyond the compilation of stamps on the band members' passports. It's an opportunity to be inspired by how international artists live and approach their distinctive musical styles, and most importantly, it offers the fortuity to celebrate cultures across the globe. Through sponsored trips with the State Department, Huntertones have traversed four continents over the past 24 months bringing the Brooklyn band to perform and collaborate with artists in Togo in West Africa, Zimbabwe in southern Africa, Egypt, Georgia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. *Passport* beautifully captures Huntertones' kaleidoscope of experiences, which fans of a multitude of genres can now enjoy.

Featured Compositions on Huntertones' New Album, *Passport*

Written by composer/saxophonist **Dan White**, "Clutch" opens the album with an afro-beat guitar rhythm intertwining with swaying three-part horns and synthesizer lead lines by Justin Stanton. White recalls, "On our first tour with the State Department, we went to Quito, Ecuador and hiked the active volcano Pichincha to 15,000 feet elevation. We climbed it too fast, and a few of us got intense altitude sickness. 'Clutch' is very much influenced by the mountainous excursion, as well as an unsettling cab ride on the way home. Our cab's engine went out with only access to first and second gear. It was a wild ride to say the least."

While in Zimbabwe, trumpeter/composer **Jon Lampley** (member of **Jon Batiste and Stay Human** of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*) scribed the central theme of "Bird Song" based off of a melodic bird call he heard while in a courtyard at a middle school where the band was teaching a clinic.

"Togo" marks the lead single on *Passport*, a composition reminiscent of Huntertones' first time traveling to Africa. At the heart of White's piece are the people of Togo. Despite extreme economic challenges, Togo's artists bring an outpour of love and purpose to their music. The celebratory anthem "Togo" encapsulates the pure joy of the arts in Togo, and the composition has become a centerpiece of Huntertones' live concert repertoire.

The traditional song "Hondo" evokes the pride of Zimbabwe's people. On *Passport*, Huntertones bring to life a trans-Atlantic studio

collaboration with master mbira player and vocalist **Hope Masike**. Initially performed live with Masike in Zimbabwe, she first sent the band an iPhone demo of “Hondo,” which they arranged the piece around. Upon touring in France, Masike recorded her vocal parts in a studio and sent it off to Atlantic Sound Studios in Brooklyn. The track crisscrossed between NYC and France several times, resulting in a gorgeous partnership that conjures ultimate tenderness and a sense of peace.

“Star of the East” is composed by trombonist Chris Ott, an arrangement written following Huntertones’ time in Cairo, Egypt. Upon witnessing the great pyramids, visiting a local mosque, hearing Egyptian music on the radio, and collaborating with a Cairo-based band, Ott pens an Eastern-leaning number filled with wonder and appreciation for the iconic city.

“Fara” (meaning happiness) results from Huntertones being pulled from a clinic at an elementary school by the Zimbabwean government and re-routed by the Cultural Affairs office to an orphanage with 5 - 17 year olds. With 15 kids sitting in a circle, Huntertones’ sole goal was to bring a smile to the children’s faces. It proved to be an incredibly profound milestone of all their travels.

A funky outlet for the trials and tribulations of tour life, “Bad David” takes all the pent up emotion and funnels it all into the often-cathartic experience of performance, whether live on stage or in the studio. “Change” is Chris Ott’s composition that won the **Herb Albert ASCAP Young Composers Award** (2017). Featuring the first time Huntertones themselves sing as a group on an album, “Change” is a testament of how much each member has grown over the past four years since moving to Brooklyn.

“Fergal’s Tune” might be the first recorded song in history showcasing a **Billboard World Chart-topping** Irish band performing with a beat-boxer (Chris Ott) and tuba player (Jon Lampley) for an epic jig. **Fergal Scahill** of **We Banjo 3** plays a fiery fiddle part atop Ott’s vocal wizardry and Lampley’s bass lines on sousaphone. Huntertones shared a bill with We Banjo 3 in Northern California (2017), and Huntertones’ horn section have since appeared on stage with We Banjo 3 at some of the United States’ most renowned Irish festivals.

Passport closes with guitarist Joshua Hill’s song “Parusha,” a rhythmically pulsating dance tune with melodic horn interludes that Hill solos atop. With the song title influenced from an Eastern philosophy meaning, “the one, the many,” “Parusha” takes the listener to the intersection of Europe and Asia to the country of Georgia. Hill channels Huntertones’ performance at the music festival One Caucasus, which strives to foster an environment enabling commonly conflicting countries, Armenia and Azerbaijan, to unite as one. The horn parts were also written based on the band’s meeting of a Senegalese vocalist in Georgia.

On the road for much of the past two years, Huntertones have appeared at many of the world’s biggest festivals including Umbria Jazz (Perugia, Italy), Festival da Jazz (St. Moritz, Switzerland), and the Toronto Jazz Festival (Canada). In the United States, they’ve performed at the Rochester Jazz Festival (New York) and San Jose Jazz Winter Fest (California), and have shared the stage with acclaimed artists such as Blue Note’s **Lionel Loueke**. Huntertones hit the road in support of *Passport* in October 2018. For a comprehensive list of forthcoming tour dates, please visit: huntertones.com

Huntertones

Passport

(Release Date: October 5, 2018)

Track Listing:

- 1) Clutch
- 2) Bird Song
- 3) Togo
- 4) Hondo
- 5) Star of the East
- 6) Fara
- 7) Bad David
- 8) Change
- 9) Fergal’s Tune
- 10) Parusha

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