

Galactic

History doesn't stand still. It impacts, influences, and inspires the ebb and flow of the future by informing the present. Galactic draw on 25 years together in order to progress with each performance and subsequent record. After 10 albums, over 2,000 gigs, and tens of millions of streams, the proud New Orleans, LA quintet—Ben Ellman [saxophone, harmonica], Robert Mercurio [bass], Stanton Moore [drums, percussion], Jeffrey Raines [guitar], and Richard Vogal [keyboards]—have kept the torch burning through five U.S. presidential regimes, the turn-of-the-century, Hurricane Katrina, a Global Pandemic, and a much-anticipated recovery. They're the rare collective who can support Juvenile on *Jimmy Kimmel LIVE!*, contribute music to a blockbuster soundtrack such as *Now You See Me*, and light up the stages of *Coachella*, *Bonnaroo*, and *New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (a staggering 22 times)*.

Joined by vocal powerhouse Anjelika “Jelly” Joseph, they continue to forge ahead with a 2021 headline tour and more new music.

“There is a history to the band, yet we continue to release and perform new material,” says Stanton. “I’m truly excited for our fans and audience to hear this next record we’ve been working on. I think it’s some of our best work yet.”

They laid the groundwork for this future upon coming together in 1994. Two years later, the guys dropped their full-length debut, *Coolin’ Off*, and hopped in a Ford Econoline van (*with trailer in tow*) for their very first official tour. Along the way, they released seminal albums such as 2007’s *From the Corner to the Block*, boasting collabs with the likes of Chali 2na, Juvenile, Trombone Shorty, DJ Z-Trip, and Boots Riley. During 2015, *Into The Deep* marked their first debut in the Top 25 of the *Billboard* Top 200 and second straight #1 bow on the *Billboard* Top Contemporary Jazz Albums Chart. Not to mention, it boasted the title track “Into The Deep” [feat. Macy Gray], racking up nearly 20 million streams and counting. Along the way, they performed alongside the likes of Dave Matthews Band, The Roots, Jack Johnson, Talib Kweli, the Allman Brothers Band, Widespread Panic, B.B. King, Counting Crows, James Brown, and many more. They’ve also recorded and performed with the likes of Allen Toussaint [“Bacchus”] and Big Freedia [“Double It”]. Most recently, 2019’s *Already Ready Already* garnered acclaim from *New York Times*, *NPR Weekend Edition*, *Exclaim!*, and many more, while they’ve appeared on the covers of *Downbeat* and *Relix Magazine*.

Around the same time, they welcomed Jelly to the fold after joining forces on stage for a handful of unforgettable performances.

“I was super nervous at first, because I had some pretty big shoes to fill—but like those other singers I had to bring myself and I think I’ve fit in pretty well,” Jelly smiles.

“Jelly came to *Fuji Rock* in Japan with us to sing background with Macy Gray,” recalls Stanton. “We needed someone to sing one of our Galactic originals, and she stepped up. Since there was no time for rehearsal or soundcheck, she showed up prepared, knew the tune completely, and rocked it. When it came time to find someone new to sing with us, she was our first choice. She has such effortless stage presence and a very comfortable rapport with audiences. She also brings an element of unbridled fun!”

That fun came across loud and clear on the 2020 single “Float.” Uplifted by Jelly’s powerhouse pipes, it hinted at the potential of their collective chemistry.

“I love listening to Galactic’s older records, because they were very funk driven,” Jelly goes on. “Now, it seems like they’re incorporating more pop, rock, and soul to create a newer sound.”

As they continue writing, recording, and performing, Galactic always keep New Orleans close to their hearts at all times. In 2018, the band purchased and took over one of the city’s most hallowed venues—Tipitina’s Nightclub. Their history with the venue even predated the band as Ben’s first job was as a cook in the old kitchen, while they’ve graced its stage more than 100 times over the years.

In the end, Galactic keep moving forward as they add more chapters to their incredible history.

“We’ve just achieved 25 years as a band of brothers, so we know how to work with each other and move ourselves through the next 25 years,” Robert leaves off. “We’re always trying to push ourselves with our songwriting and studio collaborations. I look forward to where the future will take us.”