

A man with glasses and a goatee, wearing a black shirt, is playing a double bass. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights his face and the instrument.

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JAMIE OUSLEY'S

by Bill Meredith

BASSIST JAMIE OUSLEY'S NEW RELEASE, *A Sea of Voices*, reflects his profound concern with the future of the planet. Net proceeds from sales of the ocean-themed, not-for-profit CD will benefit Sunshine State Interfaith Power and Light, the Florida chapter of a national environmental organization that seeks to mobilize faith communities to care for Mother Earth.

"It's making music with a deeper purpose," says the 35-year-old Hallandale-based musician. "Our bodies are made up mostly of water, and so is the Earth, yet we don't protect it as well as we should. Interfaith Power and Light understands that. They have 38 different state chapters and referred me to the Sunshine State chapter. Its executive director, Reverend Andy Bell, is wonderful. I'm now on their board of directors."

Ousley's spiritual side comes naturally. A native of Johnson City, Tenn., he grew up the son of a Methodist minister before moving south in 1998 to attend graduate school at the University of Miami. Yet the impetus for his third CD was mostly environmental — with a modicum of wry financial savvy.

"I thought a not-for-profit album might be better than a negative-profit album," Ousley says with a laugh. "But through playing with [80-year-old Miami-based jazz icon] Ira Sullivan, I've learned to love playing gigs in churches, where everyone really listens. When I started looking for organizations that could help me do that while benefiting the environment, Sunshine State Interfaith Power and Light fit the CD's water-based theme."

The album's title, its wavelike cover art and themed selections like Irving Berlin's "How Deep is the Ocean" contribute to the hydropheric motif, but some tracks take different liquid forms. Ousley's instrumental compositions "Steam" and "Holy Water" echo their titles through the expertly placed ebbs and flows of his songwriting, a melodic byproduct of his early violin training.

The session's drummer, Austin McMahon, led Ousley to engineer Peter Kontrimas, who recorded it at his home studio in Westwood, Mass. Nashville-based pianist Joe Davidian



JAMIE OUSLEY

and Boston-based McMahon comprise the rest of Ousley's trio, the three first meeting and performing together while studying at UM.

The well-traveled Ousley has a recent history of remote bandmates and far-flung recording locations. His first two releases, 2008's *O Sorriso Dela* and 2010's *Back Home*, were tracked in the Far East with his Japan-based trio mates Phillip Strange on piano and Larry Marshall on drums. On the new CD, Japanese vocalist Nanami Morikawa, who recently moved to Miami, movingly interprets the traditional tune "Shenandoah" in English and Japanese. Morikawa will perform with Ousley, Davidian and McMahon at the West Palm Beach CD release party on Feb. 2, as will another longtime confederate, vocalist SAMM, who warmly sang the title track to *Back Home*.

Ousley also enlisted South Florida musicians — and UM grads — he works with frequently to contribute to *A Sea of Voices*. Pianist Gabriel Siefert plays on "Alfonsina y el Mar," while percussionist Carlomagno

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S P O T L I G H T

CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE & INSIDE STRAIGHT OPPERMAN HALL, FSU, TALLAHASSEE/FEB. 4

Upright bass master Christian McBride recently released a pair of albums that reveal different facets of his enormous talent. The 39-year-old Philly native helms a roaring big band on *The Good Feeling* and engages in intimate, allstar duets on *Conversations With Christian*. A glance at his sideman credits over 20 years reveals stints with everyone from Bobby Watson to Pat Metheny to Sting, and even includes recent touring with former James Brown saxophonist Maceo Parker. McBride's equally brilliant on electric bass, which he also plays on occasion. At ease playing all forms of traditional jazz, fusion or R&B, he'll lead his hard-bop



Inside Straight quintet for this FSU concert. Featuring versatile alto and soprano saxophonist Steve Wilson, young vibraphone sensation Warren Wolf and esteemed veteran drummer Carl Allen, the combo will play material from its 2009 debut *Kind of Brown* — and display its leader's signature blend of tone, taste and technique. **BM**

TERELL STAFFORD QUINTET

FOUR SEASONS RESORT, PALM BEACH/FEB. 6

Miami-born trumpeter Terell Stafford has been called "one of the great players of our time" by no less an authority than pianist McCoy Tyner. With a bluesy, authoritative tone fueled by formative years in Chicago, and technique honed through classical studies, Stafford continued his studies at Rutgers University at the suggestion of Wynton Marsalis. The 45-year-old Stafford has appeared as a sideman with Tyner, Bobby Watson, Herbie Mann, Jimmy Heath, Nancy Wilson, Diana Krall, John Clayton, and Matt Wilson (with whom he'll perform in Fort Lauderdale in April) during his nearly 20-year recording career. Stafford's



quintet features pianist Bruce Barth, saxophonist Tim Warfield Jr., bassist Peter Washington and drummer Dana Hall. The group's latest CD, the Clayton-produced *This Side of Strayhorn*, is an evocative presentation of works by Billy Strayhorn, on which the trumpeter tackles classics and little-heard gems from Duke Ellington's long-time collaborator. **BM**

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URI GURVICH

ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/FEB. 11

For decades, American jazz musicians have found greater acceptance overseas than at home. A fortunate byproduct has been the emergence of open-minded jazz players from foreign lands who uniquely interpret the American musical art form. Israeli alto saxophonist Uri Gurvich is a case in point. He's currently touring to showcase the influential blend of Hebraic folk melodies, jazz rhythms and Middle Eastern harmonies displayed on his debut CD, *The Storyteller* on John Zorn's Tzadik label. Gurvich's worldly mix of influences is well-founded. At age 19, he toured with the European Jazz Orchestra before moving to Boston

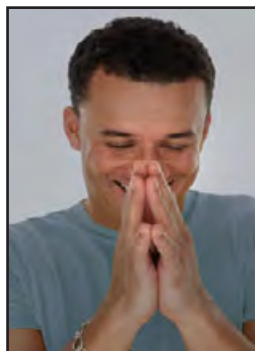


to study at Berklee and eventually settling in New York City. Gurvich also lends his tone and creativity to Cuban drummer Francisco Mela's latest release, *Tree of Life*. Gurvich's quartet for his Delray show includes the United Nations-worthy lineup of Argentinean pianist Leo Genovese, Finnish bassist Peter Slavov and Israeli drummer Ronen Itzik. **BM**

JACKY TERRASSON TRIO

MINIACI PAC, FORT LAUDERDALE/FEB. 11

Musicians are shaped not only by their instincts and education, but by their ancestry and upbringing. An Austrian player is as likely to be steeped in classical traditions as a Mississippi-raised musician is in the blues. So pianist Jacky Terrasson's all-over-the-place improvisational imagination certainly has something to do with his being born in Germany to French and American parents. Raised in Paris, Terrasson honed his classical technique into his teens before studying jazz at Berklee in Boston. He returned overseas to start his performing career before eventually settling in New York City. Listen to Terrasson's compositions



on his 2010 CD *Push*, or hear his trio roar through a standard like "Caravan," and you'll detect elements of European classical music and American jazz fusing effortlessly. Terrasson and his bassist, Ben Williams, are both Thelonious Monk Competition winners. New York City drummer Jamire Williams rounds out the trio. **BM**

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DUNCAN THEATRE, PBSC, LAKE WORTH/FEB. 18

Fans of virtuosic Gypsy jazz and/or silent films won't want to miss the Hot Club of San Francisco's creative "Cinema Vivant" presentation. Guitarist Paul Mehling will lead the seven-piece band (its name echoes the classic Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli-led Hot Club of France) through music that will accompany three silent films predating even that World War II-era group. American filmmaker Charley Bowers' *There It Is* (1928), and European director Ladislav Starewicz's *The Cameraman's Revenge* (1912) and *The Mascot* (1933), blend adventure, comedy and documentary while the band provides the live



soundtrack. Three guitarists (Mehling, Isabelle Fontaine, Jeff Magidson), two violinists (Evan Price, Julian Smedley) and two bassists (Clint Baker, Sam Rocha), blend the Gypsy jazz influence of their namesake with Mehling's nods to the bluegrass and retro-pop styles of David Grisman and Dan Hicks. **BM**

MICHAEL LOCKE & THE REPEAT OFFENDERS

TIMEOUT KC, MIAMI/FEB. 10

BIG EASY, HOLLYWOOD/FEB. 11

FLICKERLITE, HOLLYWOOD/FEB. 17

BERT'S BAR & GRILLE, MATLACHA/FEB. 18-19

Ohio-based guitarslinger Michael Locke returns to his old South Florida stomping grounds this month, his four-piece band and excellent new live recording in tow. The University of Miami grad sounds better than ever on *Pleasure King!*, which provides a superb showcase for his fiery, deeply rooted riffage. On this set of original and classic blues, Locke conjures a whole history of the music, from his Freddy King/Bill Doggett-inspired title track to his jazzy interpretation



of Willie Dixon's "Too Many Cooks" to fresh reads of blues staples such as "I Get Evil." Expert support comes from bassist James Higgins, keyboardist Da'Rosa Richardson and drummer Stephen Keith. These Florida dates are a series of CD-release parties. Joel DaSilva's *Midnight Howl* will join Locke at the Flickerlite and at Bert's. **BW**

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S P O T L I G H T

BIG SANDY & HIS FLY-RITE BOYS
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/FEB. 16
BAMBOO ROOM, LAKE WORTH/FEB. 17
ROCKABILLY RUCKUS, TAMPA/FEB. 18
GREEN PARROT, KEY WEST/FEB. 19-20
THE SOCIAL, ORLANDO/FEB. 21
JACK RABBITS, JACKSONVILLE/FEB. 23

When the Bamboo Room lost power some years ago, retro-roots kings Big Sandy & His Fly-Rite Boys plucked acoustic instruments from the venue's walls. Big Sandy stood on a chair in the candlelit room and let his big, pure voice ring out. And when the juice came back on, the boys got back to doing what they do so well — rockin' like it was 1959. Whether reviving



a little-heard jukebox gem or playing a fingerpopping ditty of their own, the Boys masterfully evoke the eras of Western swing, rockabilly and R&B. For more than 20 years, the group's been honing these sensibilities, as evidenced on 2006's *Turntable Matinee*. Now Big Sandy, Jeff West, Joe Perez and Ashley Kingman are back on Florida stages. **BW**

ROBERT CRAY & SHEMEKIA COPELAND
ARSHT CENTER, MIAMI/FEB. 17

For its aptly titled Blues & Soul concert, the Arsht Center's Jazz Roots series pairs journeyman guitarist Robert Cray with roof-raising vocalist Shemekia Copeland. Cray built his career on his smoldering licks, terrifically soulful vocals and superb songwriting. Funky numbers such as "Phone Booth," from 1983's *Bad Influence*, showed great promise, which Cray fulfilled on his 1986 classic *Strong Persuader*. He's continued to release reliably sizzling music, including 2010's live double-disc *Cookin' in Mobile*. Cray also was part of a session with Albert Collins and Johnny "Clyde" Copeland, 1985's *Showdown!* Guitarist Copeland



was Shemekia's dad, and she picked up plenty of his deep-blues feeling while touring with him as a teen. Now in her 30s, Copeland has emerged as heirress to the legacies of the late Koko Taylor and Etta James, as well, with a string of powerhouse recordings. Both also perform at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall: Cray on Feb. 14, Copeland on Feb. 19. **BW**

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S P O T L I G H T

ALLEN TOUSSAINT & TROMBONE SHORTY WITH ORLEANS AVENUE FSU, TALLAHASSEE/FEB. 17

New Orleans legend Allen Toussaint meets New Orleans legend-in-the-making Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews for what's sure to be one helluva party. Toussaint was an in-demand session man, playing piano on or arranging classics such as "Ooh Poo Pah Doo," "Mother-in-Law" and "Ya Ya." Production work with The Meters, Dr. John and LaBelle in the 1970s deepened his legacy, and his continued relevance can be heard on his 2006 album with Elvis Costello (*The River in Reverse*) and a 2009 allstar jazz session (*The Bright Mississippi*). Meanwhile, Shorty has been



forging his own path. The trombonist and trumpeter grew up in the Tremé, but had no intention of playing his hometown's music the same old way. He and his Orleans Avenue band fold funk, rock and hip-hop into their gumbo, even as they maintain a Crescent City roux. Shorty soared to the top of the jazz charts with 2011's *For True*. **BW**

CAROLINA CHOCOLATE DROPS FSU, TALLAHASSEE/FEB. 19-20

Lovers of traditional roots and folk music will find plenty to savor in the repertoire of the Carolina Chocolate Drops. The trio of multi-instrumentalists and vocalists Don Flemons, Rhiannon Giddens and Justin Robinson (since replaced by Hubby Jenkins) bonded over their obsession with traditional African-American string band music originating from the Piedmont region. The group's 2010 Nonesuch label debut, *Genuine Negro Jig*, topped the *Billboard* Bluegrass and Folk charts and snared them a Grammy for Best Traditional Folk Album. It may be hard to believe this old-timey music could earn such them such acclaim



these days. And yet, the Drops bring plenty of youthful energy to their performances, and the musicians have been informed by the music of their own times. *Leaving Eden*, to be released this month, presents an exciting amalgam of traditional forms and instrumentation — banjo, fiddle, acoustic guitar — with up-to-date references. **BW**

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SPOTLIGHT

ELLIOTT SHARP

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AUDITORIUM/FEB. 25

Describing what New York City guitarist Elliott Sharp sounds like is like describing what air looks like. Often described as avant-garde, Sharp is a self-described "science geek" who studied electronics and anthropology as well as music. His science projects include an acoustic guitar fitted with a Dobro tailpiece and an eight-string hybrid "guitarbass." Two forthcoming releases will further display his dexterity. *Sky Road Songs*, by his blues project Terraplane, will feature contributions from since-deceased blues-guitar great Hubert Sumlin, as well as Sharp playing guitar, saxophone, bass clarinet and mandolin. *Aggregat*



Trio will display the guitarist's jazz side, inspired by his solo "Sharp Plays Monk" nods to Thelonious Monk. Sharp's solo set in Miami will be augmented by his band composition "Syndakit" performed with Frida-musiq, which consists of like-minded alumni and students from the University of Miami's Frost School of Music. **BM**

JANIVA MAGNESS

OM BAR, NEW SMYRNA/FEB. 16

B.B. KING'S, ORLANDO/FEB. 17

BAMBOO ROOM, LAKE WORTH/FEB. 18

CLEARWATER BLUES FEST/FEB. 19

Janiva Magness displays a steely resolve in songs of survival and redemption. On her excellent 2010 release *The Devil is an Angel Too*, the blues and soul singer personalized gems from the songbooks of Nina Simone, Gladys Knight and Ann Peebles. She also interpreted material by contemporary tunesmiths Julie Miller, who penned the dark and menacing title song, and Jeff Turmes, who contributed the desolate country-blues "Weeds Like Us." Magness chases *Devil* with her new



CD, *Stronger For It*, set for release in March. An Alligator Records press release deems it "the most moving and intimate album of her career," as she penned some of the songs herself, in addition to mining deep ore from Tom Waits, Shelby Lynne and Ray Wylie Hubbard. On stage, Magness is among the blues' most potent performers. **BW**

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