



JAZZ & BLUES
MAY 2012
FLORIDA
FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

FEATURED ARTIST

NEGRONI'S TRIO

**HERBIE HANCOCK • PETER KARP and SUE FOLEY • SMOKIN' TORPEDOES
DAVID SANCHEZ QUARTET • BIG AL & THE HEAVYWEIGHTS
SONNY ROLLINS • SOUL REBELS • KARRIN ALLYSON
PAPA GROWS FUNK • BELA FLECK and THE MARCUS ROBERTS TRIO
CHICK COREA, STANLEY CLARKE and LENNY WHITE • CASSIE TAYLOR**

Negróni's Trio

by Bill Meredith

THE TERM "LATIN JAZZ" HAS AS MANY DIFFERENT

connotations as jazz itself. But Miami-based Negróni's Trio has combined elements of both genres, among other styles, to forge a sound uniquely its own.

Fifty-five-year-old pianist Jose Negróni formed the trio in 2002, seven years after moving his family to Miami from his native Puerto Rico. His son, drummer Nomar Negróni, now 31, was just 14 at the time. Having studied privately with University of Miami instructor Steve Rucker through high school, and earned a full scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Nomar attained the drum chair in his father's new band at age 21.

Acoustic and electric bassist Josh Allen, now with the trio for two years, recently graduated from UM. He's solidified the lineup which had previously utilized a handful of guest bassists. With five CDs over 10 years, Negróni's Trio continues to cut a swath through several different genres and subgenres, Latin and otherwise. "I'd call our sound a mix of classical, jazz, Caribbean and Latin American influences," Nomar Negróni says, "with original ideas that are always played from the heart."

The heart of the band's classical influence resides in Jose, who taught for 16 years at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico and is the trio's primary composer. "He's very influenced by classical music," Nomar says. "When he writes music for the trio, you can hear that. It's one of the things that keeps us from being lumped into Latin jazz."

A disciple of Puerto Rican salsa pianist Papo Lucca, Jose studied with pianist Alicia Morales, the niece of another of the



island's famed pianists, Noro Morales. The Negróni's Trio patriarch first showcased his strong compositional blend of classical and Latin ideas on the trio's 2003 debut, *Naturaleza/Nature*. Its 2005 followup, *Piano/Drums/Bass*, ventured further into Afro-Caribbean elements. With its combination of originals and creative covers like Wayne Shorter's classic "Footprints," the recording earned a Latin Grammy nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album. *Negróni's Trio Live*, from 2006, captured the musicians on-stage at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, and displayed Nomar's increasingly intuitive musical relationship with his father.

"When I first started playing with the trio, I was still very young," he says. "My dad was one of several older guys I was playing with at that time. Now, it feels more like we're brothers to me."

Nomar's increasing influence was reflected in the title of the trio's next CD, the 2008 release *Father and Son*. The drummer's own style is a unique blend of jazz and Latin music elements. "There are so many influential players," he says. "For contemporary jazz, I'd have to say Steve

Negrón's Trio

Gadd; for traditional jazz, I love Roy Haynes; and from the Latin side, Horacio Hernandez. I try to take little bits of what a lot of drummers do and make it into my own thing.”

On the trio’s most-recent release, 2010’s *Just Three*, Nomar does just that. His colorful and often melodic drumming accents each keystroke by his father, who adds new dimensions by switching between acoustic piano and a Fender Rhodes electric keyboard. The results earned the trio another Latin Grammy nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album.

Allen joined Negrón’s Trio at roughly the same young age as Nomar had a decade earlier. So expect new ideas, fireworks and more accolades when the band releases its next “live” CD. “Josh is the new guy on bass in the Miami area,” Nomar says. “We’re planning on recording live soon at a theater with no audience, but we haven’t decided where yet. We’ll get the energy of a gig with the live sound of an open theater.”



Negrón’s Trio performs at the Arts Garage in Delray Beach on May 19. For more information, call 561-450-6357 or visit artsgarage.org.



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S P O T L I G H T

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TURTLE KRAALS, KEY WEST/MAY 10-11
BAMBOO ROOM, LAKE WORTH/MAY 12
BERT'S BAR, MATLACHA/MAY 13-14
BRADFORDVILLEBLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MAY 19

The second outing from Peter Karp and Sue Foley, *Beyond the Crossroads* is terrifically rootsy entertainment. The pair's expert guitar work and gritty vocals are certainly compatible, and their foot-stomping original tunes dip into country blues, old-school R&B and honky-tonk. Born in Ottawa, Foley brought her barbecued licks to Texas, impressing everyone who heard her masterful playing and huckleberry vocals. Among her admirers was guitarist, vocalist and keyboardist Karp, who invited Foley to sing a duet on his album *Shadows and Cracks*. The pair grew close during two years of email correspondence, which led to their 2010 debut collaboration, *He Said — She Said*. Don't miss 'em. BW



SMOKIN' TORPEDOES
SCRUFFY MURPHY'S, ORLANDO/MAY 5
UNDERGROUND BLUZ (UCF), ORLANDO/MAY 12
BEACH SHACK, COCOA BEACH/MAY 19
JESUP BAY, OVIEDO/MAY 26

If you judge a band by its songbook, then Smokin' Torpedoes should whet your appetite for classic jukebox blues. Among the tunes the Orlando-based group expertly renders: Lowell Fulson's "Reconsider Baby"; Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson's "Ol' Kidney Stew is Fine" and "Juice Head Baby"; and The Blasters' "One Bad Stud." And if those titles get you drooling, wait till you hear the two-time Orlando IBC winners in action (or on Youtube). After a brief layoff, guitarist, harp blower and vocalist Jeff Willey reconvened the Torps in January with veteran drummer Dan Imiola and saxophonist Steve Holt. He also recruited accomplished UCF students Teague Stefan on guitar and Brandon Miller on bass. Willey boasts a voice and a t t i t u d e perfectly suited to the jumpin' material, not to mention a fluid, jazzy guitar sound. BW



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BIG AL & THE HEAVYWEIGHTS SHED BBQ & BLUES JOINT, DESTIN/MAY 5

From Metairie to Mobile, Natchez to New Orleans and Ponchatoula to Pensacola, Big Al & the Heavyweights ping across the Gulf like a pinball. Returning to Florida this month, the Crescent City party vets offer a well-seasoned mix of blues and roots that's kept them working steadily for 20 years in various incarnations. Drummer Big Al Lauro hails from the Big Easy and has a natural feel for the region's signature rhythms. Over the years, the versatile timekeeper has helmed bands truly worthy of the Heavyweights title, including one with guitarist Warren Haynes and another with



harmonica wizard Jason Ricci. Currently, the Heavyweights feature an all-Louisiana lineup with guitarist-vocalist James Bass, bassist Dean Galatas and huge-toned harp-blower and vocalist Harmonica Red. A recent DVD, *Come to Our Party*, captures the band onstage — the best way to hear them. **BW**

SOUL REBELS BRADFORDVILLEBLUES,TALLAHASSEE/MAY16 THE STAGE, MIAMI/MAY 18

The brass band is the most iconic of New Orleans traditions, but the Soul Rebels march to the beat of their own drummers. Those drummers would be founding members Lumar LeBlanc and Derrick Moss. Steeped in their hometown's musical heritage, they also absorbed the sounds of funk, rock, R&B and hip-hop. Moss and LeBlanc gathered a group of like-minded musicians — including monster tenor saxophonist Erion Williams — and began winning over local audiences with their brash take on the genre. The Rebs continue to push their city's music



into the 21st century. Their recent recording, *Unlock Your Mind*, contains brass-fueled, funky-butt reads of tunes such as Eurhythmic's "Sweet Dreams are Made of This" and Stevie Wonder's "Living for the City," as well as their own hard-grooving tunes. Unlock your mind, and your booty's sure to follow. **BW**

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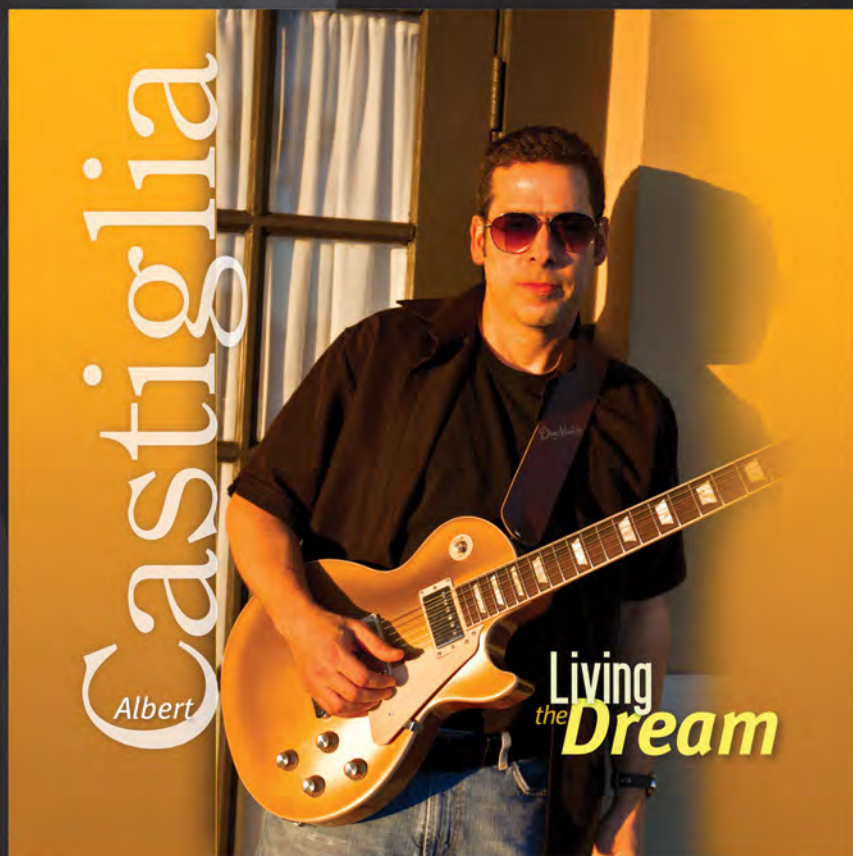
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Maxwell Room - Ft Lauderdale, FL - June 23rd

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PAPA GROWS FUNK
WILL'S PUB, ORLANDO/MAY 24
FUNKY BISCUIT, BOCA/MAY 25
THE STAGE, MIAMI/MAY 26

Last month marked the 12th anniversary of New Orleans groove meisters Papa Grows Funk. The allstar quintet coalesced around Hammond B3 wizard and lead vocalist John "Papa" Gros, calling up influences such as The Neville Brothers, Dr. John and The Meters. The band's latest recording, *Needle in the Groove*, updates classic Crescent City funk, soul and jazz, and features stellar performances from Gros, saxophonist Jason Mingledorff, guitarist June Yamagishi, bassist Marc Pero and drummer Jeffrey "Jellybean" Alexander. The album title hints



at the vintage LPs on which these cats cut their teeth, as does the presence of legendary producer Allen Toussaint on about half the tracks. PGF has exported its Crescent City party music around the world, but they always return to their hometown, where you can find them Monday nights at the Maple Leaf. **BW**

CASSIE TAYLOR
BRADFORDVILLEBLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MAY 26
EARL'S HIDEAWAY, SEBASTIAN/MAY 27
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/MAY 29
THE INDIGO ROOM, FORT MYERS/MAY 30
ENGLEWOOD'S ON DEARBORN, ENGLEWOOD/MAY 31

With her tangle of reddish curls, striking blue-green eyes, and charismatic stage presence, Cassie Taylor was impossible to overlook as she accompanied her father, Otis Taylor, on bass and vocals. After seven years performing with dad, the younger Taylor continues to establish her own identity. Last year, she released the solo recording *Daughter of a Bluesman* and co-led *Girls With Guitars*, a blues-rock project with



Samantha Fish and Dani Wilde. Doubling on keys, the fragile-yet-tensile-voiced singer also formed a "neo-blues" quartet, the Soul Calvary, to perform her emotionally involving songs. The band is working on a full-length recording, which they're funding through Kickstarter. **BW**



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May 16	The Soul Rebels	
May 17	Matt Hill & The Buzzkills	
May 18	J.B.'s Zydeco Zoo	
May 19	Peter Karp & Sue Foley	
May 25	Fiona Boyes	
May 26	Cassie Taylor & The Soul Cavalry	

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HERBIE HANCOCK
SUNFEST, WEST PALM BEACH/MAY 2

Celebrating its 30th year, SunFest started out with jazz-heavy lineups, but traded them for a preponderance of pop acts. Still, the 2012 roster includes one of the heaviest of modern-jazz heavyweights. Keyboardist Herbie Hancock, 72, is likely to play material from his latest release, *The Imagine Project*, a 2010 CD recorded in seven countries with a scroll of guest stars spanning the jazz, rock and pop worlds. The unpredictable Hancock has been at the forefront of jazz innovation for 50 years, since starting his solo career and joining Miles Davis' band in the early 1960s. A former engineering student, the Chicago native further nurtured his love of technology with



electric keyboards on the 1973 funk-fusion hybrid *Head Hunters* and with his 1983 album *Future Shock* and its hit single and video, "Rockit." Yet Hancock's 1995 album *The New Standard* presented pop hits in an acoustic jazz format, and his 2007 gem *River: The Joni Letters* honored Joni Mitchell and earned him a Grammy for Album of the Year. **BM**

DAVIDSANCHEZQUARTET *feat.* **STEFONHARRIS**
MINIACI PAC, FORT LAUDERDALE/MAY 12

The David Sánchez Quintet serves a sizzling blend of modern jazz with a decidedly Latin accent. For their South Florida JAZZ concert, the Puerto Rican-born tenor sax superstar will perform with Venezuelan pianist Edward Simon, fellow Puertorriqueño bassist Ricardo Rodriguez, Puerto Rican-American drummer Adam Cruz and featured guest, African-American vibraphonist Stefon Harris. The group will surely play material from *Ninety Miles*, the 2011 CD that was recorded in Havana by Sánchez and Harris with trumpeter Christian Scott and Cuban groups led by pianists Rember Duharte and Harold Lopez-Nussa. Sánchez, 44, earned a Latin Grammy



for his 2004 CD *Coral*, and he's known for a rhythmic sense that was enhanced by starting out on congas at age 8. After switching to saxophone at 12, he developed quickly enough to earn a music scholarship to Rutgers University in New Jersey, putting him in close proximity to the jazz hotbed of New York City. **BM**

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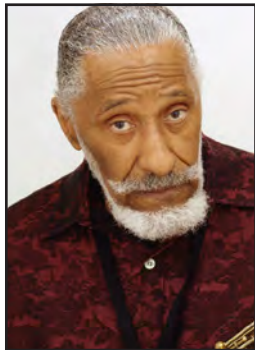
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S P O T L I G H T

SONNY ROLLINS
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
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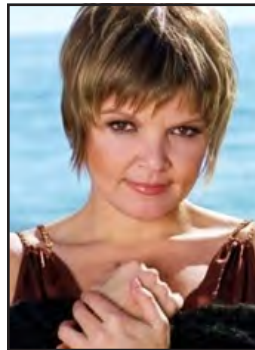
Sonny Rollins has outlived nearly all his contemporaries in jazz over the past 60 years, and he shows few signs of slowing down. At age 81, the big-toned tenor saxophonist remains a joyful and creative force, as he calls up a lifetime of musical inspiration in every solo: from bop and showtunes to honking R&B and sunny Caribbean grooves. In 2010, Rollins became the first jazz composer to be named the Edward MacDowell Medalist, an honor presented to individuals who make outstanding contributions in their field annually since 1960. In 2011, he received the Medal of Arts, the nation's highest honor for artistic excellence. Innovative, brash and iconoclastic, Rollins preceded John Coltrane in the Miles Davis Quintet, playing with the trumpeter before he was 20 years old. The Harlem native also worked with Thelonious Monk, Max Roach, Bud Powell and Clifford Brown. Expect a historic performance by the tenor titan and his road-tested band. **BM**



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KARRIN ALLYSON
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE/MAY 25

If vocalist Karrin Allyson is best-known for her eclectic themed recordings and range of stylistic talents, it may be a case of art imitating life. The 48-year-old singer was born in Kansas, moved to San Francisco during high school, and then attended the University of Nebraska on a classical piano scholarship. Since becoming a professional jazz vocalist, she's ventured to Minneapolis, Kansas City and now New York City, while recording 13 gems that include *Ballads: Remembering John Coltrane*, *Imagina: Songs of Brasil*, and her latest, the Grammy-nominated 2011 CD *'Round Midnight*. Allyson's boundless range encompasses



expressive scat-singing, expert Portuguese lyricism and mournful ballads. On *'Round Midnight*, she coaxes the listener into every track — from originals to the evocative title standard — with guitarist Rod Fleeman, bassist Ed Howard, drummer Matt Wilson, and her own seductive vocals and playing on both acoustic and electric piano. **BM**

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- 2:00PM BOBBY & THE RENEGADES
- 4:00PM GHOST TOWN BLUES BAND
- 6:00PM OTIS CADILLAC & THE ELDORADOS
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- 8:00PM RAMBLER
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GHOST TOWN



OTIS CADILLAC



RAMBLER

SUNDAY, MAY 27

- 2:00PM ERNIE LANCASTER
- 4:00PM DIDDLEY SQUAT
- 6:00PM CASSIE TAYLOR
- 8:00PM JOHN NEMETH
- 10:00PM BLACK MOLLY



ERNIE LANCASTER



DIDDLEY SQUAT



CASSIE TAYLOR



JOHN NEMETH



BLACK MOLLY



DAVID SHELLEY

MONDAY, MAY 28

DAVID SHELLEY & BLUESTONE ALL AFTERNOON

Lineup subject to
change without notice.

**BELA FLECK & THE MARCUS ROBERTS TRIO
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE/MAY 25**

Béla Fleck has spent his career taking the banjo into worlds beyond its traditional context. On the new release *Across the Imaginary Divide*, the 53-year-old banjoist teams up with Jacksonville-born trad-jazz pianist Marcus Roberts and his ace rhythm section of bassist Rodney Jordan and drummer Jason Marsalis. Few musicians are flexible enough to step into such situations, but Fleck has proven an anomaly. During the past 35 years, he's performed with the rootsy New Grass Revival, fusion group Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, traditional African musicians, a trio with



classical bassist Edgar Meyer and Indian percussionist Zakir Hussain, a duo with jazz icon Chick Corea, and many others. In Jordan, Fleck gets a highly interactive bassist; in Marsalis, a member of New Orleans' first family of jazz; and in Roberts, a hometown hero whose depth of jazz history is matched by his sterling chops. **BM**

**CHICK COREA/STANLEY CLARKE/LENNY WHITE
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE/MAY 27**

Even at age 70, keyboardist Chick Corea is still too active to determine what his eventual legacy might be. But it's safe to say that it will include bassist Stanley Clarke. The two are founding members of the 40-year-old band Return to Forever, and were joined by drummer Lenny White in 1973 when Corea morphed the act from its Brazilian jazz origins into a popular fusion phase. Along with guitarist Al Di Meola, the three musicians released the Grammy-winning 1975 album *No Mystery* and top-selling *Romantic Warrior* in 1976 before RTF disbanded. After pursuing various other projects for 30 years, the bandmates reunited for



tours and recordings, which led to the core trio of Corea, Clarke and White releasing the Grammy-winning live-and-studio time capsule *Forever* in 2011. On the final day of the Jacksonville Jazz Fest, expect that CD's acoustic and electric fireworks on classic material like "Señor Mouse," "After the Cosmic Rain" and "500 Miles High." **BM**

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