



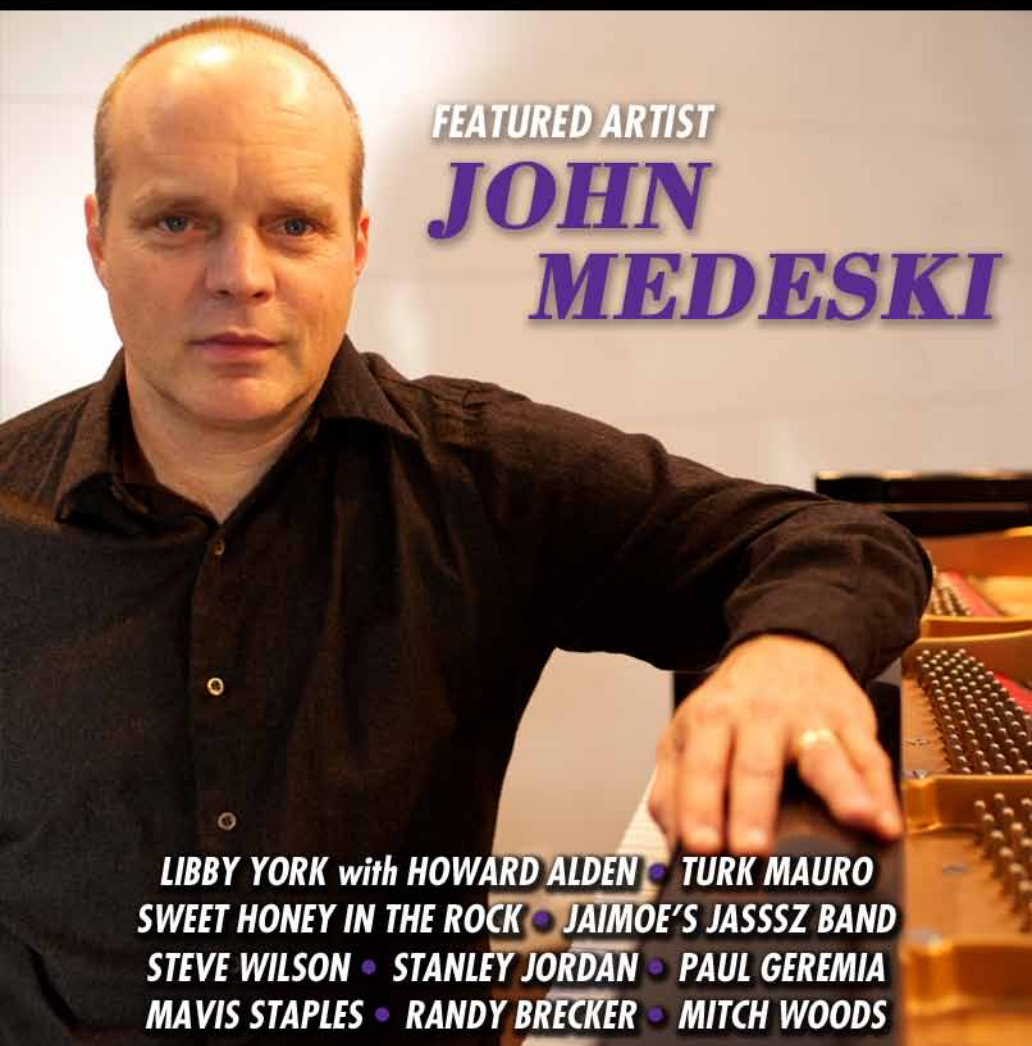
JAZZ & BLUES
FLORIDA

JANUARY
2013

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

FEATURED ARTIST

**JOHN
MEDESKI**



**LIBBY YORK with HOWARD ALDEN • TURK MAURO
SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK • JAIMOE'S JASSSZ BAND
STEVE WILSON • STANLEY JORDAN • PAUL GEREMIA
MAVIS STAPLES • RANDY BRECKER • MITCH WOODS**

JOHN MEDESKI

by Bill Meredith



JOHN MEDESKI, KEYBOARDIST FOR progressive jazz/jam trio Medeski, Martin and Wood, was born in Kentucky, but spent his formative years in South Florida. From age four until he earned a scholarship to study at the New England Conservatory in Boston, Medeski called Fort Lauderdale home. He'll return to the area for a pre-Jam Cruise concert with MMW at Revolution Live, before leaving from Port Everglades.

Advancing through the music program at Lauderdale's pre-K-through-12th grade Pine Crest School, Medeski, now 47, rubbed elbows with iconic musicians who lived in the area during the 1970s and '80s. Among them were multi-wind-instrumentalist Ira Sullivan, guitarist Randy Bernsen and bass legend Jaco Pastorius.

"I played with Jaco around town several times," Medeski says. "He wanted me to do a tour of Japan with him when I was 16, but my mom wouldn't let me. I only played with Ira a couple of times, but went to see lots of his shows. Randy and I crossed paths a lot, and still do. I'm on his latest record [the 2012 EP *APPeaser*]."

Medeski attended NEC to continue his piano studies, but when he discovered a Hammond organ there, it changed both his story and history. He formed a bond with bassist Chris Wood, and the two moved to New York City. With the addition of drummer Billy Martin in

1991, they launched one of the most successful organ trios ever.

MMW actually started out all-acoustic on their 1992 debut disc *Notes From the Underground* before becoming electric festival-circuit heroes by fusing jazz, funk, blues, pop and world music. The 21-year-old band return to their roots on their latest release, the unplugged 2012 live CD *Free Magic* (Indirecto). Recorded during a 2007 acoustic tour, the vibrant set includes Wood's opening Weather Report nod "Doppler"; Medeski's shape-shifting "Where's Sly," featuring a stirring Martin drum solo; and the pianist's blending of two of his innumerable influences on the

Charles Mingus/Sun Ra medley "Nostalgia in Times Square/Angel Race."

As Medeski points out, he never abandoned piano, even as he added Hammond B3 and Wurlitzer organs, clavinet, synthesizers and mellotron to his electric arsenal. "Our second CD [the sublime *It's a Jungle in Here*, 1993] was about half piano, half electric keyboards," Medeski says. "It's always been a blend."

During the following decade, MMW became a unique, open-minded rarity: a jazz group popular enough to call its own shots. With "alternative-jazz" status conferred upon them by a fan base of alt-rock lovers, jazz heads and jam-band followers, the trio alternated blazing electric efforts (*Combustication*, *Uninvisible*) with releases on its own Indirecto label, starting with the freely improvised *Farmer's Reserve* and acoustic outings such as the live *Tonic*. Such freedom also allowed the band members to branch out. Medeski started the trend with his searing 1994 CD *Lunar Crush*, which paired him with David Fiuczynski, an adventurous guitarist he'd met at NEC. Wood's most recent side project is the rootsy Wood Brothers, with his guitar-playing vocalist sibling Oliver Wood; Martin's is his duo with Hammond organist Wil Blades.

But MMW's most popular incarnation was its most unforeseen, and teamed them with a

MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD

superstar from the world of jazz-fusion. "We got a message on our 1-800 fan line, back before the Internet," Medeski says. "Hey, this is John Scofield and I really dig what you guys do.' I thought it was a joke, but we called back and it was really him." MMW wound up providing elastic support for the former Miles Davis guitarist on his 1998 release *A Go Go*. Subsequent quartet CDs — under the name Medeski, Scofield, Martin and Wood — include *Out Louder* and *Live: In Case the World Changes Its Mind*, a 2011 document of their 2007 tour. MMW will be performing with the guitarist on the upcoming *Jam Cruise*, as well. "Some people like the quartet with Sco best," Medeski says, "and some prefer the trio. They're different, but then again, we've always been on the fringe of a lot of different sounds."



Medeski, Martin and Wood perform at Revolution Live in Fort Lauderdale on Sunday, Jan. 6. Doors open at 8PM. Call 954-449-1025 or visit Jointherevolution.net.



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Sat, 1/5, 8pm

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Piano prodigy Raphael pairs with seven-string guitar master Alden, melding classics and improvisation. "These two muses seem to be joined at the hip as they complement each other so well." —*Independent Online*



Fri, 1/11, 7:30pm | **Federico Brillos (\$25-35)**

Five-time Grammy winner soars on the violin, earning him a stellar reputation as a jazz, Latin, and classical music master. "Every moment of each song is a quantum packet of beautiful energy." —*All About Jazz*



Sat, 1/12, 8pm | **Turk Mauro (\$25-35)**

His mastery of a range of styles, from big band swing to hard bop and classic jazz reveals him as one of the most versatile saxophonists in Florida. "Passionate and swinging." —*The New York Post*



Fri, 1/18, 7:30pm | **Mike Levine (\$25-35)**

Highly skilled in a variety of styles, from smooth jazz to rocking rhythms, as comfortable playing jazz classics as he is original compositions. "Music that is not just smooth jazz, it's great jazz." —*allaboutjazz.com*



Sat, 1/26, 8pm | **Randy Brecker (\$25-35)**

Talented trumpeter, part of the popular duo The Brecker Brothers, seven-time Grammy award nominee, recorded and toured with music legends Jaco Pastorius and Bruce Springsteen. "Stunning, poignant, breathtaking." —*Jazz Improv Magazine*

GARAGE BLUES



Sat, 1/19, 8pm | **Bob Margolin (\$25-35)**

Nicknamed "Steady Rollin" for his mellow tunes and rolling melodies, he redefines old blues standards. "His stellar guitar playing is the highlight...it's tasteful, yet packed with deep soul by this guitar guru." — *Boston Blues Society*

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK
 MIRAMAR CULTURAL CENTER, ARTS PARK/JAN. 25
 SOUTH MIAMI-DADE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER,
 CUTLER BAY/JAN. 26

Formed by Bernice Johnson Reagon in 1973, the a cappella group Sweet Honey in the Rock harmonize on a rich repertoire of spirituals, blues and folk songs. During their 40-year tenure, the group has stayed socially and culturally relevant, connecting the struggles of their forebears to issues of civil rights, gender equality and racial identity, and generally giving voice to oppressed people everywhere. While Dr. Reagon has since stepped away from the stage, Sweet Honey rolls on, ever mindful of their mission to edify as well as entertain. On "Are We a Nation," their contribution



to the multi-artist 2012 release *Border Songs*, Sweet Honey tackle the issue of racial profiling and other tactics designed to keep immigrants out of the U.S. Original members Carol Maillard and Louise Robinson, and longtime members Ysae Barnwell and Nitanju Casel, remain at the core of sextet, which also includes Aisha Kahlil and Shirley Saxton. **BW**

PAUL GEREMIA
 LUNA STAR CAFE, NORTH MIAMI/JAN. 26
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/JAN. 31
(w/ Belmont & Jones)

Love My Stuff is the title of country-blues master Paul Geremia's 2011 Red House recording, and it carries a few connotations. Of course, there's the spicy Charley Patton title song, which Geremia expertly interprets. But then there's the obvious affection Geremia shows for blues pioneers such as Patton, Blind Willie McTell and the Rev. Gary Davis. And, quite naturally, fans of the form will indeed "love his stuff." In his early years, Geremia shared stages with blues greats Pink Anderson, Yank Rachell and Babe Stovall, and the connection is obvious. Sparse though they may be, Geremia's



recordings are always a treat, showcasing his deft picking on 6- and 12-string guitars and Dobro, fine harmonica playing and sourmash vocals on the country-blues canon and wry originals. This Rhode Island native has rambled the world, but likes to winter where it's warm. He'll close out the month with similarly minded blues duo Belmont & Jones. **BW**

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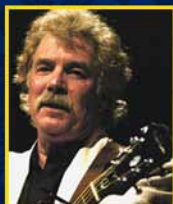


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Alongside fellow drummer Butch Trucks, Jaimoe Johanson laid down the big beats and sophisticated grooves that powered The Allman Bros Band. Jaimoe fell in love with jazz as a teenager but found plenty of creative expression within the Allmans' expansive Southern rock. Today, he helms his self-titled Jassz Band. The group continues in the Allmans style, while emphasizing blues and jazz roots. As heard on their 2011 release *Renaissance Man*, lead vocalist and guitarist Junior Mack's heartfelt baritone is right at home on the classic "Rainy Night in Georgia," as well as on Gregg Allman's gorgeous "Melissa," and on his own Allmanesque beauty "Drifting and Turning." A superb horn section further adds jazz textures, as does Bruce Katz's piano and Hammond, and of course, the rhythms of Jaimoe and bassist David Stoltz. Visit Sunshinebluesfestival.com. **BW**



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MAVIS STAPLES

MAHAFFEY THEATER, ST. PETE/JAN. 19

On hits like "Respect Yourself" and "I'll Take You There," Mavis Staples' commanding voice propelled The Staple Singers to the top of the charts in the 1970s. And the 73-year-old Chicago native continues to move audiences today. In 2007, she teamed up with roots great Ry Cooder on the powerful *We'll Never Turn Back*, revisiting songs of the civil rights era. In 2010, she collaborated with Wilco frontman Jeff Tweedy on the album *You Are Not Alone*, offering yet another take on her signature mix of blues, spirituals and soul music. Staples' and Tweedy's version of John Fogerty's "Wrote a Song for Everyone" ranks high among her great rock covers, which include the Staples' renditions of Stephen



Stills' "For What It's Worth" and The Band's "The Weight," which they performed in the film *The Last Waltz*. During her live shows, Staples dips into various eras, covering songs by her father, the late Pops Staples, as well as spirituals, civil rights anthems and, of course, funky Staple Singers hits. A new Mavis-Tweedy CD is imminent. **BW**

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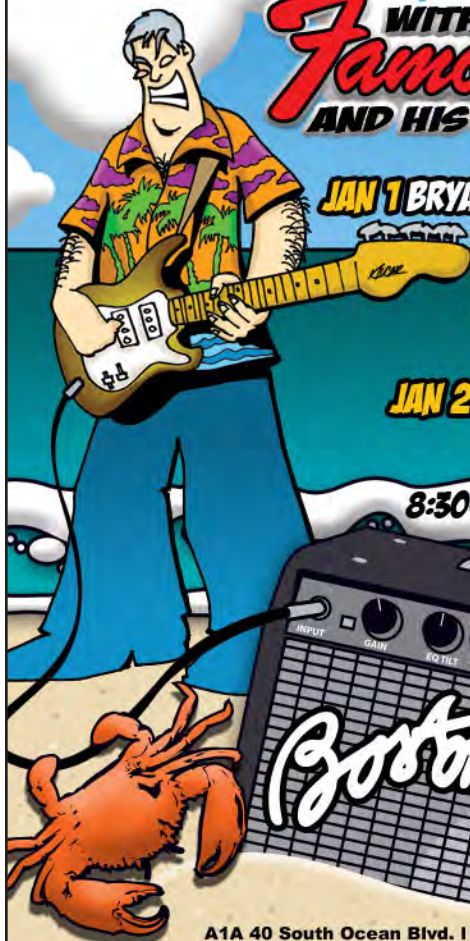
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MITCH WOODS
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/JAN. 29

Any house is a barrelhouse when Mitch Woods is in attendance. The Brooklyn-born boogie maven displays great affection for jump-swing, vintage New Orleans R&B and deep blues every time he touches the keys. He and his Rocket 88s have traveled the globe, spreading the gospel of Professor Longhair and Louis Jordan. On their 2012 CD/DVD *Blues Beyond Borders*, Woods and co. are captured on-stage at a blues fest in Istanbul, revisiting favorites such as "Solid Gold Cadillac," "Crawfishin'" and "Mojo Mambo." Woods' spirited vocals and piano are the result of decades of immersion into jump and boogie, and his original tunes are evocations of an era when this music ruled the jukebox. To hear his blues



expertise, dig his *Keeper of the Flame* album, which paired him with John Lee Hooker, Johnnie Johnson and Earl King. For his show at Boston's in Delray, Woods will team up with the versatile allstar South Florida blues crew of violinist/vocalist Nicole Yarling, guitarist Rick Rossano and drummer Jeff Renza. **BW**

TURK MAURO
ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/JAN. 12

Saxophonist Turk Mauro has played with legends such as Dizzy Gillespie and Buddy Rich, and in locales from his native New York City to Paris. For the past 20 years, he's been based in South Florida, plying his warm, robust tone and a melodic style that blends mainstream with modern jazz. Mauro played baritone sax with Gillespie and Rich, but started a recording career on tenor with his 1977 debut *The Underdog*. During the contemporary-jazz era, when interest in his self-described approach of "bebop, blues and ballads" waned, Mauro took the advice of tenor titan Sonny Rollins and moved to Paris in 1987. He stayed there for seven years before relocating to Hollywood, Fla. One of



his neighbors, Prestige Records founder Bob Weinstock, helped resurrect Mauro's recording career on a pair of recordings for Milestone, the 1995 Gene Ammons tribute *Hittin' the Jug* and 1997's *The Truth*. Joining Mauro for his concert in Delray will be pianist Doug Bickel, bassist Gary Thomas and drummer Mike Piolet. **BM**



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**STANLEY JORDAN TRIO
MINIACI PAC, FORT LAUDERDALE/JAN. 12**

Guitarist Stanley Jordan caused jaws to drop with his 1985 breakthrough album *Magic Touch*. Its title was a play on his advanced touch technique, an unaccompanied style based in tapping rather than strumming, which he employed on fresh reads of standards (“Round Midnight,” “Freddie Freeloader”) and pop classics (“Eleanor Rigby;” Hendrix’s “Angel”). On stage, Jordan was arguably even more impressive, simultaneously tapping two guitars, one around his neck, the other on a stand. Yet the guitarist found stardom tedious and first impressions hard to maintain, and he eventually retreated to Sedona, Ariz. Out of the limelight, he enjoys the freedom to make music on his own terms.



His latest CD, the 2011 release *Friends*, is a polar-opposite effort with guests like Bucky Pizzarelli, Mike Stern, Charnett Moffett and Kenwood Dennard. For his South Florida JAZZ concert series show, Jordan will perform in a trio with bassist Nat Reeves and Dennard, a gifted drummer whose credits include Jaco Pastorius and Brand X. **BM**

**LIBBY YORK AND HOWARD ALDEN
TRUMAN LITTLE WHITE HOUSE, KEY WEST/JAN. 14-15**

Libby York’s Key West concert with guitarist Howard Alden represents both personal and musical time travel. During the 1980s, the Chicago-born vocalist bought a house in Florida’s southernmost city and split time between there and New York City. York took piano lessons from former Juilliard instructor Yehuda Guttman, while vocal instructor Abbey Lincoln helped her develop a voice that recalls Anita O’Day, Chris Connor and Sarah Vaughan. Since returning to Chicago in the mid-’90s, York has released three CDs, the latest of which is *Here With You*. California native Alden follows the time-honored influences of jazz-guitar innovators Django Reinhardt, Charlie Christian and Barney Kessel.



Playing a seven-stringed instrument since 1992, Alden coached Sean Penn for his role as a 1930s guitarist in Woody Allen’s 1999 film *Sweet and Lowdown*, and appeared on its soundtrack. Since 2000, the guitarist has released well-received recordings as a solo artist and with violinist Mark O’Connor’s Hot Swing band. **BM**

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RANDY BRECKER

PHILHARMONIC CENTER FOR THE ARTS,
NAPLES/JAN. 17 (w/ Lew Del Gatto)
ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/JAN. 26

Sixty-seven-year-old trumpeter Randy Brecker only has around a dozen solo recordings, from his 1969 debut *Score* through the multi-Grammy-nominated 2011 CD *The Jazz Ballad Song Book* with the DR Big Band. But his session credits during that span require a scroll, including Frank Sinatra, George Benson, Jaco Pastorius, James Brown, Steely Dan, Charles Mingus, B.B. King, Horace Silver, Larry Coryell, Parliament/Funkadelic, Frank Zappa, Bruce Springsteen, Eliane Elias, the Average White Band, and Blood, Sweat and Tears. The versatile Brecker, whose playing can effortlessly shift



between powerful and poignant, also made several lasting recordings between 1975 and 2005 with the Brecker Brothers (his group with sibling saxophonist Michael Brecker, who died in 2007). The trumpeter will perform in Naples as a special guest of saxophonist Lew Del Gatto, but will take centerstage with his own band in Delray. **BM**

STEVE WILSON & WILSONIAN'S GRAIN

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE/JAN. 25
Saxophonist Steve Wilson gracefully shifts among leader, sideman and educator roles the same way he navigates different styles on his alto and soprano instruments. Between 1987 and 2001, the Virginia native toured and recorded with Lionel Hampton, Dave Holland and Chick Corea and released six CDs as a leader. His live 2010 recording *Home* captured the engaging musical dialogue between the saxophonist and pianist Bruce Barth. An educator at the Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music and SUNY Purchase College Conservatory of Music, Wilson currently alternates among his own bands and those led by Maria Schneider, Christian McBride, Buster Williams and Mulgrew Miller. His Wilsonian's Grain quartet, an interpretive group that re-examines Wilson compositions from the past decade, includes pianist Orrin Evans, bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Bill Stewart. Wilson describes the experience of playing with such accomplished, familiar bandmates as akin to "putting on old socks with new shoes." **BM**



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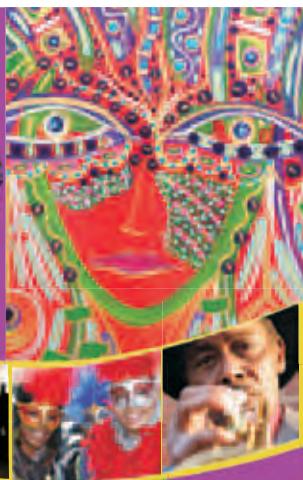
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Steve Wilson & Wilsonian's Grain

January 25 at 7:30pm • UF Gainesville



Hailed by NPR as "one of the finest saxophonists in the business," Steve Wilson combines his jazz expertise with respected artists to form the group Wilsonian's Grain. The quartet has been featured on NPR Live from the Kennedy Center and headlined at the 2011 Detroit Jazz Festival. He also serves on the faculties at Juilliard, the Manhattan School of Music and the SUNY Purchase College Conservatory of Music.

CLICK TO WIN TICKETS!

Or on Jan 8 at The Bull, 18 SW 1st Ave, Gainesville
Giveaways at 11PM & 12AM. Must be present to win.

JAZZ & BLUES FLORIDA

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