



JAZZ & BLUES
FLORIDA

MAY 2013

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

FEATURED ARTIST



**ALICE
DAY**

MARY WILSON • CLARENCE CARTER • PHILL FEST • JOSH SMITH
TOM HARRELL QUINTET • MAC ARNOLD & PLATE FULL O' BLUES
GREGORY PORTER • ROBERT TOP THOMAS & THE SWAMP KINGS
PONCHO SANCHEZ • DOUG DEMING & DENNIS GRUENLING

ALICE DAY

by Bill Meredith



ALICE DAY HAS BEEN REFERRED TO AS “The First Lady of Jazz.” And the Miami-born singer has certainly lived up to that title — she was the first lady inducted into the South Florida Jazz Hall of Fame, which, admittedly, she founded.

However, when the Miami-based organization enshrined its 2009 inaugural class—saxophonists Cannonball Adderley and Jesse Jones Jr., broadcaster China Valles, steel drummer Othello Molineaux and jazz-club entrepreneur Lenny Zeif — the committee rightly included its founder and chairperson without her knowledge.

“Since I did have a hand in choosing the honorees, it came as a total surprise that my name was also on the list,” Day says, chatting by email from Switzerland. “After I got over the shock, it was an honor to have been included with those extraordinary people. The presentation was made by Chief Sandrell Rivers and Mrs. Thelma Valles.”

Saxophonist Jones attended Northwestern High School in Miami with Day. So did Jones’ younger brother, trumpeter and educator Melton Mustafa, and longtime Miami jazz DJ Len Pace, both of whom were inducted into the

hall. Day’s affection for Mustafa was more than evident when she performed during a tribute last year in Miami for the trumpeter, who is recovering from prostate cancer.

The class of 2012 Hall of Famers, who will be inducted on June 23 at American Legion Post 29 in Miami, also comprise musicians who rose through the ranks alongside Day. They include pianist Dolph Castellano, saxophonist Joe Donato, broadcaster Alan

Grant, saxophonist Jet Nero, vocalist Myrtle Jones and bassist Sam Jones. Like most of her peers, Day soaked up South Florida’s unique blend of jazz, blues, Latin, Caribbean and gospel influences. And legendary figures such as Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington, Mahalia Jackson, Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey were also highly influential.

“I started singing professionally when I was 13,” she says. “I was very young, but I always knew I’d do it.” But she couldn’t have anticipated just how far the music would take her. Day has toured Europe and Asia incessantly for the past 20 years.

Day has recorded with European musicians, as on CDs with the Swiss band Cojazz, as well as with U.S. stalwarts such as pianist Miguel de la Cerna, bassist Jim Kessler and drummer James Martin. She was also captured during a club show in Bangkok (*Live at the Bamboo Bar*), and has waxed an album mingling her influences on *Sunday Morning: The Gospel Truth About Jazz*.

A masterful interpreter of song, Day possesses impeccable phrasing, intonation, emotion, rhythm, vocal range and the ability to swing. She has a special knack for reworking standards,

ALICE DAY

which she'll do in South Florida shows with pianist De la Cerna, bassist Sam Chiodo and drummer James Cotmon. Just don't ask her exactly what songs she'll perform.

"I never know till I'm on stage," Day says, "but it's usually material from the American Songbook."

Day received both the Cultural Ambassadors Award and the Key to the City in Miami in 1998, and not just for her singing. She's also been a jazz DJ, educator and entrepreneur. "I owned the old Musician's Exchange club in Ft. Lauderdale in the late 1980s. It was called Alice's Place," says Day, who briefly took over the venue from owner Don Cohen.

While club performances are increasingly rare these days, Day continues to conduct workshops and lectures regularly in Europe and Asia. "I perform in Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Portugal, France, Spain, Thailand, China, Singapore, Indonesia and India," she says. "I have self-produced and co-produced recordings from Europe and Thailand, but I still consider Miami my home."



The Alice Day Band will perform on May 8 at the Sky Lounge, in the Downtown Financial Center in Miami; on May 19 at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Miami; and on May 26 at American Legion Post 29 in Miami. Visit [Facebook.com/Sunshinejazzorg](https://www.facebook.com/Sunshinejazzorg).



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MARY WILSON; *STORMY WEATHER*,
THE LENA HORNE PROJECT

STRAZ CENTER, FERGUSON HALL, TAMPA/MAY 2
Mary Wilson will forever be linked to The Supremes. But the 69-year-old singer refuses to let her career be completely defined by that early success. Witness the genre-blurring artist's current touring vehicle, *Stormy Weather*, *The Lena Horne Project*. With narration by James Gavin, author of the book of the same name, the show centers on another multifaceted artist. Horne, who died in 2010, was an ahead-of-her-time vocalist, actress, dancer and civil rights icon. The Mississippi-born Wilson's own blues and gospel influences were nurtured in the musical hotbeds of Chicago and Detroit before she was a teenager. Her career enjoyed a resurgence



thanks to the 2006 film *Dreamgirls*, an adaptation of the Broadway musical based on the story of The Supremes. The Motown greats were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988. In *Stormy Weather*, Wilson performs such Horne staples as "Honeysuckle Rose," "It's All Right With Me" and, of course, the title song, with jazz accompaniment. BM

CLARENCE CARTER

BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MAY 4
Blues and R&B fans might recall the gleefully raunchy Clarence Carter hit "Strokin'." The single-entendre romp ruled jukeboxes and frat parties in the 1980s, and continues to fill dance floors today. But the sightless singer and guitarist had established himself as a soul-music giant more than a decade before, with a string of singles such as the classics "Slip Away" and "Looking for a Fox," and the tear-jerking hit "Patches." He also waxed the 1967 cut "Tell Daddy," which was answered by Etta James' "Tell Mama." At age 77, Carter's still at it, recording and touring, and in excellent voice. His most recent release, last year's *I Got Rhythm*, features typically lascivious tunes



such as "Grandpa Can't Fly His Kite," as well as covers of blues standards and fingerpopping R&B originals. On "I Ain't Ready to Retire," also on his 2009 CD *On Your Feet*, Carter sings, "They got some nice rockin' chairs, but they just wasn't made for me." For which blues and soul fans should be thankful. BW

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**DOUG DEMING & DENNIS GRUENLING
W/ THE JEWEL TONES
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MAY 5
ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY/MAY 18**

For the past several years, guitarist and vocalist Doug Deming and harmonica master Dennis Gruenling have been tearing it up on the road and in the studio. Their shared love of Chicago blues and jump swing remain at the nexus of their recordings, as well as Deming's band, The Jewel Tones, featuring bassist Andrew Gohman and drummer Devin Neel. That core group plays on the Florida Gulf Coast-based Deming's latest CD, *What's It Gonna Take*, as well as on Gruenling's 2012 release *Rockin' All Day* (both on the VizzTone label). Deming and Gruenling evince not just the tone, but the spirit of



1950s blues and jump. The guitarist's leads go from knife-edged menace to silk-stocking slinky, recalling Hubert Sumlin one minute and T-Bone Walker the next. And his tenor vocals are particularly well-suited to the music. Gruenling's vast harp vocabulary spans Walters Big and Little, as well as jazz sax giants Lester Young and Illinois Jacquet. **BW**

**GREGORY PORTER
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE/MAY 26**

Stranger paths toward a recording contract may exist, but vocalist Gregory Porter's hardly qualifies as orthodox. The Nat King Cole-influenced, Los Angeles-born singer was a high school football star. He played linebacker for San Diego State University on a scholarship until a shoulder injury ended his career. While in San Diego, he befriended saxophonist, pianist and composer Kamau Kenyatta, who invited him to visit the L.A. studio where he was producing a Cole tribute CD by flutist Hubert Laws. When Laws heard Porter sing the Charlie Chaplin-penned Cole hit "Smile," he was so impressed that he included Porter's vocal version as a bonus



track. All of which led to Porter's guest appearances with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, and his 2010 debut CD *Water* and its 2012 followup *Be Good*, both of which earned Grammy nominations. Porter tackles originals ("Real Good Hands," "1960 What?") and standards ("Work Song," "But Beautiful") on his recordings with equal aplomb. **BM**

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PONCHO SANCHEZ
JACKSONVILLE JAZZ FEST,
DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE/MAY 26

Few percussionists become band leaders, but Texas-born conguero and vocalist Poncho Sanchez has recorded and toured under his own name for more than 30 years. The 61-year-old actually got an early career boost by playing with vibraphonist Cal Tjader's band from 1975 until Tjader's death in 1982. Sanchez's recording career, which started in 1980, gained momentum afterward, building to his 2000 release *Latin Soul* (a Latin Jazz Album Grammy winner). On his 2011 disc *Chano y Dizzy!*, Sanchez and trumpeter Terence Blanchard recreated the fiery dialog between late Latin jazz percussion-and-trumpet godfathers Chano Pozo and



Dizzy Gillespie from the 1940s. Sanchez's most recent recording is 2012's equally incendiary release *Live in Hollywood*, with his band of trombonist Francisco Sanchez, trumpeter Ron Francis Blake, saxophonist Rob Hardt, keyboardist Andy Langham, bassist Rene Camacho, bongo player Jose "Papo" Rodriguez and timbale player Angel Rodriguez. **BM**

MAC ARNOLD & PLATE FULL O' BLUES
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/MAY 7
BAYSIDE GRILLE, KEY LARGO/MAY 8-10
OCALA ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX/MAY 11
EARL'S HIDEAWAY, SEBASTIAN/MAY 12

Having performed and recorded with Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker, Mac Arnold had experienced a lifetime of blues glory when he returned to his native South Carolina in 1990. But he wasn't ready to retire from the bandstand just yet. Now, at age 70, his career in full bloom, Arnold leads his Plate Full o' Blues band through high-octane Chicago blues. Boasting a commanding voice and stage presence, he's been nominated for Traditional Blues Male Artist BMAs three years in a row.



Arnold's most recent CD, 2011's live *Blues Revival*, showcases his fiery vocals and homemade gas-can guitar on originals and blues standards. Half the tracks were recorded with Arnold's band, and half with a Muddy Waters Reunion Band (Bob Margolin, Kim Wilson and the late Willie "Big Eyes" Smith). **BW**



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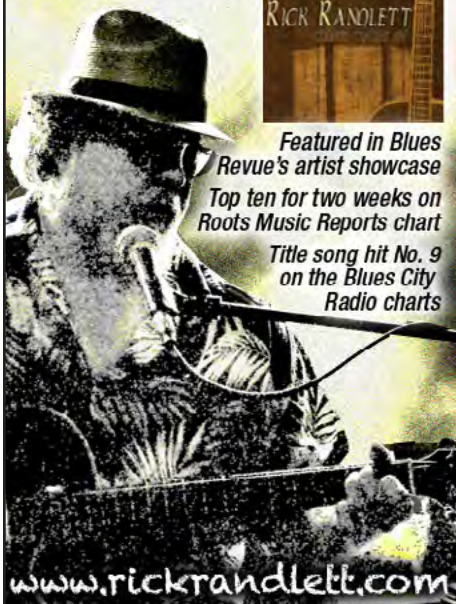
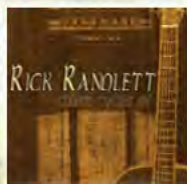





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PHILL FEST

PALM BEACH MARRIOTT, SINGER ISLAND/SUNDAYS DOWNTOWN AT THE GARDENS, PALM BEACH GARDENS/MAY 11

To say that guitarist Phill Fest was born into a Brazilian musical family is an understatement. His mother, Lili Galiteri Fest, is a respected vocalist, composer and music instructor; his father, the late Manfredo Fest, was the blind keyboardist and musical director for Bossa Rio, the group that opened for Sergio Mendes' acclaimed Brasil '66 band for three years. The younger Fest has carried on the family tradition, recording four CDs through the 1990s with Manfredo, and helming several other projects since. The guitarist's stellar new CD, *Projeto B.F.C.*, also features pianist Robert Prester,



bassist Russ Howard, harmonica player Hendrik Meurkens and drummer/percussionist Ronie Martinez. Fest showcases his and both his parents' compositions, as well as pieces by Prester and Martinez. Expect nimble, fingerpicked passages, whether he's playing solo, in a duo with singer Terezinha Valois, or in one of his full bands. **BM**

TOM HARRELL QUINTET

MINIACI CENTER, FORT LAUDERDALE/MAY 11

With a playing style that seamlessly shifts between powerful post-bop and relaxed swing, 66-year-old Tom Harrell is among the jazz world's most versatile trumpeters. An Illinois native who moved to the San Francisco Bay Area with his family as a child, Harrell graduated from Stanford University in 1969 with a degree in music composition. Almost immediately, he started touring and recording with bands led by Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Dizzy Gillespie, Horace Silver, Bill Evans, Gerry Mulligan, Joe Lovano and Charlie Haden. A Grammy-winning composer and also a silky flugelhorn player, Harrell started his 27-CD-deep catalog in 1976, and has followed a



period of large-ensemble leadership (1996-2003) with five albums by his simpatico quintet. The aptly named 2012 release *Number Five* features tenor saxophonist Wayne Escoffery, pianist and Fender Rhodes player Danny Grissett, bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Johnathan Blake, who help Harrell make his compositions sound practically orchestral. **BM**

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BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MAY 31
 Hailing from New Smyrna Beach, Robert "Top" Thomas is a seminal figure of Florida swamp blues. The guitarist and vocalist not only toured and recorded with Noble "Thin Man" Watts, Lazy Lester and Bill Wharton, but was also a founding member of the band SmokeHouse. Earlier this year, Thomas released *The Town Crier*, his excellent debut CD for Victor Wainwright's WildRoots Records label. The album showcases Thomas' Southern-fried vocals and well-seasoned chops on acoustic and electric axes, as he picks his way through a baker's dozen of swampy Florida tunes, most of which were co-written by bassist



Stephen Dees. Thomas tips his fedora to Lazy Lester, an important influence, with a read of the fingerpopping "The Same Thing Could Happen to You." And, on the Thomas/Dees original "King Snake Crawl," the singer gives shoutouts to the late Bob Greenlee and many of the artists who recorded at the Sanford-based King Snake imprint. **BW**

JOSH SMITH
FUNKY BISCUIT, BOCA/MAY 24
EARL'S HIDEAWAY, SEBASTIAN/MAY 26
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/MAY 28
BIG EASY, HOLLYWOOD/MAY 30 (Duo)
BAMBOO ROOM, LAKE WORTH/MAY 31 (w/JP SOARS)
 Many longtime South Florida blues lovers fondly recall teen guitar-slinger Josh Smith. Far from the bolero-hat-wearing wunderkind he once was, Smith has enjoyed a sterling career as a headliner and sideman since the late '90s. In the latter capacity, Smith has toured with vocalist Raphael Saadiq, with whom he backed Mick Jagger at the 2011 Grammy Awards. And Smith continues to grow as an artist. Perhaps influenced by his time with Saadiq, his latest release, *Don't Give Up on Me*, finds Smith



in fine voice on a program of original, horn-bolstered soul-blues featuring his mature, yet still-sizzling six-string. Living in L.A. for more than a decade, he returns to South Florida (through June 9 only) for the first time in nearly five years. Smith will be joined by South Florida blues great JP Soars for his Lake Worth show. **BW**

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vocalist **Dawn Royston**

706 West University Avenue, Gainesville
352-378-2001
leonardosgainesville.com

SATURDAY, MAY 11th

2013

\$25 General Admission
\$40 VIP

Classic Car Show

BBQ Dinner & Crawfish Boil



**BRICKCITY
BLUES
FESTIVAL**

Mac Arnold & Plate Full O' Blues
Rondo & Mojo Downs • Brown Brothers
Queen Sheba of the Mississippi
Pine Plaza on Pine Street (by Mojo Grill)

Tickets at Mojo Grill of Ocala
and Mojo Grill of Belleview

BENEFITING
Ocala Outreach Foundation Inc.
The Jacob Casey Foundation
The SOS Foundation for Epilepsy

The Mojo Grill
Country & Country Club

"YEAH, WELL I THINK I'LL GO DOWN IN GAINESVILLE, JUST TO SEE AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE..."
"DEEP DOWN IN FLORIDA" BY MUDDY WATERS
(MCKINLEY MORGANFIELD)

NCBS The North Central Florida Blues Society proudly presents

NIKKI HILL
with opening act The Jacoby Brothers Band

May 12
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210 SW 2nd Ave
Gainesville

ncfblues.org



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MAY 2 MAGIC BEANS

MAY 3 FORTUNATE YOUTH

MAY 4 MINGO FISHTRAP

**MAY 5 GREENHOUSE LOUNGE,
BIODIESEL & SPACE JESUS**

MAY 8 JAM CRUISE 12 LAUNCH PARTY
featuring ORGONE

MAY 9 REFLECTIONS

MAY 10 THE MIKE DILLON BAND

MAY 11 NICK COLIONNE
with THE JEFF PRINE GROUP

MAY 16 CRAZY FINGERS

MAY 17 JUNO WHAT?!

MAY 18 THE MICHAEL ALLMAN BAND
with SEAN CHAMBERS

MAY 23 UNLIMITED DEVOTION

MAY 24 JOSH SMITH with horn section
with BLUES DRAGON

MAY 25 ERIC LINDELL

MAY 31 JIMMY THACKERY & DRIVERS
with HADDEN SAYERS

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MAY 5 MINGO FISHTRAP



MAY 12 MAC ARNOLD
& PLATE FULL O' BLUES



MAY 19 DOUG DEMING & THE
JEWEL TONES w/DENNIS GRUENLING



MAY 25-26-27
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