



**JAZZ & BLUES**  
FLORIDA

APRIL 2014

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

**FEATURED ARTIST**

**CÉCILE  
MCLORIN  
SALVANT**



**JAIMOE'S JASSZ BAND • PONCHO SANCHEZ & HIS LATIN JAZZ BAND  
LENORE RAPHAEL with HOWARD ALDEN • JAMES HUNTER  
BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA • BRAD MEHLDAU TRIO  
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# Cécile McLorin Salvant

by Bill Meredith



## “YOUTH IS WASTED ON THE YOUNG,”

George Bernard Shaw famously wrote. But the author obviously never met Cécile McLorin Salvant. The 24-year-old rising jazz vocal star sings with articulation, phrasing, pitch and humor that defies her age on both original material and chestnuts from 70-plus years ago, including hits by Billie Holiday, Fats Waller and Bessie Smith.

Not bad for someone who'd studied only classical piano from age 5, and classical voice from age 8, when she went off to college to pursue a law degree. Born in Miami to a French mother and Haitian father, Salvant got bitten by the jazz bug in Aix-en-Provence, France. That's where she'd moved after graduating from Miami's Coral Reef High School, to major in law and study opera and baroque voice at Darius Milhaud Conservatory.

“My only real jazz exposure in Miami came through my mother,” she says. “She loved all the great jazz singers, so we'd listen to them at home. But I wasn't aware of Miami's rich jazz scene at all. I only wanted to be a classical singer.”

Her unanticipated tutelage at the conservatory came courtesy of jazz professor Jean-François Bonnel, whose unorthodox lessons started her on her ascension. “My mother suggested I check out

his jazz classes,” Salvant says, “even if only as a hobby. Jazz is taken very seriously there, and viewed with a lot of dignity. Jean-François didn't really teach me with a lesson plan, but brought in stacks of CDs to listen to. That shaped a lot of my repertoire.”

Bonnel's influence on Salvant went even further. The clarinetist/saxophonist's quintet backed the then-teenage singer in concerts and on her 2009 independent debut recording *Cécile*. After moving back to the United States, the New

York City-based Salvant recorded her Mack Avenue debut *WomanChild* with pianist Aaron Diehl, bassist Rodney Whitaker, drummer Herlin Riley and guitarist/banjoist James Chirillo.

*WomanChild*, a 2014 Best Jazz Vocal Album Grammy nominee, includes a sublime version of “What a Little Moonlight Can Do,” a 1935 hit for Holiday written by Harry M. Woods. There's a novelty piece — also from that year — by vocalist/trumpeter Valaida Snow, titled “You Bring Out the Savage in Me,” and a 1906 ode to individuality by comedian Bert Williams called “Nobody” that Nina Simone covered in the 1960s.

In the time between her recordings, Salvant won the 2010 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocal Competition in Washington, D.C., which put her on the fast track. Wynton Marsalis took notice, showering the ahead-of-her-years singer with praise. Salvant's last Miami appearance, in fact, was in December, as guest vocalist with his Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. “Wynton is very specific about what he likes and what he doesn't,” she says with a laugh. “He's honest, so his praise was amazing, humbling, and even a little scary. But I feel lucky to have someone like that to go to for advice.”

Salvant will perform in Miami this time with pianist Adam Birnbaum subbing for Diehl;

# Cécile McLorin Salvant

her regular touring bassist Paul Sikivie, and a new drummer, Lawrence Leathers, who the singer says, "makes me smile every time I hear him play."

The appearance is part of Tigertail Productions' FLA-FRA Florida-France Festival, which features internationally themed appearances and short "Culture Click" events throughout April at various locations. French cabaret singer Floanne will perform the night before Salvant at Miami-Dade County Auditorium, and Miami Central High School trumpeters Duane Ingram and Michael Lightbourne will interpret Charles Mingus' "Haitian Fight Song, 1957" during a noon "Culture Click" at downtown Miami's Freedom Tower on April 7.

"I'm really excited to be a part of this festival," Salvant says, "and especially because it'll be my first concert back in Miami with my own band."



Cécile McLorin Salvant will perform at the Colony Theater on Miami Beach's Lincoln Road at 8:30PM on April 12. For more information, visit [Tigertail.org](http://Tigertail.org) or call 305-324-4337.

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**PONCHO SANCHEZ AND HIS LATIN JAZZ BAND**  
with JAMES CARTER  
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CUTLER BAY/APRIL 5

Conga master Poncho Sanchez cut his teeth working with another American percussionist well-versed in Latin music — vibraphonist Cal Tjader. Born in Texas to a Mexican-American family, Sanchez grew up near Los Angeles, the cultural melting pot that shaped his sound. The Grammy-winning percussionist paid tribute to Latin jazz pioneers with his 2011 CD *Chano y Dizzy*, a salute to Cuban conguero Chano Pozo and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, whose role was updated by Terence Blanchard. On his current tour, Sanchez and his eight-piece band — showcased on the fiery 2012 CD



*Live in Hollywood*—welcome dynamic saxophonist James Carter to perform selections from the 1962 John Coltrane album *Olé Coltrane*. Often overlooked amid Trane's sessions in Miles Davis' quintet and his other trailblazing solo recordings, *Olé* is overdue for this kind of retrospective. The pair should cast new light on the transitional Latin jazz masterpiece. **BM**

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The best Allman Brothers album to come out in recent years was not made by the Allman Brothers. Rather, it was crafted by Jaimoe's Jassz Band, an excellent ensemble led by original Allmans drummer Jaimoe Johanson. Released in 2011, *Renaissance Man* features an Allman-esque mix of Southern rock, blues and jazz, undergirded by Jaimoe's jazz-influenced drumming and excellent taste. Despite the band's moniker, they don't really play jazz, but rather infuse jazz time and feel into tracks like the gorgeous "Drifting and Turning" or a poignant read of Tony Joe White's "Rainy Night in Georgia." The band is fronted by versatile vocalist and



guitarist Junior Mack, whose emotive vocals at times recall Gregg Allman's — dig his take on "Melissa" — and driven by a spanking horn section. At the center of it all, Jaimoe continues to drive the action with great soul and sophistication. He'll do the same for the Allmans, when they take the stage at Wanee, as well. Visit [musicliveshere.com](http://musicliveshere.com). **BW**

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The Blind Boys of Alabama may have started in the late 1930s, but their music remains as relevant as ever. Thanks to their willingness to continually update their sound, the vocal group, whose roots reach back to the Alabama Institute for the Negro Blind in Talladega, have continued to raise goosebumps on the arms of successive generations. In addition to recording for Peter Gabriel's RealWorld label, they've teamed up with Robert Randolph, Tom Waits, Mavis Staples, Ben Harper and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. The



gospel harmonizers' most recent recording, *I'll Find a Way*, was produced by Justin Vernon, of Bon Iver fame. Traditional songs are augmented by new tunes and performances by Vernon, Patty Griffin and Shara Worden, among others. Original Blind Boy Jimmy Carter, 82, remains the stalwart of the group, with whom he first recorded in 1948. **BW**

**LENORE RAPHAEL with HOWARD ALDEN**  
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**SARASOTA/APRIL 5**  
**BROWARD CENTER, FT. LAUDERDALE/APRIL 9**  
 Blame it on Oscar Peterson. After hearing the brilliant Canadian pianist, Lenore Raphael turned from a classical music career to one in jazz. At 71, Raphael remains under the late Peterson's spell, covering his songs, penning "Blues for O.P.," and taking part in a 2008 tribute concert in Toronto. In fact, her about-to-be-released album will be a tribute to Peterson. For her Florida performances, Raphael will be joined by seven-string guitarist Howard Alden, a longtime compatriot with whom she recorded the 2012 duo album *Loverly*. Alden has plied his harmonically rich approach alongside



Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry and fellow seven-stringer Bucky Pizzarelli. He also played on the soundtrack to Woody Allen's 1999 film *Sweet and Lowdown*, about a 1930s jazz guitarist. For the Gold Coast Jazz Society concert in Ft. Lauderdale, the duo will be joined by bassist Chuck Bergeron and drummer Roger King Jr. (Goldcoastjazz.org) **BM**



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Fri 18 JP Soars & The Red Hots 9pm

Sat 19 Vanilla Fudge 8pm

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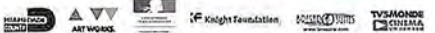
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## APRIL

- 2 Ellie Ray's, Branford
- 3 Bacon's BBQ, La Crosse (afternoon)
- 4 McCall's, The Villages
- 9 Ellie Ray's, Branford
- 10 Bacon's BBQ, La Crosse (afternoon)
- 10 Hurricane Patty's, St. Augustine
- 11 Elks Club, St. Augustine
- 12 Beach Shack, Cocoa Beach
- 16 Ellie Ray's, Branford
- 17 Bacon's BBQ, La Crosse (afternoon)
- 18 McCall's, The Villages
- 19 Great Outdoors, High Springs
- 24 Bacon's BBQ, La Crosse (afternoon)



**Mondays** 8 Ball APA Pool League 7PM  
**Tuesdays** Band Rehearsals 6:30PM  
**Wednesdays** Local Talent 7-10PM  
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## RENE MARIE

B-SHARP'S JAZZ CAFE, TALLAHASSEE/APRIL 10  
ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/APRIL 11  
SOUTH MIAMI-DADE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER,  
CUTLER BAY/APRIL 12-13

Vocalist Rene Marie seems to embrace controversy. The Virginia native has combined the Southern-themed "Dixie" with the anti-lynching imagery Billie Holiday sang about in "Strange Fruit" in a medley on her 2001 CD *Vertigo*; released singles protesting homelessness and racism; and unearthed a one-woman show in 2009 called *Slut Energy Theory — U'Dean* that explores her journey from sexual abuse to self-esteem. The expressive vocalist also arranged the lyrics from the African-American anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" into "The Star-Spangled Banner" on her 2011 CD *The Voice of My Beautiful Country*, and salutes another outspoken singer, actor and composer on her latest release, 2013's *I Wanna Be Evil (With Love to Eartha Kitt)*. Marie will perform with her longtime trio of pianist Kevin Bales, bassist Elias Bailey and drummer Quentin Baxter. **BM**



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## JAMES HUNTER

TAMPA BAY BLUES FEST, VINOY WATERFRONT PARK, ST. PETERSBURG/APRIL 13

Despite a Grammy nod and a couple of No. 1 blues albums, British soul singer James Hunter had been a best-kept secret among aficionados. Then, last year, he received a promotional push with the release of *Minute by Minute*, a superb collection of old-school soul. Tunes such as "Chicken Switch," the title track and "One Way Love" evoke the golden-age of soul, with Hunter's smoky vocals recalling Muscle Shoals rather than working-class Colchester, England, where he grew up. Busking on streets, taking gigs where he could, Hunter displayed an early aptitude for the music. Eventually, he caught the ear of Van Morrison, who put him on



his show and sang a couple of duets with him on Hunter's own 1996 debut album *...Believe What I Say*. *Minute by Minute* earned Hunter spots on *The Tonight Show* and at SXSW, when he and his band toured the U.S. last year. He's sure to pick up even more fans during this rare Florida appearance. (Tampabaybluesfest.com) **BW**

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## ROY BOOK BINDER

STRINGBREAK MUSIC FEST, SERTOMA RANCH, BROOKSVILLE/APRIL 12

With mentors and tourmates including the Rev. Gary Davis, Pink Anderson and Big Boy Crudup, Roy Book Binder got his blues straight from the well. Book's a master of the Piedmont style — which is rich with ragtime syncopation and intricate fingerpicking — as well as Delta blues. He also possesses a voice full of mirth and moonshine, his songs frequently as narrative as the stories he spins on stage. At age 70, the Polk City, Fla., resident continues to ramble the country, slowing down on occasion to record, which he did last year. The resulting album, *The Good Book*, is Book Binder's first all-original album in years. Clarinetist Frank Bowman and



lap-steel ace Damon Fowler lend sterling accompaniment to the guitarist's expert picking on typically wry and autobiographical tunes. The mustached songster tips a hat to inspirations Robert Jr. Lockwood and Hacksaw Harney, and even blows a little smoke on the e-cigarette trend. Lindertainment.com has the full Stringbreak lineup. **WB**

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box set. Ballard, who joined in 2005, has recorded both studio and live CDs with them since. Expect everything from Mehldau's deep originals to jazz standards to interpretations of rock songs by Soundgarden, The Beatles and Radiohead. They might even play one from Mehldau's new duo project with drummer/e-musician Mark Guiliana. **BM**

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**TAD ROBINSON  
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/APRIL 11  
TAMPA BAY BLUES FEST, ST. PETERSBURG/APRIL 13**

As a member of bands led by harmonica ace Al Miller and guitarlinger Dave Specter, Tad Robinson had blues fans diving for liner notes to find out who was singing on their albums. With a heated vocal style reminiscent of Syl Johnson and Sam Moore, the New York native and Indiana University grad made a name for himself in Chicago. A combo plate of Memphis soul and Windy City blues, the latter of which also shines through his deft harp blowing, helped Robinson stand out on stage and in studio sessions. This brought him to the attention of Delmark's Bob Koester, who cut a couple of Robinson discs in the '90s. During the past decade, Robinson, who lives outside Indianapolis, has recorded some soul-blues gems for the Severn label, including 2010's exquisite *Back in Style*. Robinson's original songs, and certainly his vocals and arrangements, are strongly reminiscent of Al Green's Hi label heyday. But he can also draw blood with his blues-harp licks. **BW**



**JAZZ & BLUES  
FLORIDA**

For Press Releases, CD Reviews, Advertising Info or Listings, contact our Main Office at **561.313.7432** or P.O. Box 2614, Palm Beach, FL 33480

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