



**JAZZ & BLUES**  
FLORIDA

OCTOBER  
2014

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

FEATURED ARTIST

**JP Soars  
& The  
Red Hots**

**GRAHAM WOOD DROUT • JOHNNY O'NEAL • LUCIOUS SPILLER  
ARTHUR BARRON • NEW ORLEANS SUSPECTS  
DR. JOHN & THE NITE TRIPPERS • FRED HERSCH  
JORMA KAUKONEN • JACKIE RYAN  
MARTY & MICHIKO MORELL with LA LUCHA TRIO  
JASON MARSALIS VIBES QUARTET • ROBERT "TOP" THOMAS**

# JP Soars & The Red Hots

by Bob Weinberg



**SOUTH FLORIDA BLUESMAN JP SOARS** was driving from a gig in Marshfield, Mass., to Newark, N.J., when he received an email he couldn't ignore. It was from Little Steven Van Zandt's manager, informing him that Steven loved his latest CD, *Full Moon Night in Memphis*. Not only did Bruce Springsteen's guitarist and Tony Soprano's consigliere intend to feature album cuts on *Little Steven's Underground Garage*, his globally syndicated radio show, but he had also selected the raw-edged, socially conscious rocker "Somethin' Ain't Right" as one of his Coolest Songs of the Year. And, if JP was in the area, he should stop by the studio.

With about three hours to kill before their flight home to West Palm Beach, the blues guitarist and his drummer, Chris Peet, took a quick detour into New York's West Village. "I didn't realize that Steven was gonna be there," says Soars, who was returning from gigs in August with the allstar roots group Southern Hospitality. "I

thought they were just gonna show us around. But there he was, with his bandana on, hangin' out, playin' us back stuff he was working on. It was really cool."

Little Steven was already hip to Soars. He'd previously selected "Doggin'," a cut from Soars' 2011 CD *More Bees With Honey*, as a Coolest Song of the Year. Ever since, Soars' career has continued to soar. *USA Today* chose *Full Moon Night's* "Thorn in My Side" as a pick of the week, and in August, the album hit No. 3 on the Blues Debut chart. After winning the International Blues Challenge in 2009, Soars has expanded beyond his rabid South Florida fanbase, playing gigs around the country and overseas with his band the Red Hots, as well as with Southern Hospitality (with guitarist Damon Fowler and pianist Victor Wainwright). He also plays on occasion with Gypsy Blue, a Django Reinhardt-style jazz band. And that versatility is readily apparent on *Full Moon Night*, as the guitarist displays his mastery of Chicago and Memphis blues; plays jazzy T-Bone Walker licks; slices raunchy slide riffs from a cigar-box two-string; and expertly evinces jump-swing, blues-rock and even straightup country and Latin jazz.

Soars' Howlin' Wolf-style rasp contrasts with Teresa James' hickory twang on "The Road Has Got Me Down," a classic-country duet, on which he reveals skills on lap-steel guitar. "[Lap-steel wizard] Damon Fowler is really into country, and that definitely rubs off on me," says Soars, who grew up in Arkansas before his family relocated to South Florida. The song's sentiment was easy to come by. "We were on the road, it was March, and it was frickin' cold," he relates. "It was two and half weeks of driving through snow, and I was like, 'Oh my God, I can't wait to get home to Florida!'"

Soars' inspiration for the instrumental "Lil' Mamacita" was a bit warmer — namely, his cat, Gitane. A buddy dubbed her "Lil' Mamacita," and the title proved apt for this flamenco groover, as well. Also close to home and heart, "The Back Room" is a funky salute to John Yurt's much-missed blues club in Boca Raton. Just 10 minutes from Soars' house, the club played a formative role. "We played there for three and half

# JP Soars & The Red Hots

years, every Thursday night," he says. "That's where we got our shit together as a band, where we honed it and polished it and trimmed the fat."

Hard work has paid off for Soars, whose 2009 IBC win in Memphis kicked down doors and provided the imagery for the title track to his new album. "Right before going on at the finals, we were the last band," he says. "I remember standing outside the Orpheum Theater and looking up at the full frickin' moon, and I was like, 'All right. You got one little chance to make an impression. You better go in there and try to kick their ass.' I said a little prayer... and it definitely changed my life."



JP Soars & the Red Hots will perform on Oct. 1 at Events Plaza, Sandestin, and on Oct. 31 at the Hoodoo Voodoo Halloween Blues Ball at the Downtowner Saloon, Fort Lauderdale (Hoodoooodoo.com). Soars will also perform with Southern Hospitality on Oct. 5 at Earl's Hideaway, Sebastian (Earlshideaway.com), and on Oct. 10 at the Daytona Blues Fest at Jackie Robinson Ballpark (Daytonabluesfestival.com). Visit [Jpsoars.com](http://Jpsoars.com) for more.

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**LUCIOUS SPILLER**  
**DAYTONA BLUES FEST, JACKIE ROBINSON**  
**BALLPARK/OCT. 10**

Lucious Spiller pulls bluesy, funky grooves from an acoustic six-string and sings in a grainy tenor full of emotion. Based in Arkansas, Spiller impressed judges at this year's International Blues Challenge, during which he placed second in the solo/duo category. His originals, as heard on his solo album, *Born to Sing the Blues*, include straightup blues and soul balladry, powered by the insistent rhythms he generates on his guitar and sung in an affecting vocal that ranges from earthy growl to ethereal falsetto. Raised in St. Louis, Spiller learned the blues at his father's knee, continuing in the tradition of his family's musical Mississippi roots. "At the age of 5,



I learned Jimmy Reed's 'You Don't Have to Go,'" he sings on the title track to *Born to Sing the Blues*. "Before I was 6, I was playin' 'Sweet Home Chicago.'" In the early 1980s, Spiller played with blues-guitar greats Larry Davis, Fenton Robinson and Big Jack Johnson. Look for him in the upcoming internet feature *Moonshine and Mojo Hands*. BW

**FRED HERSCH**  
**ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/OCT. 17 (SOLO)**  
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Alone at the piano, Fred Hersch quietly dazzles. 2011's solo *Alone at the Vanguard*, showcases his melodic gifts, advanced improvisational skills and knack for channeling Thelonious Monk. With a wealth of jazz-standard arrangements at his fingertips, Hersch might interpret tunes by Schwartz & Dietz and Rodgers & Hammerstein, or touchstones such as Billy Strayhorn and Tom Jobim. He might dip into his original music, such as this year's trio release *Floating*, or 2013's duo CD with guitarist Julian Lage, *Free Flying*. Or Hersch might pull material from his



forthcoming DVD, *My Coma Dreams*, which captures performances of his highly personal suite which utilizes a 10-piece ensemble, animation and vocal performance to chronicle his greatest challenge. In 2008, after complications from near-fatal septic shock, Hersch was put into a medically induced coma for two months. He's been quite prolific ever since. BM

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# S P O T L I G H T

**JASON MARSALIS VIBES QUARTET**  
**DANIELS PAVILION, NAPLES/OCT. 29**  
**ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/OCT. 30**

As the youngest of the musical members in the first family of New Orleans jazz, 37-year-old drummer Jason Marsalis has provided the swinging pulse for pianist Marcus Roberts; worldly jazz group Los Hombres Calientes; and his family's self-titled band with pianist/father Ellis and brothers Wynton (trumpet), Branford (sax) and Delfeayo (trombone). But the drummer's training at Loyola University included classical mallet studies, and the latest two quartet releases under Marsalis' name, *Music Update* and *In a World of Mallets*, feature him almost exclusively as a vibraphonist. His Vibes Quartet features drummer



David Potter, pianist Austin Johnson and bassist Will Goble. And the bandleader's approach with mallets is as sophisticated as with drum sticks. On their latest CD, the quartet delivers elements of chamber music mixed with post-bop on original compositions like "Blues Can Be Abstract, Too" and "Discipline Gets Lost In a World of Mallets." **BM**

**ROBERT "TOP" THOMAS (SOLO)**  
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A superb songwriter and interpreter of swampy Florida blues, Robert "Top" Thomas has plenty of material from which to draw. For his upcoming solo acoustic show, the accomplished guitarist and vocalist might dig up gems from major influences Lazy Lester and Jimmy Reed; revise tunes from his days with the swamp-blues band SmokeHouse; or maybe even play numbers by artists he worked with at the Sanford-based King Snake Studios. Or he might pick traditional blues classics such as "Ella Speed" or "Baby Please Don't Go." And it's more than likely he'll toss in original songs from his excellent 2013 CD *The Town Crier*. On "King Snake



Crawl," Thomas, a New Smyrna Beach native, recalls the treasured time he spent at the late Bob Greenlee's imprint, throwing shout-outs to label mates such as Noble "Thin" Man Watts, The Midnight Creepers, and Ace Moreland. The grooving "YeeHaw Junction" certainly surpasses the excitement conjured by that particular Florida locale. **BW**

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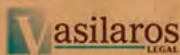
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**CLEARWATER JAZZ HOLIDAY, COACHMAN**  
**PARK/ OCT. 18**

Who better to celebrate the music of Louis Armstrong than Dr. John? A native son of New Orleans, Doc pays loving but hardly slavish homage to the Crescent City jazz icon on his latest album, *Ske-Dat-De-Dat: The Spirit of Satch*. After all, the inimitable vocalist and pianist cut his teeth on the R&B of Fats Domino, Professor Longhair and James Booker, which flavors his interpretations. And, as *Locked Down*, his 2012 collaboration with Black Keys guitarist Dan Auerbach proved, the good Doc's ever willing to update his sound. With horn arrangements from Nite Trippers' trombonist Sarah



Morrow, and contributions from trumpeters Nicholas Payton, James "12" Andrews, Terence Blanchard and Arturo Sandoval, Dr. John offers fresh takes on Satchmo's music (from "Dippermouth Blues" to "What a Wonderful World") incorporating jazz, blues, hip-hop and funk. Expect Doc and the 'Trippers to pull some Satch from the trick bag this trip. BW

**ARTHUR BARRON/MIAMI JAZZ PROJECT**  
**ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/OCT. 24**

Multi-wind instrumentalists Arthur Barron and Dave Liebman go back more than 40 years in a musical friendship seeded during Liebman's world travels as the tenor and soprano saxophonist with Miles Davis in the early 1970s. A tenor and alto saxophonist and flutist, Barron is also well-traveled, from studying at the Berklee College of Music in his native Boston to New York, San Francisco, Hong Kong and Miami -- where he's spent most of the past 30 years recording independent CDs and owning some of the city's best jazz nightclubs. But the duo's new Miami Jazz Project, with younger South Florida stalwarts Abel Pabon (keyboards), Josh Allen



(basses), Michael Piolet (drums) and Alfredo Chacon (percussion), holds a release party for the self-titled first CD from its multi-album contract with the ZoHo Music label. Trumpeter Stewart Rabin will essentially take the ever-busy Liebman's place, and he and Barron will run through the CD's intricate and creative originals and standards with Pabon, bassist Gabriel Vivas and drummer Rey Monroig. BM.

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Tues	7	Crazy Fingers	8pm
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Fri	10	7 Below - A Tribute To Phish	9pm
Sat	11	New Orleans Suspects	8pm
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Tues	14	Bobby Lee Rodgers Jazz Trio	8pm
Wed	15	Brendan O'Hara	8pm
Thur	16	Tim Reynolds TR3	8pm
Fri	17	The Sean Chambers Band	9pm
Sat	18	The Long Run - A Tribute To The Eagles	8pm
Mon	20	Biscuit Jam With Mark Telesca & The Funky Biscuit All Stars	8pm
Tues	21	Short Straw Trio	8pm
Wed	22	The Magic Beans	8pm
Thur	23	Lather Up	8pm
		With Special Guests The Royal Noise	
Fri	24	Unlimited Devotion	9pm
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Mon	27	Biscuit Jam With Mark Telesca & The Funky Biscuit All Stars	8pm
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# S P O T L I G H T

**MARTY AND MICHIKO MORELL**  
**TIMUCUA WHITE HOUSE, ORLANDO/OCT. 26**  
 Seventy-year-old Marty Morell played from 1968-1974 with pianist Bill Evans, and that seven-year tenure was the longest of any drummer with his heralded trio, which included bassist Eddie Gomez during that time. Now the jazz drum set and percussion professor at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Morell is also adept at all forms of Latin percussion, as is his wife. Michiko Morell is a powerful vocalist who sings without a hint of a Japanese accent, as evidenced by her solo debut from 2011, *Enamorada*. The couple performs in Orlando with the Tampa-based La Lucha trio of pianist John O'Leary, bassist Alejandro Arenas and drummer Mark Feinman, which gives the veteran drummer



(who also plays piano) numerous chordal and percussive opportunities. La Lucha states on its website that it "aims to create music that transcends genres and classifications." If YouTube clips are an indication, this open-minded ensemble is likely to create a new fusion of Afro-Cuban, Brazilian and traditional jazz and beyond. **BM**

**JORMA KAUKONEN**  
**RUTH ECKERD HALL, CLEARWATER/OCT. 23**  
**FESTIVAL MIAMI, UM GUSMAN CONCERT HALL, MIAMI/OCT. 24**

As a founding member of Hot Tuna, guitarist Jorma Kaukonen has been sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of country blues with audiences for 45 years. A masterful picker and distinctive vocalist, he's particularly adept at the rolling ragtime styles of heroes such as the Rev. Gary Davis and Mississippi John Hurt. Kaukonen loves this music so much that he opened the Fur Peace Ranch in Ohio in 1989 to teach others to play it, recruiting some of the best guitarists across multiple genres as instructors. While playing with The Jefferson Airplane, Kaukonen and bassist Jack Casady started Hot Tuna as a side project, eventually splitting from Airplane to pursue their love of the blues. The two continue to tour as Hot Tuna, but on his Florida dates, Kaukonen will be accompanied by longtime associate and master mandolinist Barry Mitterhoff. A recent setlist includes Tuna tunes, as well as gems from 40 years of solo work. **BW**



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Saturday 10/18/2014  
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Doug Deming & The  
Jeweltones | Blues



Sunday 10/19/2014  
7:00 PM

Eric Andersen  
| Blues



Friday 10/24/2014  
8:00 PM

Miami Jazz Project  
CD Release Show  
| Jazz



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THE BARNACLE, COCONUT GROVE/OCT. 12  
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WOODY'S WEST END TAVERN, MIAMI SPRINGS/  
OCT. 31

If you're looking for the perfect Halloween soundtrack, you won't do much better than the songs of Graham Wood Drout. Drout's spooky hoodoo sensibilities have supplied the serious juju behind Miami roots-blues pioneers Iko-Iko for three decades. With tunes such as "Don't Mess With Voodoo," "Walk With the Zombies" and "Miller's Woods," Iko can raise goosebumps. Of course, the band also parties with the best, throwing down on blues, boogies and swamp pop, much of which emanates from Drout's own fevered pen. For a



taste of the singer and guitarist's remarkable songcraft, pick up a copy of Iko's newly released *Bullets in the Bonfire*, volume 1 of a greatest hits collection spanning more than 20 years. The band's current incarnation includes Drout, guitarist John Wenzel, bassist Mitch Mestel, keyboardist Ron Taylor and drummer Jimmy Daniel. **BW**

## JOHNNY O'NEAL

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AUDITORIUM/OCT. 11

Fifty-eight-year-old Johnny O'Neal has a unique story in addition to his estimable piano and vocal talents. After moving to New York City, the Detroit native's career was on the rise in the early 1980s, including steady gigs with with trumpeter Clark Terry and drummer Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and a job as house pianist at the Blue Note. But a mugging outside his Harlem apartment in 1986 sent O'Neal into a tailspin. He moved away, only displaying the pianistic influence of Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson and vocal nuances of Joe Williams in obscurity, and developed AIDS in the process. Peterson recommended O'Neal for the 2004 Ray Charles biopic *Ray*, and his portrayal of Tatum returned him to prominence as his health gradually started to improve. He's likely to perform selections from his latest CD, *Live at Smalls*, but you never know — O'Neal believes in the spirit of improvisation right down to performing with neither a set list or a net. **BM**



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Hamilton Jazz Orchestra he co-leads with drummer Jeff Hamilton, piano-playing son Gerald Clayton, and others to create Ryan's best effort yet. As Christopher Loudon of *JazzTimes* wrote, Ryan has a voice "...rivaling the dextrous sass of Sarah Vaughan, the instinctive smarts of Carmen McRae and the scintillating verve of Diana Krall." **BM**

**NEW ORLEANS SUSPECTS**  
**FUNKY BLUES SHACK, SANDESTIN/OCT. 9**  
**ACE'S, BRADENTON/OCT. 10**  
**FUNKY BISCUIT, BOCA RATON/OCT. 11**  
**MAGNOLIA FEST, LIVE OAK/OCT. 19**

Any New Orleans jukebox worth the price of a po'boy should include at least one entry by Professor Longhair, the Neville Brothers and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Now imagine that juke also included tunes by The Radiators and Groove Thangs and you have a good idea of the sounds — and collective résumés — of New Orleans Suspects. Comprising guitarist and vocalist Jake Eckert, keyboardist and vocalist CR Gruver, (former South Floridian) saxophonist Jeff Watkins, bassist Reggie Scanlan and drummer Willie Green, the allstar group's lineage is anything but suspect. Their third album in as many years, the brand-new *Ouroboros* is a highly engaging collection of rootsy, N'awlins-style R&B and funk, stirring echoes of the Nevilles, Meters, Subdudes, Little Feat and Dr. John. The atmospheric "Hoodooos and Cunyans" belongs on any Halloween playlist. **BW**



**JAZZ & BLUES**  
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For Press Releases, CD Reviews, Advertising Info or Listings, contact our Main Office at **561.313.7432** or

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**FRIDAY AT THE CABARET:**

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14, 8:30PM**  
**ALLAN HARRIS**  
A MIAMI NICE JAZZ FESTIVAL EVENT  
CABARET SERIES, BLACK BOX THEATER  
\$25 in advance - \$30 day of show

Harris has been described by *The Miami Herald* as an artist with "the warmth of Tony Bennett, the rhythmic sense of Sinatra, and the sly elegance of Nat 'King' Cole." His numerous awards include the New York Nightlife Award for "Outstanding Jazz Vocalist," the Backstage Bistro Award for "Ongoing Achievement in Jazz," and the Harlem Speaks "Jazz Museum of Harlem Award."

**One Show Only!**

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