

JAZZ & BLUES

F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



FEATURE: JAZZ ARTIST

DANIELA SOLEDAD

BLUES ARTISTS

RAY CASHMAN

JOSH GARRETT

STEVE GUYGER

SUGARAY RAYFORD

TENNESSEE REDEMPTION

JUSTINE TOMPKINS

JAZZ ARTISTS

BILLY COBHAM

SCOTT DICKINSON

SAMMY FIGUEROA

LEESA RICHARDS

DAVONDA SIMMONS

STEFFEN ZEICHNER

DANIELA SOLED

While Daniela Soledade may initially seem like a fresh name in Brazilian music, the vocalist's impact is immediate on her brand new, bold-yet-subtle debut, *A Moment of You*. A carefully curated set of Bossa Nova gems (while dodging the most obvious choices), Brazilian-ized standards and original songs, created in partnership with producer/guitarist Nate Najjar, the album frames Soledade's luminous tone and mature interpretive powers as she sings in both English and Portuguese.

Beyond the surface and sensory allure, a legacy-related back story lends depth to Soledade's unfolding musical saga. She belongs to a sparkling lineage of great Brazilian artists, ranging from her grandfather Paulo – collaborator with Antonio Carlos Jobim, Vinícius de Moraes, Baden Powell and other Brazilian legends – and her father Paulinho, who has worked as producer and partner with Ivan Lins and Gilberto Gil.

Growing up, Soledade spent time in top studios in Rio de Janeiro, participating in studio recordings for Brazilian artists such as Xuxa and the band Oxgênios. At age 14, she placed first in the entrance exam to attend the prestigious Music Conservatory Villa Lobos, and studied flute there before moving to Florida at age 16. *A Moment of You* arrives as a launching point for a promising career. Of the album's title, which comes from a lyric in Jobim's "Someone to Light Up My Life," Soledade explains, **"The title suits the stage of life in which I found myself as I recorded this album. This is my moment to be myself, to invest in myself and to pursue my dreams."**

Soledade's right-hand musical ally, guitarist/producer Nate Najjar jointly forged the vision for the record with the singer. They gravitated towards what Soledade calls the "intimate, quiet, beautiful moments" in Bossa Nova. Najjar commented, "When I think of Bossa Nova, I think of João Gilberto – this quiet and intimate aesthetic. Daniela and I both discovered that we love the same aesthetic." Najjar also emphasizes the importance of a cohesive personality on the album. "With an album like this, a lot of people still listen to the entire record. I want to make sure that the flow, from top to bottom, feels a certain way."

The album opens with the classic samba "Eu Sambo Mesmo," moves smoothly through a bossa-flavored version of Gershwin's "The Man I Love" and on to a closing voice-guitar duet of Charles Trenet's "I Wish You Love." Brazilian musical heritage is well represented, from Jobim's "Someone to Light Up My Life" to Marcos Valle's "Safely in Your Arms," Rosa Passos' "Dunas," and Los Hermanos' "Veja Bem Meu Bem." A centering role on *A Moment Of You* goes to the Soledade family



ADE'S MOMENT

crest. Daniela notes ***“it’s an honor to be able to include three generations of Soledade songs on my debut album.*** That was very special to me. I truly admire my grandfather and my father’s talent and I feel very privileged to continue the family legacy.” “Song for Baden” is Soledade’s father’s tribute to his late friend and mentor, famed guitarist Baden Powell. The song features extra lyrics by Soledade, a guitar solo cameo by her father (filmed in from a studio in Rio), and famed Brazilian drummer Duduka Da Fonseca as a guest. “Sonho Desfeito” is a 1956 samba co-written by her grandfather and Antonio Carlos Jobim. Soledade’s original contribution is the sweetly haunting ‘Baião’ (a rhythmic style from the Northeast of Brazil) tune “Ninho.”

Soledade is now poised for her moment in the larger music scene. Reflecting on the album

in its finished state, she says “I love that I have my grandfather’s and father’s songs in there with one of my own. ***I love the intimate, delicate, rich sound of the recordings.***

I love that all of the musicians who play on it are amazing world-class musicians... the vibe, the feeling, the two languages combined, the authentic Brazilian rhythms that I grew up with... everything is perfect for me.” Due to national touring in support of this release, the next opportunity for Floridians to hear live selections from the new CD will be at the Suncoast Jazz Festival in November.

More at daniela-soledade.com.



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Steve Guyger

Philadelphia is home to one of the finest blues harp players in the world, often to the surprise of people not inside the blues scene. Over the past 40-plus years, 2009 Handy Award nominee Steve Guyger has been dishing out some of the finest blues to be heard anywhere. Whether in a duo, trio, or with his band, The Excellos, he always rocks the house. Guyger played off and on for the late Jimmy Rogers for 15 years until Rogers' death in 1998, and has played with many of the great Chicago bluesmen and contemporary players. The late William Clarke called Steve "the best harp player I've ever seen," and Mark Hummel called him "a monster player." Guyger began playing harp back in the late 1960s, and was influenced early on by Paul Butterfield. His passion for blues harp took him to Chicago to learn at the feet of the masters. Guyger has shared the stage with greats including Little Sammy Davis, Carey Bell, Rick Estrin, Rod Piazza, Kim Wilson and Charlie Musselwhite. Guyger was joined by celebrated Chicago blues guitarist Billy Flynn on his instructional book/DVD *Blues Harmonica*. With six CDs to his credit, plus a handful of collaborations including three with Paul Oscher, Guyger lives and performs in Philly while also touring with the New Legends of the Blues All-Stars. He was honored to appear on 2016's *Blues for Big Walter*, a tribute to harp legend Big Walter Horton. More at steveguyger.com.

FROM A PHOTO BY JUDE FINNELL





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Steffen Zeichner

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Playing the violin in a variety of genres including jazz, classical and klezmer, Gainesville native Steffen Zeichner

currently performs with several ensembles and orchestras throughout South Florida. He is the leader of 5 String Swing, a lively jazz violin led band that regularly presents shows of jazz, swing, and American standards. Zeichner has performed with a variety of top artists including Chick Corea, Gloria Estefan, Cyrille Aimee, Nestor Torres, Kenny Loggins, Ben Folds, Maria Schneider, Terence Blanchard, and George Benson, with whom he was featured as the violin soloist and concertmaster for Benson's 2013 album, *Inspiration*. An experienced studio musician, Zeichner has credits on Grammy-winning and Grammy-nominated records, *Downbeat* Award winners, and on numerous other albums of various musical genres. Zeichner is also a passionate educator with a focus on developing the creative potential of string players, particularly through exposing them to musical genres outside of the classical world and through helping students to develop improvisational skills. He has a BM in Violin Performance from Indiana University (studying with Henryk Kowalski, Federico Agostini, Jorja Fleezanis, David Baker), a MM from the University of Miami (Charles Castleman, Glenn Basham, Gary Lindsay, Stephen Guerra Jr), and is currently working on the dissertation

for his Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at the University of Miami. Steffen has also studied

jazz violin with John Blake Jr., Mark

O'Connor and Jeremy Cohen. More at sizviolin.com.



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SEPTEMBER 28
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Bassist and songwriter Justine Tompkins (nee Gardner) has been a musician since age seven, playing piano, clarinet, and most recently, electric bass. After graduating Summa Cum Laude

in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bass Performance from Berklee College of Music, Tompkins began playing with blues musicians including drummers Scoop Davis, Duke Kelley and Dan Bunge, and guitarist Gregg Miller. In 2011, Tompkins began playing and touring with ex-Sheryl Crow lead guitarist Todd Wolfe and drummer Roger Voss. As part of the Todd Wolfe Band, Tompkins spent years writing, recording, touring and performing internationally, including lots of time in Germany, Austria, Poland, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Japan and Canada. Tompkins played bass on the two most recent Todd Wolfe Band albums, 2013's *Miles to Go* and 2015's *Long Road Back*. In 2016, she was featured in John Ginty's music video for the single, "Fredo," (featuring Redman), and also recorded with John Ginty feat. Aster Pheonix for Ginty's 2017 album, *Rockers*. She spent most of the year touring to support it before joining the touring band of blues singer JJ Thames nationally and abroad. A 2018 relocation to Florida led to a position touring with guitarist Albert Castiglia. Tompkins' influences include Flea, Anthony Vitti, Tommy Shannon, Ben Shepherd and Tim Commerford. Musical tastes range from the Beatles to Stevie Ray Vaughan to the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Tompkin's creativity, multidimensional background (African-American, Spanish, German, French and Irish), and affinity for hardcore groove make her an invaluable asset to any blues endeavor. More at beanbass.com.



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Scott Dickinson


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Trumpeter / composer Scott Dickinson holds degrees in jazz performance and composition from the University of North Florida, Depaul University, and the University of Miami. As a performer, Scott has had the opportunity

to share the stage with major artists such as Michael Feinstein, Larry Coryell, Alphonse Mouzon, and Mason Bates. He has also been a finalist in several performance competitions including the National Trumpet Competition, The International Trumpet Guild Competition, and the Chicago Union League Jazz Competition. Some of the many venues Dickinson has performed at include New York's Smoke, Chicago's Green Mill Cocktail Lounge, as well as jazz festivals in Jacksonville, Chicago, France, The Netherlands, Switzerland, and China. He is a member of the Dr. Phillips Jazz Orchestra, and also maintains an active career as a composer and arranger. Dickinson's pieces have been played by professional ensembles across the country including the Jazz Conceptions Orchestra, Rob Partron's JazzTECH Big Band, as well as Bob Lark's DePaul Alumni Big Band. Scott's arrangements have been performed by such artists as vocalist Annie Sellick, and legendary saxophonist Phil Woods. Dickinson has also been commissioned to create arrangements for high school all-state bands, church choir and orchestra, and has won two *Downbeat* awards for big band arrangement. In 2013 he received an honorable mention for his submission "Apparatus" for the Doc Severinsen International Composition Contest. The piece is scored for symphony orchestra and solo trumpet with jazz drum set and bass. More at scottdickinsonmusic.com.



FROM A PHOTO BY AGNES LOPEZ



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Sammy Figueroa

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Long regarded as one of the world's leading percussionists, Sammy Figueroa has played on countless records

and is well-known for his versatility in a multitude of musical styles. Besides playing with some of the world's greatest pop stars – including David Bowie, Chaka Khan and Mariah Carey – Figueroa has also performed distinguished jazz artists such as Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins and Quincy Jones. Born in the Bronx and raised in Puerto Rico, the son of romantic singer Charlie Figueroa, Sammy spent many years as New York's top percussionist before moving to South Florida in 2001. There he soon discovered an inspiring trove of amazing Latin jazz virtuosos, and soon Sammy Figueroa and His Latin Jazz Explosion debuted at the Hollywood Jazz Festival. Figueroa's first album, *...and Sammy Walked In*, included a title track written in his honor by Michel Camillo. Three albums followed – *The Magician*, *Urban Nature* and *Imaginary World* – all boasting masterful compositions and arrangements by Venezuelan composer/musicians Silvano Monasterios on piano and Gabriel Vivas on bass. In addition to his own albums, Figueroa has co-produced several jazz and world music albums with award-winning world music producer Rachel Faro (the two married earlier this year). From 2010 to 2013, Figueroa toured the world with saxophone master Sonny Rollins, and appears on Rollins' latest three albums. In 2014, Figueroa took a detour, recording and releasing *Memory of Water*, a new age album featuring his celestial-sounding Hangpan. Figueroa's been working on a new project featuring urban and R&B styles mixed with a Latin pop approach.

More at sammyfigueroa.com.



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Currently in the midst of an international tour to promote his new album *Somebody Save Me*, SugarayRayford received the 2019 Blues Music Award in the Soul Blues Male Artist Category. The album, with The Italian Royal Family, hit No. 1 on the Living Blues Charts, NACC and Roots Music Report while also receiving significant

airplay in other radio formats. After testing the waters of a handful of musical genres, the Texas-born Rayford found his home in the blues. He joined Aunt Kizzy's Boyz in 2004, and their debut CD *Trunk Full of Bluez* led to a second place finish at the 2006 International Blues Challenge. Their 2007 followup *It's Tight Like That* helped the Boyz win the 20078 LAMN Jam Grand Slam Urban Artist of the Year title, beating out hundreds of competitors. A move to Los Angeles led to a gig hosting an area blues jam, nurturing his Rayford's desire to further a solo career. He travels the world singing with other bands, and has provided studio vocals on several projects, including the theme for *Judge Joe Brown*, the movie trailer for *City Lights*, and two songs on CBS-TV's *Person of Interest*, among others. In 2012 Rayford made his stage debut starring in *Ain't Nuthin' But The Blues*, joining members of the Broadway cast at the Portland, Oregon's Center Stage. Every show of the six-week run ended with a standing ovation. More stage appearances followed. With his seven-piece crack band and personal charm, a Rayford show is a flat-out high-energy celebration. More at sugarayrayford.com.

FROM A PHOTO BY ERIC SASSAMAN



SEPTEMBER 28
NEW SMYRNA BEACH
JAZZ FESTIVAL
NEW SMYRNA BEACH

DaVonda Simmons

With her unique style of jazz, R&B, classical, and Broadway genres, DaVonda Simmons has headlined in some of south Florida's hottest nightspots for more than 20 years. She honed her skills and received her Bachelor of Music degree from Florida International University in Miami, then worked as a principal performer and special guest artist for Walt Disney Entertainment for more than ten years. She has opened for the likes of Joe Williams, Diane Schuur, Marvin Hamlisch, Lionel Hampton, Arturo Sandoval, Chuck Mangione, Rosemary Clooney, Della Reese, Nell Carter, Rita Moreno, Carol Channing, and many others. As a studio vocalist, Simmons' rich, dynamic voice can be heard on pop albums, gospel CDs, and commercial jingles and voice-over work. She has sung back-up vocals on recordings for artists such as Vanessa L. Williams, Jermaine Jackson and Gloria Estefan. Her distinctive voice can be heard on commercial and promotional jingles for Chevrolet, Lynx, Magic 107FM, Disney - MGM Studios, and the Island of St. Martin. Simmons also appeared as a principal in *The Dooley and Pals Show*, a children's TV show airing on PBS. She has made frequent worldwide appearances as a headline entertainer aboard cruise ships, taking audiences on a musical journey that includes the visits to the Swing Era, Motown and Broadway. Simmons has also received rave reviews for her musical theater performances in *Dreamgirls*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Wiz*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Menopause the Musical*. Her CD is titled *D'Va*. More at davondasimmons.com.



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Sept 16	Boca Raton	Funky Biscuit
Sept 19	West Palm Beach	Clematis by Night
Sept 20	Ft Lauderdale	Tarpon River Brewing
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Josh Garrett

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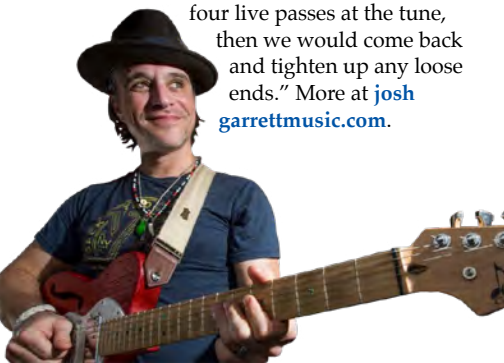
SEPTEMBER 15
PARADISE BAR &
GRILL
PENSACOLA BEACH

SEPTEMBER 16
SEVILLE QUARTER
PENSACOLA

For more than ten years now, Josh Garrett has been traveling the country, playing blues clubs and festivals with his distinctive mix of blues, Cajun music, and zydeco. Garrett was born in New Roads, LA, and moved to Houma, LA in 1979. Houma is home to the upcoming 16th annual Voice of the Wetlands Festival, where Garrett has shared his unique brand of Louisiana roots music for many years.

After recording his debut album *Changed Man* at age 24, Garrett and his band traveled regionally to promote it, and in 2008 Garrett relocated to Nashville where he recorded his second album, *Live on Printer's Alley*. Back in Louisiana, Garrett's third album, *String of Problems*, hit No. 1 on the Roots Music Louisiana Blues Charts, and was followed by 2015's successful *Honey For My Queen*. Garrett recently signed with Tab Benoit's Whiskey Bayou Records, also located in Houma. The new release by Garrett (and a new CD by the legendary Big Chief Monk Boudreaux) are scheduled for release before the end of the year. Garrett's album, yet to be named, was recorded at Whiskey Bayou Studio (Houma, of course). Most of the tunes on the record, produced by Benoit, were composed on the spot. Breaking it down, Garrett explains: "I showed up with ideas. We fleshed out those ideas into songs. We would make three of

four live passes at the tune, then we would come back and tighten up any loose ends." More at joshgarrettmusic.com.



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Billy Cobham

SEPTEMBER 21
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LARGO

Jazz fusion pioneer Billy Cobham is an internationally renowned drumming virtuoso, percussionist, composer, producer, educator and master clinician whose life

has been dedicated to musical exploration and creative expression. When Cobham was three years old his family moved from Colón, Panama to New York. A graduate of NYC's famed High School of Music and Art, Cobham further developed and refined his drumming skills as a percussionist in the U.S. Army Band. Afterward, Cobham began his performing career with jazz artists such as George Benson, Kenny Burrell and Stanley Turrentine. In 1969, Cobham co-founded the band Dreams with brothers Michael and Randy Brecker, among other notables. The following year, he was invited to join Miles Davis' group and contributed to four pivotal recordings by the trumpeter, including *Bitches Brew*. In 1971, Cobham was invited into the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Their pioneering combination of classical virtuosity, jazz spontaneity and rock prowess broke new ground in the music world over three acclaimed albums. When the original group disbanded, Cobham began releasing his own albums, beginning with 1973's *Spectrum*, widely regarded as a defining statement of the jazz-rock genre. Throughout his career, Cobham has appeared on more than 300 recordings, including those by pop and rock icons like Peter Gabriel, Quincy Jones, Jack Bruce, Bob Weir, and James Brown, and has produced and released more than forty albums as a leader. His most recent solo release is 2013's *Compass Point*. These performances are of his Crosswinds Project, featuring guest trumpeter Randy Brecker. More at

billycobham.com.



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Saturday, September 28

Flagler Avenue & Canal Street • 11:30am-10:30pm • FREE

Sunday, September 29

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Tennessee Redemption

SEPTEMBER 15
W/ BRIDGET KELLY BAND
AND DAMON FOWLER
HIGH DIVE
GAINESVILLE

Steeped in blues, raised on rock 'n' roll, inspired by soul, baptized by gospel, and open minded on jazz – Tennessee Redemption is an evolution in the personal artistry of its members. Clocking a combined total of almost 1,000 concerts on Beale Street alone (about 400 of them together), Brandon Santini and Jeff Jensen also toured around the USA and Canada together from 2011-2013. Produced by Santini and Jensen, Santini's *This*

Time Another Year earned a 2012 Blues Music Award nomination for Contemporary Album of the Year, and Santini was nominated for Harmonica of the Year (2012). The next year, that same band cut *Road Worn and Ragged*, Jensen's solo career re-launch album. They then split up to explore solo careers. In 2015, Jensen released the acclaimed *Morose Elephant*, followed by the live *River City Sessions*, and Santini released the live album *Live and Extended!* In 2017, the two accepted a handful of exclusive festival offers. With David Green on drums, Bill Ruffino on bass, and Timo Arthur on guitar, the group was billed as The Santini-Jensen Project (SJP). Further collaboration would have to wait, as Jensen toured in support of 2018's *Wisdom & Decay* and Santini prepared to release his most successful album to date, 2019's *The Longshot*, which debuted on the *Billboard* Blues Charts at No. 7, and continues to receive rave reviews globally. Now, after years of talking about it, Tennessee Redemption featuring Jensen, Santini, Arthur, Ruffino and David Green is now official. More at road-dawg.com/tennessee-redemption.



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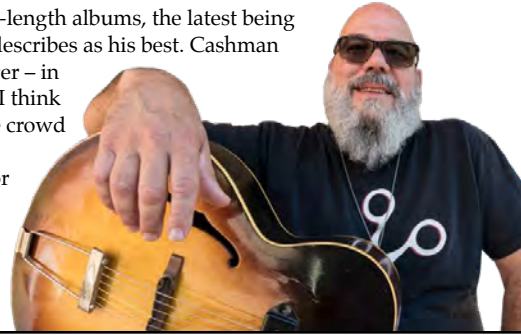


SEPTEMBER 14
THE FISH HOUSE
MIAMI

Ray Cashman

Armed with a National guitar, stomp box and a Fender amp, self-proclaimed “blues troubadour” Ray Cashman cooks up a Texas Gulf coast musical gumbo.

His amplified sound is solid, reminiscent of a Muddy Waters presentation, and it underscores his expressive lyrics. Filled with years of experience from travel and inspirations of Southern Gothic literature his songs are filled with passion and feelings and honesty and subtlety be damned. Cashman is passionate about sharing the American roots sound with folks all around the world, integrating powerful influences including the Rolling Stones, Howlin’ Wolf, and Townes Van Zandt. Cashman’s 2007 release *Texasstippi Stomp*, which featured Jimbo Mathus (Squirrel Nut Zippers, Buddy Guy) placed on many blues critics’ year-end best-of lists, and was on the nomination ballot for a best traditional blues album Grammy. Since 2003 Cashman has toured England, Ireland, Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and the USA from the Gulf Coast to Canada and sea to shining sea. He has released seven full-length albums, the latest being 2019’s highly praised *Houston Electric*, which he describes as his best. Cashman considers himself a songwriter, guitarist and singer – in that order: “Pure unadulterated emotion is what I think our music is all about. It doesn’t matter about the crowd or money, as long as the emotion is at it’s highest levels, every thing will be alright.” After living for more than two decades in music cities such as Austin and Nashville, Cashman now resides in the Sam Houston National Forest just outside of Montgomery, Texas. More at raycashman.net.



NATE NAJAR

Touring nationally in September and October with DANIELA SOLEDADE in support of her new release, *A Moment of You*. As the CD's producer and guitarist, Nate helped curate this set of Bossa Nova gems, Brazilian-ized standards and



originals, framed in Soledade's luminous tone and mature interpretive powers.

natenajar.com

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Leesa Richards

SEPTEMBER 1
THE PALACE
HOLLYWOOD

As a part of Miami's vibrant music scene, singer/songwriter Leesa Richards is helping to shape and

define its evolving sound. She has performed with a slate of powerhouse artists including Faith Hill, The Bee Gees, Kelly Clarkson, Gloria Estefan, and Carole King, and recorded with Barbra Streisand and Lenny Kravitz, among other artists. Her debut solo album, 2003's *Mother's Child*, tells a universal story of love and loss with a rich blend of soulful ballads, rock and R&B that showcases her gifts as a songwriter. Richards grew up in music-rich Detroit and started showing an inclination toward the arts at a very early age. "My parents listened to a lot of jazz and I would record myself over and over singing along to Nancy Wilson records," she says. But when she saw Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, she knew she wanted to be a dancer. She graduated from University of North Carolina School of the Arts with a degree in dance and began her career on stage performing with a variety of dance companies. She began honing her vocal chops with soul greats Gerald Austin and Peabo Bryson and contemporary soul maverick Dionne Farris. Her first world tour was as a dancer with legendary singer Whitney Houston after which she earned the role of Mary Magdalene in a national tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, earning critical acclaim which led to featured performances throughout the US and Europe. For this event, Richards is joining special guest Melton Mustafa, Jr. for Allen Paul and LaVie's Sit, Sing and Swing. Find her on [Facebook](#).

