

JAZZ & BLUES

F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



B.B. King



Joe Lovano



Buddy Guy



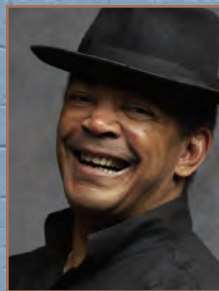
Otis Taylor



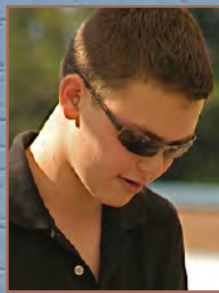
Honeyboy Edwards



Stamm/Mays



Sugar Blue



Matt Wigler



Larry Coryell



Edward Simon



Charles Tolliver

THIS EDITION IS DEDICATED TO THE LIFE OF PATRICK "JOE" McCARDLE. JAZZ IN PEACE.

WINNING SPINS

By Bill Meredith

SAXOPHONIST JOE LOVANO'S 2009

proved to be a year of highs and lows. The lows came in late October and early November, as he suffered hairline fractures in each arm during separate falls while touring in Europe. The remainder of the tour had to be canceled as he underwent surgery, but the resilient Cleveland-born, Berklee-trained saxophonist recovered and is thankfully now back on the road.

Back in May, the Joe Lovano Us Five had released *Folk Art* (Blue Note), a far-reaching effort that appeared near the top of many 2009 year-end critics' polls—including number one in *JazzTimes* magazine. The ever-searching bandleader, 57, rounded out his quintet for the disc with another veteran in pianist James Weidman and a youthful, unorthodox rhythm section. Bassist Esperanza Spalding, only 25 (who has a solo appearance scheduled for February 20 at Palm Beach Community College's Lake Worth campus), joined dual drummers Otis Brown III and Francisco Mela—each of whom also plays ankle bells, gongs and other percussives.

No two Lovano albums, or even compositions, sound alike, something that becomes obvious early in the disc. On the energetic opener "Powerhouse," he uses the tenor saxophone within harmonic structures that intermittently recall John Coltrane, Charlie Parker and Ornette Coleman. The leader then develops a loping theme on the lengthy title track that appears to break down after three minutes. But that's when Brown and Mela—panned right and left for complete separation between their drum kits—use a creative double-drum solo to introduce the swinging midsection. Lovano then re-enters, using his tenor to downshift back to the opening theme for the song's coda.

"Folk Art" hints at the outside nature of things to come—avant-garde leanings that, in the hands of lesser musical explorers, might sound trite. On the free-time ballad "Wild Beauty" the drummers use brushes and mallets to accentuate Spalding's pulsating bass line and Lovano's singing tenor. Weidman plays sparse chords until his middle solo. Here he unleashes a mad rush of notes, creating a tension that's released upon the return to the main



JOE LOVANO

theme. The pianist also plays a beautiful intro to "Song for Judi," a ballad Lovano wrote for his wife, vocalist Judi Silvano.

"Us Five" turns Weidman loose on another statement-making middle solo, but only after Lovano plays call-and-response with both drummers in an introductory, New Orleans-influenced march. It's a pattern that's also repeated near the end, complete with a mature-beyond-her-years solo by Spalding.

The album ventures even further "outside" on "Drum Song," as the two percussionists create a controlled cacophony that's accentuated by Lovano on multiple instruments. In addition to his saxes, he plays gongs and taragato, a Hungarian folk instrument he describes in the liner notes as "half clarinet and half soprano saxophone, with many colors and a human-voice sound." Lovano one-ups himself on "Dibango" by playing an aulochrome, a new polyphonic, chromatic woodwind instrument that resembles two soprano saxophone bodies with the keys down the middle. The results often sound like

WINNING SPINS

dueling saxes on the track, which is dedicated to Cameroonian saxophonist and vibraphonist Manu Dibango.

Lovano uses an alto clarinet to create a sparse, folkish mood on "Page 4," which features more Spalding brilliance through her unaccompanied bass break. The saxophonist wears his open-form heart on his sleeve on the album-concluding "Ettenro"—Ornette spelled backwards. Weidman is again stellar, as is Lovano, who switches between tenor and alto saxes. Not a standard, curved alto, mind you, but rather an unorthodox straight horn. All in keeping with this curveball-throwing artist's unbroken link to the pioneers of jazz freedom.



Joe Lovano performs on Feb. 18 at the University of North Florida's Robinson Theater in Jacksonville. For more information, call 904-620-2878 or visit unf.edu/coas/music/calendar.html.

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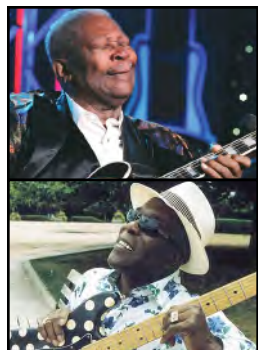
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B.B. KING AND BUDDY GUY HARD ROCK LIVE, HOLLYWOOD/FEB. 2

"B.B. is the only person who has ever shown me anything on the guitar," Buddy Guy relates in his 1993 biography *Damn Right I've Got the Blues*. "Other than what he taught me, I'm completely self-taught." As an up-and-comer making his name in Chicago, Guy revered the already-famous King, copying many of his licks and even performing some of his signature tunes. Mightily impressed, B.B. gave Buddy his first theater gig in 1958, opening for his band at Chicago's Trianon Ballroom. The pair have been close friends ever since. Both King, 84, and Guy, 73, continue to create plenty of excitement. King's Grammy-winning 2008 recording, *One Kind Favor*, ranks among his best.



Guy, who performed in South Florida with Dr. John in November, graced the cover of this month's *Downbeat* magazine and his name pops up on Eric Clapton's Fender edition T-Mobile phone in a recent TV commercial. Expect plenty of reminiscences, as well as the singular blues styles that have inspired generations of blues artists. **BW**

EDWARD SIMON, TIPTONS SAX QUARTET JAZZ ON EDGE, GARDEN THEATRE WINTER GARDEN/FEB. 6

This annual festival features two intriguing headliners, a preceding performance by the Lakeview Middle School Jazz Band, and an after-hours jam with New York-based trumpeter Brian Groder. *The New York Times* has praised Venezuelan pianist Edward Simon's touch as "light and warm," and *Jazz Journal International* hailed his "drama and invention." Simon's latest two CamJazz CDs, *Unicity* and *Poesia*, have furthered his name recognition. Each displays his heralded touch supported by the all-star rhythm team of John Patitucci and drummer Brian Blade. The Tiptons Saxophone Quartet features the frontline of saxophonists Jessica Lurie, Tina Richerson, Amy Denio and Sue Orfield,



plus drummer Lee Frisari. The Seattle-based group's unorthodox instrumentation creates a full and unique sound, and the band takes its name from a musician with a bizarre back story. Sax player Billy Tipton (1914-1989) was Dorothy Tipton 'til she realized she could play more gigs as a he. The cross-dressing reed-player took her secret to the grave. **BM**

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LARRY CORYELL-DR. LONNIE SMITH TRIO MINIACI CENTER, FT. LAUDERDALE/FEB. 13

Texas-born guitarist Larry Coryell quit studying journalism at the University of Washington and moved to New York City in 1965, starting a career that would cause *Downbeat* editor Dan Ouellette to dub him the "Godfather of Fusion." He formed the seminal fusion band The Eleventh House (with trumpeter Randy Brecker and Weather Report drummer Alphonse Mouzon) in the early 1970s, and has recent high-octane releases with bassist Victor Bailey (Weather Report) and drummer Lenny White (Return to Forever). Replacing the originally scheduled Joey DeFrancesco, Coryell's foil for his South Florida Jazz concert will be Hammond organist Dr. Lonnie Smith. The Buffalo native, whose 1960s Blue



Note efforts and work with George Benson cemented his legacy as a funky and inventive presence on the B3, has been one of South Florida's leading keyboardists for decades. Coryell is also adept at the organ-trio format, as can be heard on his 2008 Chesky recording *Impressions: The New York Sessions*. The drummer for this Fort Lauderdale show will be Marty Morrell. **BM**

CHARLES TOLLIVER MELTON MUSTAFA JAZZ FESTIVAL FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI GARDENS/FEB. 13

Now in its 14th year, the Melton Mustafa Jazz Festival was founded by its namesake trumpeter. The Miami native and Basie band alum hosts the annual event at Florida Memorial University, where he serves as head of the Jazz Studies Program. One of the festival's star clinicians and performers this year is also one of Mustafa's influential forebears. 67-year-old trumpeter Charles Tolliver taught himself how to play while majoring in pharmacology at Howard University. He has since been featured in bands led by Jackie McLean, Max Roach, Roy Haynes, Sonny Rollins, Art Blakey and McCoy



Tyner. Tolliver now leads a big band that can alternately boil and simmer, as evidenced on its 2009 live CD *Emperor March*. Prior to the all-star concert at the Lou Rawls Theater, Tolliver, Mustafa, saxman Jesse Jones Jr., pianist Edward Simon, vocalist Yvonne Brown, bassist Ed Howard and drummer Victor Lewis will participate in Friday workshops and master classes. **BM**

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**MARVIN STAMM AND BILL MAYS
HARRIET HIMMEL THEATER,
WEST PALM BEACH/FEB. 23**

Trumpeter Marvin Stamm and pianist Bill Mays only appear to be jazz's version of *The Odd Couple*. When Memphis native Stamm eschewed Tennessee blues to study at North Texas State University, and Sacramento product Mays chose the Naval School of Music over northern California's stereotypical cool jazz scene, the two eventually bonded through bebop and traditional jazz. Each has a storied history—Stamm has worked with Frank Sinatra and Benny Goodman; Mays with Sarah Vaughan and Gerry Mulligan—and leads his own groups. However, during the past 10 years, they've collaborated on outstanding duo and quartet CDs (2000's



By Ourselves, 2007's *Alone Together*), as well as formed two-thirds of the Inventions Trio, which marries jazz and chamber music. For the JAMS 10th anniversary celebration, Stamm and Mays will play originals and standards with bassist Richard Drexler and drummer Marty Morrell. Stamm and Mays also will perform at Lakeland's Branscomb Auditorium on Feb. 24-25. **BM**

**MATT WIGLER
TARPON LODGE, PINELAND/FEB. 11**

At age 15, blues and jazz pianist Matt Wigler displays the musical maturity of a seasoned vet. And no wonder: Before he could even drive a car, the Baltimore prodigy had already shared stages or opened for the likes of Buddy Guy, Bobby Rush, Marcia Ball and even South Florida's own Joey Gilmore. On *Epiphony*, his sophomore release, Wigler showcases his natural fusion of slinky soul-jazz and butt-shaking boogie-woogie on acoustic piano, as well as Hammond organ and Wurliitzer. A disciple of fellow Baltimorean Deanna Bogart—who blows sax on a few tunes and produced the album—Wigler penned six of the 10 tracks here. The talented teen also boasts a jazzy, terrifically engaging vocal style, which can be



heard to great effect on a version of Robben Ford's "Lateral Climb," sung in duet with Bogart. Wigler rips the ivory from the keys on his exuberant Charlie Parker update "Boogie Au Privave" as well as on his own spirited "High Five Boogie," and his speedy Hammond runs on the self-penned "Mac and Cheese" further astound. Expect great things from this developing talent. **BW**

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DOWNTOWNER/FORT LAUDERDALE/FEB. 13

The 21st edition of this event boasts a couple of singular headliners in harmonica virtuoso Sugar Blue and mesmerizing tale-spinner Otis Taylor. James “Sugar Blue” Whiting gained his greatest prominence when he recorded the hit “Miss You” with the Rolling Stones in 1978. But he had truly earned his blues cred on sessions with genre giants such as Johnny Shines, Louisiana Red and Honeyboy Edwards. A dazzlingly skilled musician and fine, soulful singer, Sugar Blue adds a variety of colors and flavors to his blues. On his latest recording, *Threshold*, the chromatic harp wizard incorporates jazz, pop and R&B into the mix. But he can still kick the hell



out of the blues on tunes like “Messin’ With the Kid” and “Trouble.” Taylor similarly uses blues as a launching point. The guitarist and vocalist has created a genre of his own with often-harrowing story songs that personalize the plight of the dispossessed and impoverished. Taylor expands his palette with jazz textures on 2009’s *Pentatonic Wars and Love Songs*. **BW**

HONEYBOY EDWARDS
COLONY THEATRE, MIAMI BEACH/FEB. 20

The title of David “Honeyboy” Edwards’ 2008 recording *Roamin’ and Ramblin’* could hardly be more fitting. As recounted in his invaluable 1997 autobiography, *The World Don’t Owe Me Nothing*, the 94-year-old hit the road while in his teens, hopping trains and learning the rudiments of the itinerant blues life from none other than Big Joe Williams. Although their friendship was brief—Honeyboy was there the night Robert Johnson was fatally poisoned in 1938—the tragic bluesman’s impact on him was profound. Edwards eventually settled in Chicago, his home of more than 50 years, and has been globally celebrated as blues royalty. In fact, he took Blues Music Awards in 2005 and 2007, and won a



Grammy for the 2007 multi-artist album *Last of the Great Mississippi Delta Bluesmen: Live in Dallas*. The Recording Academy also presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in January. Even at his advanced age, Edwards’ ghostly vocals and eloquent picking are startlingly affecting. For his Miami concert, he will be accompanied by guitarist Steve Arvey. **BW**

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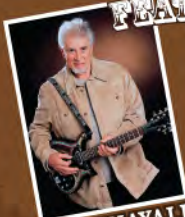
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