

JAZZ & BLUES

JANUARY 2011



F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



NORMAN SIMMONS



DR. JOHN & NEVILLE BROS.



DOUG & JEAN CARN



KEVIN MAHOGANY



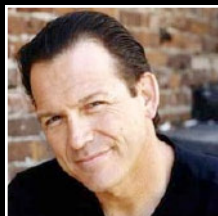
KEITH JARRETT



**REVEREND RAVEN AND
THE CHAIN SMOKIN' ALTAR BOYS**



MARCIA BALL



TOMMY CASTRO



RAY SCHINNERY



JULIE BLACK



REBECCA RICHARDSON



CHRISTIAN McBRIDE

WINNING SPINS

by Bob Weinberg

FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS, KEITH

Jarrett has been reinvigorating the Great American Songbook. When he began this undertaking, some fans were understandably apprehensive. After all, the pianist had established himself as an adventurous presence in the jazz world throughout the 1970s. While he generally maintained a melodic sensibility, Jarrett was hardly expected to turn his attention, almost exclusively, to reimagining standards.

But he certainly recruited the right rhythm team for the job. In 1983, Jarrett teamed up with bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Jack DeJohnette for the album *Standards, Vol. 1*, a surgical re-examination of familiar melodies that delved into their structures and nuances. The recording, and subsequent concerts, proved wildly popular, setting the template for the trio's albums and concerts over the next two-and-a-half decades. And it's easy to see why: Jarrett, Peacock and DeJohnette are extraordinary musicians who enjoy a rapport that has only deepened over the years. Witness for yourself as the threesome perform at Miami's Arsht Center later this month.

Jarrett brings the same scrupulous approach to standards to *Jasmine*, his 2010 duo recording with bassist Charlie Haden. As part of Jarrett's superb '70s quartet—with saxophonist Dewey Redman and drummer Paul Motian—the bassist enjoyed a symbiosis with the pianist rooted in a love of melody. While the two hadn't played together in more than 30 years, that connection remains sound.

Jarrett and Haden start off with a glacially paced read of "For All We Know." Melancholy is inherent in the melody—particularly to listeners familiar with the lyric—and tempo, and both men's tones seem to indicate a recognition of the transitory nature of life and love, which makes each more dear. The wistful mood continues on the midtempo "Where Can I Go Without You," albeit with a bit more bluesy brio from Jarrett. Haden's woody solo—performed *pizzicato*, as throughout—seems a few shades darker.

The pair maintain an introspective mood throughout—Jarrett tends toward that end of the emotional spectrum, although he's a



with Jack
DeJohnette
and Gary
Peacock



KEITH JARRETT

bit more extroverted with the trio—but *Jasmine* is hardly dreary. Perhaps the mood was determined by the intimacy of the setting: Jarrett had invited Haden to play at his small home studio. With no rehearsal and little preparation, the pair capture an immediacy of expression on these spontaneous renditions. Longtime fans will either appreciate or tolerate the involuntary moans that have always punctuated Jarrett's work, but the pianist's verbal doodling is not overly distracting.

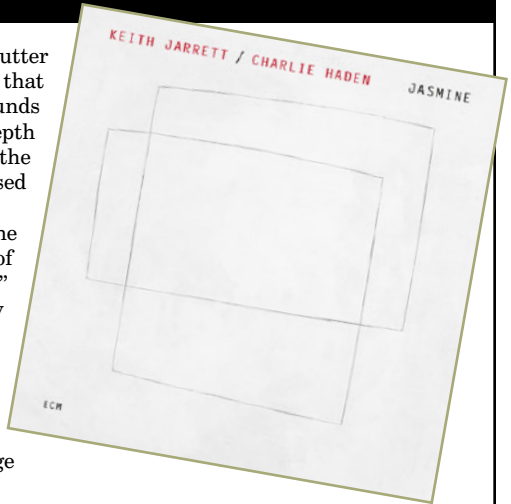
A bouncy jaunt through "No Moon at All" provides a notable exception to the plaintive feel of the album. Haden matches his old comrade's joyful gait with a walking-bass line, which he develops into a warm and engaging solo. Another uptempo number or two would have been welcome, but it's hard to begrudge artists who can create the kind of sublime tenderness on display in their read of the Joe Sample-Will Jennings' tune "One Day I'll Fly Away."

Jarrett's gift for reinterpretation can be heard to brilliant effect on his read of "Body

WINNING SPINS

and Soul,” a song whose lyric expresses utter devotion to a loved one who doesn’t return that affection. In Jarrett’s hands, the tune sounds more like a confident affirmation of the depth of his feelings. The track has earned the pianist a Grammy nomination for improvised solo of the year.

Sentiments of love and loss bring the album to a close with the one-two punch of “Goodbye” and “Don’t Ever Leave Me.” Fans of Jarrett’s trio and group work may miss the interplay of a drummer, but Jarrett and Haden have created a mood piece of great warmth and elegance. *Jasmine* allows listeners to eavesdrop on a musical conversation between masters whose art has mellowed and ripened with age and experience.



Keith Jarrett, Gary Peacock and Jack DeJohnette will perform Jan. 21 at the Arsht Center in Miami. Call 305-949-6722 or visit Arshtcenter.org.

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**MARCIA BALL, JULIE BLACK
SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE, TAMPA/JAN. 14**

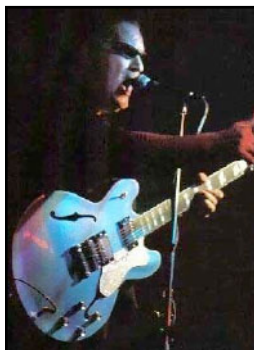
After disembarking from Delbert McClinton's Sandy Beaches Cruise, Marcia Ball will hit the ground running as she hightails it from Port Everglades to Tampa for a show that night. But the Texas pianist and vocalist never seems road-weary when she's seated behind the keyboards, one leg elegantly draped over the other while bouncing in time to the boogie-woogie, barrelhouse and second-line rhythms that are as natural to her as breathing. It's always Mardi Gras when Ball's in the house, as she conjures the merry ghosts of Professor Longhair, Smiley Lewis and Huey Smith with tunes such as "That's Enough of That Stuff," "Louella" and "Red Beans." Citing Irma



Thomas as her major vocal influence, Ball is also a tremendously soulful singer; her version of Randy Newman's "Louisiana 1927," a real concert favorite, is unfailingly poignant, particularly after Katrina. Ball will be joined for her show at Skipper's by New Port Richey-based blues-rock belter Julie Black, who has earned raves for her first two recordings. **BW**

**REVEREND RAVEN
AND THE CHAIN SMOKIN' ALTAR BOYS
THE LITTLE BAR, GOODLAND/JAN. 20
FT. LAUDERDALE AIRPORT HILTON/JAN. 21
CHEF JOHN'S, JUPITER/JAN. 22
GATORZ, PORT CHARLOTTE/JAN. 23
B.B. KING'S, ORLANDO/JAN. 26**

SOUTH SHORES TAVERN, LAKE WORTH/JAN. 27
Reverend Raven and the Chain Smokin' Altar Boys have surely grown their congregation with their recent release *Shake Your Boogie*. Fueled by the Rev.'s heated guitar licks and vocals, the band's high-energy blues also gets a big assist from the fire-breathing sax of Big Al Groth. For more than a decade, Rev. and the Boys have been creating believers in their home base of



Milwaukee, taking best blues band honors at the Wisconsin Music Industry Awards six times. Growing up in Chicago, the Rev. was bitten by the blues after witnessing a 1971 Freddy King show, and his playing reflects those Windy City roots. For the pre-R&B Cruise party on the 21st, the guys will share the roster with John Carey/Piano Bob and Bryan Lee. **BW**

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February 18	Terry Hanck

TOMMY CASTRO
EARL'S HIDEAWAY, SEBASTIAN/JAN. 16
OM BAR, NEW SMYRNA/JAN. 20
ORANGE DOOR, LAKE PARK/JAN. 21

Tommy Castro is on a tear. The guitarist and vocalist's 2009 release, *Hard Believer*, earned him a Blues Music Award for Contemporary Blues Album of the Year. That trophy joins the other BMAs he collected in 2010: Band of the Year, Contemporary Blues Artist of the Year and B.B. King Entertainer of the Year. A seasoned vet of the San Francisco blues scene, Castro has won fans worldwide with his intense vocals and smoldering guitar. That winning hand also includes mighty song-writing chops, an ear for good-ol' soul and R&B, and his ability to stock a band with talents such as saxo-



phonist Keith Crossan, trumpeter Tom Poole, bassist Scot Sutherland and drummer Ronnie Smith. With engaging originals such as "Backup Plan" (written with Ric Estrin) and "Make it Back to Memphis," and R&B classics such as "Ninety-Nine and One Half" and "My Babe" (Righteous Brothers, not Little Walter), it's easy to believe in *Hard Believer*. **BW**

DR. JOHN, THE NEVILLE BROTHERS
SUNRISE THEATER, FORT PIERCE/JAN. 28

Before he became a cuddly New Orleans icon, Dr. John was one scary character, conjuring the dark hoodoo side of the Crescent City with his raspy-voiced Nitetrippler persona. Also known as Mac Rebbenack, he's since been embraced as a New Orleans ambassador, his distinctive voice and elegantly rollicking piano style synonymous with the city. In March, the good doctor will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. His most recent recording, *Tribal*, has been nominated for a Best Contemporary Blues Album Grammy, and he also earned a nomination for the BMAs' Pinetop Perkins Piano Player of the Year. Mac will share the bill at the Sunrise Theater with New Orleans funk forefathers



The Neville Brothers, whose legacy dates back to influential bands such as The Wild Tchoupitoulas and The Meters. With the talents of keyboardist Art, saxman Charles, percussionist Cyril and angelic-voiced Aaron, the Nevilles bring a wealth of experience to classics such as "Fire on the Bayou" and "Junk Man," all on 2010's *Authorized Bootleg*. **BW**

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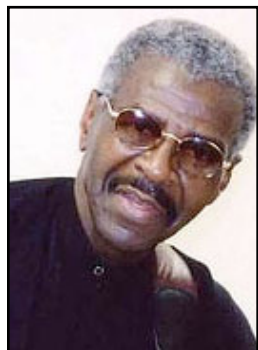
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**RAY "BLUES MAN" SCHINNERY
ALLIGATOR ALLEY BLUES FEST & CONFERENCE
AFRICAN HERITAGE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER
MIAMI/JAN. 28-30**

Ray "Blues Man" Schinnery has been a stalwart of the Big Apple blues scene for decades. Growing up in New York City, the St. Thomas native dedicated his life to the blues after hearing B.B. King in 1952. He's since performed or recorded with Jimmy Witherspoon, Big Mama Thornton and Big Maybelle, and toured Europe with The Holmes Brothers. Schinnery boasts a classic Memphis blues guitar style with more than a hint of B.B.'s style and swing, and a rich and soulful voice somewhat reminiscent of Little Milton's. Schinnery will headline the inaugural Alligator Alley



Blues Fest and Conference, which will also feature guitarists Terry Evans and Saron Crenshaw; saxophonists Ray Gaskins and Houston Person; and Miami soul greats Betty Wright and Bobby Stringer. Subtitled "From Slavery to Hip Hop," the event traces the continuum of African-American music. (Alligatoralleybluesfest.art.officelive.com.) BW

**CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE & INSIDE STRAIGHT
MINIACI PAC, FORT LAUDERDALE/JAN. 8**

It's hard to believe that Christian McBride is only 38, since he's already been the preeminent bassist in jazz for two decades. The Philadelphia native moved to New York City to study at Juilliard in 1989, but soon found himself playing acoustic bass on recording sessions with Freddie Hubbard, McCoy Tyner and Joe Henderson. During the past decade, he's switched between electric bass (his original instrument) and acoustic as both a session player and as a leader of his own groups. His latest ensemble, Inside Straight, is an acoustic quintet comprising pianist Eric Reed, vibraphonist Warren Wolf, saxophonist Steve Wilson and drummer Carl Allen. The group's Mack Avenue Records debut, 2009's



Kind of Brown, featured a handful of McBride compositions ranging from bluesy to swinging, along with select covers like Hubbard's ode to basketball great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, "Theme for Kareem." Expect even more dramatic renditions in this South Florida Jazz presentation. (Southfloridajazz.org) BM

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KEVIN MAHOGANY
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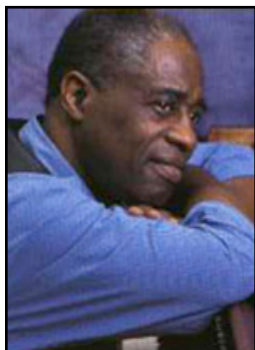
If ever a jazz vocalist sounded like his name, it's Kevin Mahogany. The Kansas City native's baritone is deep, dark and bluesy, yet he's also one of the best rapid-fire scat singers in recent jazz history. And certainly Mahogany, now a Miami resident, knows his jazz history—one of his primary influences is the late Joe Williams. Mahogany's 11 CD releases include tributes to both Charles Mingus and Johnny Hartman, and the vocalist's 2005 recording, *Big Band*, showcases his interpretations of standards associated with influences like Williams, Jimmy Rushing and Billy Eckstine—"Don't Get Around Much Anymore," "It's Alright With Me," "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)." Mahogany appropriately portrayed KC blues shouter Big Joe Turner in Robert Altman's 1996 film *Kansas City*, and the vocalist's style has been accentuated by his experience playing piano, clarinet and, also appropriately, baritone saxophone. **BM**



re-recording career started in the 1950s, and his early trips between the Windy City and New York City created a playing style that employs blues, bop and swing. Between the pianist's touch, taste and technique, and Person's update of Gene Ammons' robust tenor tone, the JAMS anniversary celebration should be one swinging party. (Jamsociety.org) **BM**

NORMAN SIMMONS with HOUSTON PERSON
HARRIET HIMMEL THEATER,
WEST PALM BEACH/JAN. 26

Pianist Norman Simmons was born in Chicago between World Wars I and II. So the 81-year-old has been around long enough to play with a host of historic vocalists (Joe Williams, Carmen McRae, Ernestine Anderson, Anita O'Day, Betty Carter) and saxophonists (Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, Lester Young, Johnny Griffin, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis). For this Jazz Arts Music Society (JAMS) performance, Simmons and his trio add another jazz icon in Houston Person. The tenor titan, who's five years younger than Simmons, boasts a 44-year recording résumé that continues through 2010's *Moment to Moment*. Simmons' own



recording career started in the 1950s, and his early trips between the Windy City and New York City created a playing style that employs blues, bop and swing. Between the pianist's touch, taste and technique, and Person's update of Gene Ammons' robust tenor tone, the JAMS anniversary celebration should be one swinging party. (Jamsociety.org) **BM**

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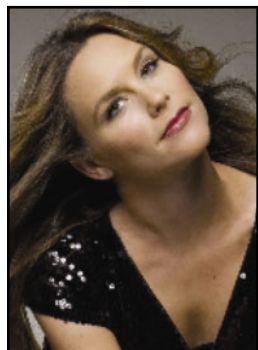
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**REBECCA RICHARDSON QUARTET
NAPLES BOTANICAL GARDENS/JAN. 16
BAYSHORE FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS,
SUGDEN REGIONAL PARK, NAPLES/JAN. 29-30**

Vocalist Rebecca Richardson earned her Bachelor's in Vocal Jazz Performance from Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, then moved practically as far away as possible in the continental U.S. when she settled in Naples. Before she left Seattle, the sultry, swinging vocalist met guitarist and Berklee College of Music graduate Dan Heck. The two united—in marriage and music—forming the foundation for groups led by each of the partners. Richardson's new *Stirred, Not Shaken* CD features both artists, plus other musicians with Seattle connections in pianist Dawn Clement, bassist



Geoff Harper and drummers Steve Korn and Byron Vannoy. Each contributes subtlety and sizzle to standards like "Tea for Two," "My Romance," "Teach Me Tonight" and "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea." Richardson's vocals echo the influence of the late Julie London, along with modern, breathy touches à la Diana Krall and Norah Jones. **BM**

**DOUG AND JEAN CARN REUNION
DAYTONA MUSEUM OF
ARTS & SCIENCES/JAN. 23**

With their groundbreaking early '70s recordings for the Black Jazz label, Doug and Jean Carn had a deep impact on the jazz world. The couple's mixture of soul and funk with sophisticated jazz arrangements was a sensation—they outsold Dave Brubeck and Ramsey Lewis, according to a 1974 *Billboard Magazine*—with their hauntingly beautiful renditions of tunes like Wayne Shorter's "Infant Eyes" and John Coltrane's "Naima." Jean Carn's voice could go from ethereal to hornlike, as she invested plenty of feeling into her husband's poetic lyrics, and even her wordless vocals were rich with meaning. Doug Carn is a refreshingly original



keyboardist, providing a varied tonal palette on piano, electric piano and organ. Albums such as *Infant Eyes*, *Revelation* and *Spirit of the New Land*, influenced a generation of jazz artists and the jazz market in general. The couple split up, with Jean going on to solo success on the R&B charts, while Doug has been an educator and sought-after sideman. **BW**

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