



# JAZZ & BLUES

F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES

MARCH  
2012

FEATURED ARTIST

**RANDY BERNSEN**

VIJAY IYER • BETH MCKEE • MAGIC SLIM • CHICK WILLIS  
DIANA KRALL • PAUL GEREMIA • JAMES COTTON  
SKYLA BURRELL • KEVIN EUBANKS • WYNTON MARSALIS  
ANTONIO ADOLFO / CAROL SABOYA GROUP  
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\$5 Cover - Cash Bar

**WEDNESDAYS**

**March 7 & 21**

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**Saturday, March 10, 11am-5pm**

**Downtown Ft. Pierce**

**Mardi Gras Carnival**

- Mark Green & Rowdy Roosters
- JS New Orleans Quintet
- Delta Dave & Lagoon Squad

**March 26-30, 11am-2pm**

**Downtown Ft. Pierce Marina**

**JAZZ WEEK Brown Bag Lunch Jazz Concert Series**

**3/26 Mark Green & Rowdy Roosters**

**3/27 James McCreavy Quintet w/vocalist Lisanne Lyons**

**3/28 Errol Rackipov Trio w/vocalist Nicole Yarling**

**3/29 FPJ&BS Ensemble w/guest vocalists**

**3/30 Orquesta Nostalgia w/Jim Hayward 12-piece Latin jazz group**



Founded in 1996, the Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster a greater awareness and love for Jazz and Blues by exposing these great American art forms to the community at large and to the schools.



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# RANDY BERNSEN

by Bill Meredith

## WHEN FT. LAUDERDALE-BASED GUITARIST

Randy Bernsen released his 1986 Zebra Records debut, *Music for People, Planets and Washing Machines*, it set the tone for a career of unpredictability. The album featured Bernsen playing a guitar-synthesizer to mimic instruments like keyboards, horns and strings within an all-star cast—bassist Jaco Pastorius, keyboardist Herbie Hancock, drummer Peter Erskine—that surprised even him by participating.

Thirty-six years later, Bernsen still switches between guitar and guitar-synth on his new EP *APptearer*. The four-song disc features a cameo by Medeski, Martin and Wood keyboardist John Medeski, but it's primarily a trio recording with brothers Uzi Nizri (Hammond organ, piano) and David Nizri (drums, percussion).

"They moved to South Florida from Israel around 15 years ago," Bernsen says of the siblings, "and they make me feel like I have a solid band for the first time in years. They actually love to rehearse, and we recorded at their Ft. Lauderdale home studio, The Bunker. And I'm so glad we could get Medeski, the prince of jam bands. He used to sneak into the Musicians Exchange in Fort Lauderdale to hear me and Jaco when he was a teenager."

A native of Dover, Mass., the 57-year-old Bernsen moved to Ft. Lauderdale in 1969. Pastorius' reputation was expanding beyond South Florida, and he and the budding guitarist forged a friendship that lasted until his tragic beating death in 1987. Pastorius appeared on Bernsen's stellar sophomore effort, *Mo' Wasabi*, along with saxophonists Wayne Shorter and Michael Brecker and drummer Steve Gadd. But when the guitarist's 1988 release *Paradise Citizens* failed to make the same impact — despite another star-studded cast — Zebra terminated Bernsen's contract.

Undaunted, he's since released independent gems such as *Live @ Tavern 213* in 1997 and *Live in San Miguel de Allende* in 2001. At the same time, he earned a commercial aviation license, following in the flight path of his father, an Eastern Airlines pilot. Between flying for a Learjet company, and touring places like India and Malaysia, Bernsen has



some trouble remembering when his last CD came out.

"I believe that was *Be Still and Know*, an acoustic record from about four years ago," he says. "*APptearer* was supposed to be straight-ahead jazz, but I always loved organ trios like Jimmy Smith's. So, when I decided I wanted to add improv-funk elements, the format made sense."

The New Orleans-tinged opener, "Bookface," features a horn section with saxophonist Richard Brookens, a longtime musical partner who sometimes expands Bernsen's trio into a quintet (along with vibraphonist Errol Rackipov). The Medeski-aided "Groove On" is dedicated to Joe Zawinul, the late Weather Report keyboardist who employed Bernsen in his Zawinul Syndicate touring band and on the 1992 CD *Lost Tribes*. The funky "Ama-zone" and swinging closer "I-Shuffle" are trio pieces.

Bernsen's other regular musical outlet is the decidedly larger Jaco Pastorius Big Band. With guest bassists like Richard Bona, Jimmy Haslip, Oteil Burbridge, Christian McBride and Victor Wooten, the Peter Graves-

# RANDY BERNSEN

conducted ensemble has paid homage to its visionary namesake on two CDs, *Word of Mouth Revisited* (2003) and *The Word is Out!* (2006).

"I recently recorded a new version of 'Come On, Come Over' with Will Lee and Peter Erskine for [the big band's] third CD," Bernsen says of the funk-soul tune that appeared on Pastorius' debut album. "It'll probably also include live tracks from a recent Japanese tour, and come out over the summer. Most of my important musical studies were at the school of Jaco."

Which makes it all the more surprising that Bernsen's latest recording has no bassist. "My next recording will be a full band with both keyboards and bass," he says. "But on this one, Uzi's covering the bottom and sounding great. I'm really enjoying the trio format and the camaraderie. He and David are like family."



The Randy Bernsen Group performs at the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale on March 9. For more information, call 954-771-8840 or visit [Crpc.org](http://Crpc.org). The group also plays March 16 and March 30 at the Grateful Palate in Fort Lauderdale. Call 954-467-1998 or visit [Thegratefulpalate.net](http://Thegratefulpalate.net).

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- Mar 15 Karen Lovely
- Mar 16 Davina & the Vagabonds
- Mar 17 Johnnie Marshall
- Mar 23 Sarasota Slim
- Mar 24 Larry Garner
- Mar 29 Bobby Messano
- Mar 30 Bill 'Sauce Boss' Wharton
- Mar 31 Joey Gilmore



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## CHICK WILLIS

**BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/MARCH 3**

Georgia blues vet Chick Willis is at his gritty best on last year's *Let the Blues Speak for Itself*. The singer and guitarist's vocals may be filled with churchy intensity, but his playing burns with pure hellfire and his songs are hardly angelic. "The only thing you left me to remember you by," he sings on one tune, "were your black drawers and your picture on the wall." In "On Your Way Fishing," he asks guest guitarist and vocalist Travis Haddix to "stop by and give me a ride. I ain't caught nothing in North Chicago, so I'm goin' to the South Side." The cousin of R&B singer Chuck Willis, Chick Willis honed his sizzling guitarwork and risqué humor on countless chitlin' circuit stages over the past six decades. His raunchy 1972 underground hit "Stoop Down Baby" earned him plenty of notoriety, as well as his nickname: The Stoop Down Man. He's also earned more recent accolades, such as *Living Blues'* Best Live Performer and the Jus-Blues T-Bone Walker Award. **BW**



## SKYLA BURRELL BAND

**BEACH SHACK, COCOA BEACH/MARCH 3**

**EARL'S HIDEAWAY, SEBASTIAN/MARCH 4**

**BOSTON'S, DELRAY/MARCH 6**

**GUANABANAS, JUPITER/MARCH 7**

**BONITA BLUES FEST, BONITA SPRINGS/MARCH 10**

Guitarist and vocalist Skylar Burrell boasts a good-rockin' blues sound designed to get hips shakin' and heads boppin'. Her brass-knuckle vocals are filled with sass, and her textured lead lines, which she trades with collaborator Mark Tomlinson, generate plenty of heat. Cue up any track from 2011's *Real Love*, and you'll be transported to the sawdust-covered dance floor of a rowdy roadhouse. She and her bandmates deliver barroom blues, rockabilly and jump-swing with equal authority. She made a demo at age 18 with the Heartbreakers' Mike Campbell, and earned acclaim and airplay with her 2004 studio debut *Working Girl Blues* and 2006's *Living Day to Day*. The Burrell Band pride themselves on their road-warrior rep and seasoned chops. **BW**



## jazz project

3/9 | 7:30 PM

### Rose Max

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3/24 | 9 PM

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# S P O T L I G H T

## PAUL GEREMIA

EUROPEAN STREET CAFE, JACKSONVILLE/MARCH 6  
BIG EASY, HOLLYWOOD/MARCH 11

## SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE, TAMPA/MARCH 13

The depth of feeling conjured by country-blues master Paul Geremia comes directly from the source. As a young artist, he opened for legendary figures Son House, Skip James, Pink Anderson and Yank Rachell. The guitarist and vocalist developed great fluency in pre-war Delta and Piedmont styles and wrings wry humor and heartbreak from classic tunes and authentic-sounding originals. Geremia mesmerizes with his nimble picking and slidework, and his sourmash vocals sound like



they could have been lifted from a dusty 78. His own recordings are equally stellar, and *Love, Murder & Mosquitos* and *Devil's Music* belong in any country-blues lover's collection. Last year's *Love My Stuff*, a compilation of live performances, should earn a spot alongside them, with personalized renditions of gems by many of the genre's greats. **BW**

## MAGIC SLIM & THE TEARDROPS

BONITA BLUES FEST, BONITA SPRINGS/MARCH 10

When it comes to hard-driving Chicago blues, Magic Slim & the Teardrops have few living rivals. Morris "Magic Slim" Holt migrated from rural Mississippi to the Windy City in 1955, where he joined his mentor, Magic Sam Maghett. Slim, 74, still eschews guitar effects for a sound as raw as the wind off Lake Michigan while singing in a voice full of blustery bravado. On his 2010 recording *Raising the Bar*, he tackles classic blues by Roosevelt Sykes, Robert Nighthawk and Elmore James, and comes up with his own expertly realized takes on the genre. This past summer, he was honored with the dedication of a



Mississippi Blues Trail Marker in Grenada, at the former site of his mom's restaurant, Queen's Eat Shop. Slim left behind more than family in the country; when he was 13, he lost the pinky on his right hand to a cotton gin. But, like Django Reinhardt and Jerry Garcia, he didn't need 10 fingers to carve out his legend. **BW**

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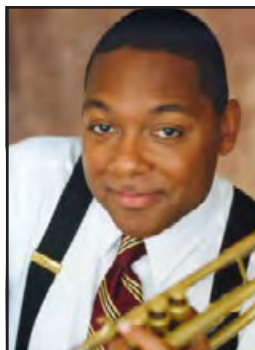
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**JAMES COTTON SUPERHARP BAND**  
**SOUTH MIAMI-DADE CAC, CUTLER BAY/MARCH 17**  
 James Cotton's love affair with the harmonica began early. Orphaned at age 9, he became a protégé of harp king Sonny Boy Williamson. By the time he was in his teens, Cotton had recorded for Sun Records and hosted a daily radio program. But his greatest fame came when he was recruited by Muddy Waters, with whom he played for 12 years. Cotton built a reputation as a dazzling instrumentalist and first-rate showman, his performances with his own bands captivating rock and blues audiences alike. While his voice has been sandpapered to a whisper — he leaves the singing to bandmates these days — Cotton's harmonica sound at



age 76 remains one of the genre's purest. His 2010 Grammy-nominated CD, *Giant*, led to three *Living Blues Critics' Poll* awards: Male Blues Artist of the Year, Most Outstanding Harmonica Player and Album of the Year. In addition to his Miami gig, Cotton will headline the Tampa Bay Blues Fest in April. **BW**

**JALC ORCHESTRA WITH WYNTON MARSALIS**  
**FLORIDA THEATER, JACKSONVILLE/MARCH 4**  
**KRAVIS CENTER, WEST PALM BEACH/MARCH 7**  
**ARSHT CENTER, MIAMI/MARCH 9**  
**STRAZ CENTER, TAMPA/MARCH 10**  
 Rather than taking most of the solos and standing up front, Wynton Marsalis will be seated in the back row, largely leaving the spotlight to fellow trumpeters like Ryan Kisor and Marcus Printup, or saxophonists Sherman Irby and Ted Nash. Marsalis has been at the helm of the cohesive 15-piece big band, the resident orchestra at Jazz at Lincoln Center, since 1988, the year after he co-founded the center's jazz program. At age 50, Marsalis remains the band's musical



director and JALC's artistic director, while pursuing high-profile projects alongside Eric Clapton, Willie Nelson and Norah Jones. The Orchestra plays jazz standards, classical pieces and compositions from Marsalis' 40-year recording career, many of which are compiled on the recently released two-disc *Music of America* collection. **BM**

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 Jimmy Hall is the lead singer, saxophonist and harmonica player for Southern Rock legend Wet Willie. Hall has shared stage and studio with The Allman Brothers, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Jeff Beck Group and many others. "Jimmy Hall is the hardest performer to watch on stage that I have ever worked with." —Gregg Allman  
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## KEVIN EUBANKS

**JAZZ IN THE GARDENS, SUN LIFE STADIUM,  
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After several solo releases, and banner work in the band of British bassist Dave Holland (who now employs his brothers, trombonist Robin Eubanks and trumpeter Duane Eubanks), guitarist Kevin Eubanks traveled to Hollywood to become part of the *Tonight Show* band in 1992. When bandleader and saxophonist Branford Marsalis left the show in 1995, Eubanks took over as Jay Leno's musical foil until 2010. His clean, George Benson- and Wes Montgomery-influenced tone played as well on television as on his latest release, *Zen Food*, and Eubanks' working band



shares elements of his East Coast/West Coast persona. Berklee-educated drummer Marvin "Smitty" Smith followed him west to the *Tonight Show* band in 1995, and saxophonist Bill Pierce holds the woodwind chair at the heralded Boston school. Keyboardist Gerry Etkins and bassist Rene Camacho round out Eubanks' quintet. **BM**

## VIJAY IYER TRIO

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE  
MARCH 24**

The son of immigrants from India, Vijay Iyer's early studies were on violin, not piano. And like peers Hiromi (from Japan) and Jean-Michel Pilc (France), Iyer's ancestry factors into his inclusion among the transitional new wave of pianists interpreting the traditional American art form. "The Star of a Story," from his new CD *Accelerando*, is based on a staggered chord sequence that owes as much to Middle Eastern as Western influence. The track also features Stephan Crump's loping bass line, which anchors drummer Marcus Gilmore's shimmering shell game with the



tempo on his cymbals. The trio's debut CD, *History*, was a 2010 Grammy nominee, and Iyer recently won the 2012 Greenfield Prize through the Philadelphia-based Greenfield Foundation. That commission will allow him to further his forward-thinking vision of classically trained musicians blending improvisation with structure. **BM**

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**MARCH 14 THE RESOLVERS**

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**MARCH 17 ST PATRICKS DAY PARTY  
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**MARCH 18 GARY FARR  
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**MARCH 21 THE RESOLVERS**

**MARCH 22 MICHAEL BURKS**

**MARCH 23 JP SOARS & THE RED HOTS**

**MARCH 24 SISTA MARY BETH**

**MARCH 25 SMOOTH JAZZ CONCERT  
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# S P O T L I G H T

## DIANA KRALL

KRAVIS CENTER, WEST PALM BEACH/MARCH 26  
VAN WEZEL HALL, SARASOTA/MARCH 27

RUTH ECKERD HALL, CLEARWATER/MARCH 28  
One of the few established jazz superstars, Diana Krall gained mainstream acceptance with her husky and sensual contralto vocals. But it was her piano playing that earned her a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston. In fact, she's featured as a pianist on Paul McCartney's new standards collection, *Kisses on the Bottom*. Krall and an all-star ensemble performed portions of the album with Sir Paul at last month's Grammy Awards ceremony. The album was produced by Tommy LiPuma, who's done similar



work with Krall from 1994 through her latest effort, the lush, Grammy-winning 2009 Brazilian CD *Quiet Nights*. The wife of chameleonic pop star Elvis Costello, Krall also contributed a cover of "Simple Twist of Fate" to the new collection *Chimes of Freedom: The Songs of Bob Dylan, Honoring 50 Years of Amnesty International*. BM

## ANTONIO ADOLFO/CAROL SABOYA GROUP

MINIACI PAC, FORT LAUDERDALE/MARCH 10  
Literally the girl from Ipanema, vocalist Carol Saboya is the daughter of Brazilian pianist Antonio Adolfo. Adolfo led his own trio during the 1960s while also touring with vocalists Elis Regina and Milton Nascimento. Saboya's soaring voice has been featured on seven solo CDs since her U.S. recording debut on Sergio Mendes' Grammy-winning 1992 release *Brasiliero*. Adolfo has 25 albums under his name, and Stevie Wonder, Earl Klugh, Herb Alpert and Dionne Warwick have recorded his compositions. Featuring Saboya on two tracks, Adolfo's latest release, *Chora Baião*, is a compelling blend of originals and covers that melds Brazilian



and traditional jazz forms. Adolfo, who has a self-titled music school in Hollywood, will back Saboya with drummer Rafael Barata, guitarist Claudio Spiewak, bassist Jamie Ousley and percussionist Carlomagno Araya. Barata will conduct a workshop at the Adolfo school on the day of the show; visit [Antonioadolfo.net](http://Antonioadolfo.net). BM

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<b>MARCH 16</b> Nouveaux Honkies	<b>MARCH 17</b> Biscuit Miller & The Mix	<b>MARCH 23</b> Bobby Nathan Band
<b>MARCH 24</b> Derek Mack Band	<b>WEDNESDAYS</b> PrimeTime (Latin Jazz)	<b>THURSDAYS</b> & 3/30 David Shelley & Bluestone

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## MARCH LINEUP

- Fri. 3-2 Rita Wilburn  
Sat. 3-3 David Shelley & Bluestone
- Fri. 3-9 Jamie King Colton  
Sat. 3-10 Big Poppa E  
**Mon. 3-12** Stu Grant's **Big Band Night** with  
the **John Branzer Orchestra**
- Fri. 3-16 **Miss Tess & the Bon Ton Parade**  
Sat. 3-17 Blues Dragon  
**Mon. 3-19** Stu Grant's **Big Band Night** with the **Orqestra Nostalgia**
- Thu. 3-22 Heidi & the EICats "Jam Session" **New**  
Fri. 3-23 Jamie King Colton  
Sat. 3-24 Joey Gilmore  
**Mon. 3-26** Stu Grant's **Big Band Night** with the **Bobby Rodriguez Jazz Orchestra**
- Thu. 3-29 Heidi & the EICats "Jam Session" **New**  
Fri. 3-30 Piano Bob's 88s Trio with Bobby Nathan  
Sat. 3-31 Joel Da Silva



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## BETH MCKEE

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, ORLANDO/MARCH 3  
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SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE, TAMPA/MARCH 10  
BACK ROOM, DELRAY/MARCH 30

Beth McKee's music is steeped in the fertile soil of the Southland. The pianist, accordionist, singer and songwriter has traced a path from Jackson to New Orleans to Austin to Oak Ridge, Fla., where she now resides. And her roots are definitely showing on *Next to Nowhere*, her latest CD, which brims with brackish bayou water and conjures steamy nighttime rambles on Bourbon Street. The fingerpopping "Not Tonight, Josephine" features her rolling piano style à la



Marcia Ball and Dr. John, and more than a hint of swamp-pop king Bobby Charles' influence. On the infectious "River Rush," McKee expresses a sentiment familiar to many of us who choose to remain near the coast: "Every time I feel my burden/ Is too much for me to stand/ Pack it up and take it to the river/ It's how I get back to who I am." BW

## PONCHO SANCHEZ & TERENCE BLANCHARD TRIBUTE TO CHANO POZO & DIZZY GILLESPIE

MIZNER PARK AMPHITHEATER, BOCA/MARCH 16

Most modern tribute recordings attempt to increase sales through their inherent familiarity, leaving creativity on the back burner. But the recent *Chano y Dizzy!* release by percussionist Poncho Sanchez and trumpeter Terence Blanchard pays tribute to the evolution of a modern style more than a top-selling artist. Sure, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie was a star in the 1940s, but he was also the bebop ambassador who helped create modern Latin jazz by collaborating with Cuban conga master Chano Pozo. Accompanied by a burning ensemble, Sanchez and Blanchard



pay homage to their ahead-of-their-time counterparts on updates of classics like "Groovin' High" and "Manteca," while offering glimpses into their own musical personalities. In concert, audiences will witness the timeline that links Pozo to Sanchez and Gillespie to Blanchard more than 60 years later. BM

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**PUBLISHER:** Charlie Boyer  
charlie@JazzBluesFlorida.com

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR:** Bob Weinberg  
bob@JazzBluesFlorida.com

**ART DIRECTOR:** Hope Jason  
hope@JazzBluesFlorida.com

**CONTRIBUTING WRITER:** Bill Meredith

**PHOTO CREDITS:** Vijay Iyer Cover & Spotlight by Jimmy Katz

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