

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



LAUREN MITCHELL BAND • JAMES CARTER ORGAN TRIO
GARY LANGFORD & THE JAZZ PROJECT • JEFF JENSEN
HUSKY BURNETTE • ADDISON FREI • RACHELLE COBA
JOHN GOODWIN-FALLSTROM SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT CONCERT
MEM SHANNON & THE MEMBERSHIP BAND • NICOLE HENRY

# NATE NAJAR

hu Bill Meredith

#### GROWING UP IN ST. PETERSBURG,

guitarist Nate Najar, 32, played rock music in his early teens. Then everything changed, courtesy of guitar instructor Frank Mullen. Since deceased, Mullen had studied with heralded Washington, D.C., classical guitar teacher Sophocles Papas, who'd also instructed nylonstring jazz icon Charlie Byrd.

The experience profoundly changed Najar's career. Now based in South Pasadena, about three miles from St. Pete, he plays finger-style on nylon-string guitars and honors the deep influence of the late Byrd whenever possible. "I only started playing classical guitar in my early 20s, after starting my jazz studies as a teenager," Najar says. "Frank was a wonderful teacher who often brought a classical guitar to my lessons. He talked me into trying one and opened me up to a new world of music, especially Charlie Byrd."

The predecessor to Najar's brand-new Brazilian-themed CD Aquarela do Brasil was 2012's Blues for Night People: The Nate Najar Trio Remembers Charlie Byrd, both released by Candid Records. The latter's cover photo depicts Byrd and Najar, dressed in suits and holding their guitars, appearing to stand together on the same cobblestone street in the Georgetown area of D.C.

"I would never have presumed to do that Photoshopped cover," Najar says. "I always loved that picture of Charlie, and knew that it had never been used as an album cover. Then Charlie's widow Becky says to me, 'Nate, I have a great idea.' She scanned the original, sent it to me, and said, 'You should put yourself on the cover with Charlie.' Considering that it was her idea, I consented, and I think it turned out great." Najar also played one of Byrd's own instruments, a 1974 Ramirez 1A classical, on the CD.

The two most recent of Najar's five CDs feature the veteran D.C.-based rhythm section of bassist Tommy Cecil and Byrd's drummer of 20 years, Chuck Redd. Three tracks on *Aquarela do Brasil* utilize the versatile Redd on vibraphone while Brazilian wizard Duduka da Fonseca (of Trio da Paz) plays drums, and two songs feature tenor saxophonist Harry Allen.

For concerts that aren't in the D.C. vicinity, like Najar's forthcoming Florida shows, his trio

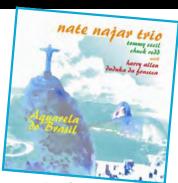


is usually rounded out by Tampa/St. Pete-area bassist Alejandro Arenas and drummer Mark Feinman. "They're younger, but they're terrific," the leader says. "For a long time I wouldn't hire them, because they had practically become the house rhythm section where I live, and I prided myself on having my own band. But they were so good that they wore me down, starting about a year ago. They've done great work, have been easy to travel with, and I've been able to mold them into being able to play in a trio with a

# NATE NAJAR

classical guitar, perhaps the quietest instrument on the planet. It's very difficult to amplify."

Most classical guitars are played without amplification, and their nylon strings are quieter than the steel strings used on electric and other acoustic guitars. Najar's instrument, custom-made by Italian luthier Daniele Chiesa, is fitted with a customized pickup by Rich Barbera to offset that. His bandmates also respect issues of volume. Both Cecil and Arenas play acoustic upright basses; Redd and Feinman are accomplished with quieter brushes, as well as drumsticks; and all the musicians understand the necessity of dynamics on material from Brazilian to Byrd and beyond.



If he had it to do over again, Najar says he wouldn't even play guitar. "Frank Mullen made me realize how much more piano-like a nylon-string guitar is when played finger-style," he says. "I should've played piano."

Figuratively, he does — just on a different form of stringed instrument.

The Nate Najar Trio will perform on July 5 at the Arts Garage in Delray Beach (Artsgarage.org) and on July 13 at the Timucua White House in Orlando (Timucua.com). Visit Natenajar.com for more information.













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#### LAUREN MITCHELL BAND TWO BROTHERS, PUNTA GORDA/JULY 4 DUNEDIN SMOKEHOUSE/JULY 5 JR'S OLD PACKINGHOUSE CAFE, SARASOTA/JULY 11 BLUE ROOSTER, SARASOTA/JULY 18

BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/JULY 26 Coming off a tour that took them as far north as Ontario, Sarasota's Lauren Mitchell Band should be plenty warmed up by the time they return to Florida. The group is traveling behind their aptly titled 2013 CD, *Please Come Home*, a smoldering collection of old-school blues and soul that showcases Mitchell's churchtrained, powerhouse vocals. The Columbus, Ohio, native relocated to Sarasota about a decade ago and has put together a superb band anchored by pianist/



Hammond B-3 ace Mike "The Professor" Hensley. Mitchell nods to heroes such as Koko Taylor, Etta James and Bessie Smith, her heated contralto striking deep on the Chicago classic "Little by Little" and the gospel blues "Do You Know." Also check Youtube for her and Henslev's incredible street duet of "Please Come Home " BW

TA1029

# GUPERB ARTISTS & EVENTS PRECENTS WWW.OrienteBand.com DITIST 2014... FRI 4 The Loews Hemisphere Lounge, 9pm 16th Street & Collins Ave., Miami Beach THU 10 Live Music Thursdays on the Plaza, 5pm 5E Financial Center, 200 S. Biscayne Blvd., Miami FRI 11 Soyka Restaurant "Livingroom Jazz" 9pm www.soykarestaurant.com Thursdays Eddy Balzola @ Le Chat Noir, 9pm 2 South Miami Avenue, Downtown Miami http://lechatnoirdesalis.wix.com/le-chat-noir Monday July 14th - Jeanette Pina's Birthday Jam For A Cause! @ The Open Stage, Coral Gables, 8pm Magnificant Jazz, World Music & Production Services

#### GARY LANGFORD & THE JAZZ PROJECT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP, GAINESVILLE/JULY 8

Trumpet/flugelhorn master Gary Langford has more time to play concerts than in previous decades. From the 1970s through the 2000s, Langford was the University of Florida's director of jazz studies and assistant director of the school of music, as well as the director of UF's concert band, marching band and jazz band. Possessing a lithe yet powerful tone, Langford displays a stylistic range that extends from swing and bebop to fusion and modern jazz, a versatility he's no doubt imparted to students and bandmates. Check out the hip arrangements of Gordon Goodwin's "Sing, Sang, Sung" or Matt Harris' "The Last Dive," as played by



the Langford-led EOS Big Band at May's Gainesville Jazz Fest, on YouTube. The threetime UF Teacher of the Year award winner is as accomplished a player as he is an educator — he earned a Masters of Music in Trumpet Performance from the renowned University of North Texas, and was part of its famed One O'Clock Iazz Lab Band. BM



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Tues	1	Lather	Up	8pm

Wed 2 Breeze 8pm

Thur 3 Crazy Fingers 8pm

Fri 4 July 4Th BBQ Featuring Twocan Blue & Friends 3pm

Sat 5 Keep The Faith - Bon Jovi Tribute 8pm

Mon 7 Biscuit Jam With Matt Farr & The Funky Biscuit All Stars 8pm

Tues 8 The Randy Bernsen Trio 8pm

Wed 9 Brendan O'Hara 8pm Thur 10 Crazy Fingers 8pm

Fri 11 A Blues Guitar Showcase Featuring The Jeff Prine Group 9pm

With Special Guests Matt Schofield & Friends

Sat 12 Supernatural & China Grove - Doobie Brothers/Santana Tribute 8pm
Mon 14 John Goodwin-Fallstrom Music Scholarship Benefit Concert 8pm

Tues 15 Bobby Lee Rodgers Jazz Trio 8pm

Wed 16 Funkabilly Playboys 8pm

Thur 17 Bubba's Birthday - Crazy Fingers With Special Guests AlyCat 8pm

Fri 18 The Blue Fire Band 9pm

Sat 19 Jackiem Joyner 8pm

Mon 21 Biscuit Jam With Mark Telesca & The Funky Biscuit All Stars 8pm

Tues 22 Aaron Lebos Reality 8pm

Wed 23 Breeze 8pm

Thur 24 The Heavy Pets With Special Guests Juke 8pm

Fri 25 Big Sam's Funky Nation With Special Guest Selwyn Birchwood 9pm

Sat 26 Damon Fowler & Albert Castiglia 5pm
With Special Guests David Shelley & Bluestone

Mon 28 Biscuit Jam With Rich Friedman & The Funky Biscuit All Stars 8pm

Tues 29 JP Soars Gypsy Jazz Band 8pm

Wed 30 Riverdown - Bike Night 8pm

Thur 31 Peoples Blues of Richmond 8pm

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#### JOHN GOODWIN-FALLSTROM MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT CONCERT FUNKY BISCUIT, BOCA RATON/JULY 14

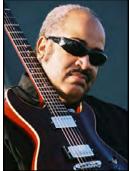
Fretless bassist John Goodwin was primarily interested in orchestral music. That is, until he heard an orchestra within the two hands and four strings of bass virtuoso Jaco Pastorius in the early '70s. Thus inspired, the Broward County-based musician, who died last year at age 60, honed his technique and tone and worked alongside elite SoFla musicians (Melton Mustafa, Othello Molineaux, Randy Bernsen) and beyond (Eric Clapton, Blood, Sweat & Tears). When he tired of touring in 1985, Goodwin started an international sheet-music transcription and manufacturing company in Hollywood, Fla. Its clients



included Madonna, Warner Bros. Publications, and Columbia Pictures Publications. proceeds from this concert - with Mustafa, Ira Sullivan, Jimi Ruccolo, Keith Cronin and a host of area all-stars will benefit the John Goodwin-Fallstrom Music Scholarship Fund at Florida Memorial University in Miami.

#### MEM SHANNON & THE MEMBERSHIP BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/JULY 5

Mem Shannon burst onto the national blues scene in 1996 with A Cab Driver's Blues, his fresh and frequently hilarious debut CD. His humorous, insightful songs grew out of years of experience as a cabbie in New Orleans. And followup discs such as Mem Shannon's 2nd Blues Album and Spend Some Time With Me displayed increasing musical and lyrical sophistication. But seeing Shannon on-stage may be a revelation to those who've only heard his albums. While his hangdog vocals remain the same, his lead guitarwork is versatile and scorching, whether he's unleashing dancefloor-filling funk riffs or reducing his fingerboard to kindling on a slow-burning blues. Shannon's 2007



release Live: A Night at Tipitina's shows just how sharp Mem & the Membership are in front of an audience, as they revisit gems such as "Payin' My Dues," "I Smell Something," and Such Thing (as too much funk)" from Shannon's impressive self-penned songbook. Great music and great entertainment from a true original. BW





321-783-4559 heidisjazzclub.com Club Hours: Wed - Sun 5pm - 1am



#### NICOLE HENRY JAZZIZ NIGHTLIFE, BOCA RATON/JULY 23

Fresh from the University of Miami, Pennsylvania native Nicole Henry was acting, doing voiceovers and working in the Florida Grammy office when a talent rep stopped in, looking for a backing vocalist for a group coming through town. Since landing that gig a dozen years ago, Henry has become an international sensation. Her 2004 debut CD, *The Nearness of You*, put her on the map beyond South Florida, spawning subsequent tours through Chicago, Tokyo, Paris, Moscow, Shanghai and New York. Influences such as Ella Fitzgerald, Nancy Wilson and Billie Holiday echo through Henry's voice. And while she often sings jazz standards, Henry's latest release, the live 2013 CD *So Good, So Right*,



finds her interpreting pop classics by Joni Mitchell, James Taylor and Bill Withers. For her show in Boca, she'll be accompanied by pianist Pete Wallace, bassist Eric England and drummer Mike Piolet, along with a horn section comprising saxophonist McCormick. trumpeter Cisco Dimas and trombonist Ruben

# and trombonist Ruben Caban. BM LATIMOR Caban. BM Now Booking shows CONTACT: Larg-EL 813.671.8572 ybor43@aff.net

#### **HUSKY BURNETTE**

LANDSHARK CAFÉ, JACKSONVILLE BEACH/JULY 10 Hailing from the foothills of Chattanooga, Tenn., Brian "Husky" Burnette plays Mississippi Hill Country blues with grungy authority. The textured guitarist and vocalist descends from rockabilly royalty, namely Johnny and Dorsey Burnette, but he sounds more like the musical offspring of Mississippi groove masters Junior Kimbrough or RL Burnside. Burnette sings in a moonshine-marinated growl that's perfectly suited to his gas-fire guitar and the menacing, insistent rhythms of bassist Jody Hatfield and drummer Yattie Westfield. Tunes such as "Beat & Lowdown" and "Dazed Away," from Burnette's 2013 CD Tales From East End Blvd., are raw enough to require a tetanus shot, but Burnette also



can fingerpick some lonely and haunting acoustic blues. Having paid his dues as a sideman or opening act over the years, the guitarist's taken inspiration from stage mates T-Model Ford and Kenny Brown as well as Guy Clark and Shooter Jennings. Check him and his trio this month at the Landshark in Jax Beach BW



# JULY AT

## arts garage



Saturday 07/05/2014 8: 00 PM Nate Najar | Jazz



Thursday, 07/17/2014 7:30 PM Jazzrats | Jazz



Sunday, 07/19/2014 8:00 PH Tito Puente Jr | Global Invasion

Saturday, 07/18/2014



friday 07/25/2014 8:00 PM Aaron Lebos | Fusion



Saturday 07/26/2014 8:00 PM Diego Figueiredo with special guest Rose Max | Fusion



Saturday 07/31/2014 7:30 PM Gianni Luciano Bianchini | Jazz



Saturday 08/02/2014 8:00 PH Lauren Mitchell Band | Blues



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#### RACHELLE COBA BAND THE SMOKE INN, DELRAY BEACH/JULY 4 THE DUBLINER, FT. LAUDERDALE/JULY 6

As with so many guitarists, a teenage Rachelle Coba was led into the blues life after hearing Buddy Guy. The former University of Miami student applies classical training to her blues artistry as she fingerpicks on a Strat, but she's more B.B. than Beethoven. Coba's searing six-sting skills have been recognized by Matt "Guitar" Murphy, with whom she's toured, as well as by Super Chikan, Maria Muldaur and yes, Buddy Guy. Coba also sings with great feeling and soul, and writes excellent songs, as can be heard on her recent CD Mother Blues. With the exception of the groovin' Sam Taylor Jr. title tune, the album comprises Coba



originals, which reveal deep roots in Memphis soul and Chicago blues. And while she can growl like Koko Taylor, Coba possesses a sweet voice that resonates with power à la Bonnie Raitt. And original numbers such as "Never Been to Memphis," "Chicago" and the slow-burning "Telephone Song' have the ring autobiography. BW

# JULY 6 LAUREN MITCHELL BAND JULY 13 JOEY GILMORE JULY 20 DADDY MACK **JULY 27 SELWYN BIRCHWOOD** BLUES BAND 1405 INDIAN RIVER DRIVE, SEBASTIAN (772) 589-5700 www.earlshideaway.com OPEN 7 AM 7 DAYS A WEEK **ENTERTAINMENT • GREAT FOOD** FULL LIQUOR LOUNGE . PACKAGE STORE OU CAN'T BEAT THE FEELING AT EARL'S!

#### ADDISON FREI

#### TIMUCUA WHITE HOUSE, ORLANDO/JULY 14

The University of North Texas and its surrounding Dallas/Fort Worth area have produced decades of jazz professionals (see the Spotlight on Gary Langford, elsewhere in this issue). Count Addison Frei among their number. To look at the Lawrence, Kan., native, is to see a 20-something jazz pianist who earned a UNT bachelor's degree two months ago. But listen to his music and you'll hear swing and sophistication beyond his years. Frei's ballad "Delicate Fog" recently won the 2014 Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award, following on the heels of his 2013 win with the burning "The Grind." And, in 2012, he won the Jacksonville Jazz Piano Competition, despite



being the youngest competitor. A member of the famed UNT One O'Clock Lab Band, who was recognized by the faculty as last Outstanding year's Undergraduate Jazz Studies Student, Frei is working on a solo debut to follow up the outstanding Flow CD by his AMP Trio with bassist Perrin Grace and drummer Matt Young. BM



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#### JEFF JENSEN

#### BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/JULY 18

If you can judge a performer by the company he keeps, you might note that former West Coast blues-guitar wizard Jeff Jensen has recruited harmonica expert Brandon Santini and boogie-piano whomper Victor Wainwright to join him on his 2013 CD Road Worn and Ragged. And the Rev. Billy C. Wirtz helped him write the autobiographical "Good Bye Portland," a farewell tune to the City of Roses where Jensen lived before departing for Memphis three years ago. Possessing an extensive library of licks, Jensen has been impressing audiences and fellow musicians alike. He's opened for B.B. King, toured with Santini, and received raves and blues and roots charts space for recordings such



as 2007's The Jeff Jensen Band and 2009's I'm Coming Home. The big-bearded bluesman also sings with plenty of conviction on tracks such as "Brunette Woman" and the ballad "River Runs Dry," both from Road Worn and Ragged. He continues to tour behind the disc, with bassist Bill Ruffino and drummer Robinson Bridgefort. BW



#### JAMES CARTER ORGAN TRIO CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH/ JULY 31

James Carter, 45, is among the most-versatile jazz saxophonists of his generation. The Detroit native has performed straightahead, avant-garde and funh alongside Wynton Marsalis, Lester Bowie and John Medeski among others. His most recent project is an organ trio. Organist Gerard Gibbs holds down the bottom end with his left hand, establishing rhythms with drummer Leonard King Jr. while engaging Carter's melodies with his right. Carter formed the trio 10 years ago, but its only release thus far is the 2011 CD At the Crossroads. Yet, possible material for their live program is vast, from that disc's originals and standards to



tunes from throughout Carter's discography, including Django Reinhardt homages from the bandleader's 2000 classic Chasin' the Gypsy. The multireedist not only plays soprano, tenor and baritone saxes. also sopranino and contrabass, flute, and bass and contrabass clarinets — all of which often make concert appearances. BM









