

JAZZ & BLUES

AUGUST 2011

FLORIDA

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



SWEET CLAUDETTE



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DOUG DEMING
& THE JEWEL TONES



NATE NAJAR



PAULETTE DOZIER



RJ HARMAN



SHANNON POWELL



HOT TUNA



TROY ROBERTS



VICTOR WAINWRIGHT

SILVANO
MONASTERIOS



WINNING SPINS

by Bill Meredith

VENEZUELA-BORN, MIAMI-BASED

keyboardist Silvano Monasterios arrived full of promise when he first traveled to the United States in 1989 to play the Miami Jazz Festival. Much of that promise was in classical music, since he'd trained at the heralded Jose Angel Lamas Conservatory in Caracas. But his side studies in jazz proved formidable enough to earn him the Miami Jazz Fest's "Best Soloist Award."

The following year, Monasterios immigrated to the U.S. after receiving a scholarship from Miami-Dade College. He earned another from the prestigious University of Miami jazz program, and by the time the keyboardist received his Bachelor of Music in 1995, he was already an area standout. Even while playing in R&B bands like Gary King & the Dream, Monasterios' unique jazz voice was evident.

When he started his solo recording career in 1998 with the CD *Roads Not Taken*, Monasterios was also well on his way toward the Master of Music degree he's since earned from UM. As a member of Sammy Figueroa's band, Monasterios earned even greater notice. His masterful playing and songwriting on the percussionist's Grammy-nominated 2007 Savant release *The Magician* attracted the attention of jazz-industry veteran Joe Fields, who executive-produced Monasterios' new Savant debut, *Unconditional*.

The pianist's compositions are both heady and hearty, a rare combination in any genre. He dedicates the opening "Farmacia del Angel" to his father, the doctor whose own piano playing at home first inspired Monasterios. Borrowing its title from a poem by Colombian author Juan Manuel Roca, the piece blends Brazilian and Venezuelan rhythms with a swinging undercurrent. Strong playing by tenor saxophonist and comfortable foil Troy Roberts—each plays in the other's band—buoys the effortless solos of Monasterios and bassist Jon Dadurka.

Monasterios takes to heart the advice to "write about what you know." The track "Monsieur Petit Noir" is named for his dog, a mixed breed with no recognizable lineage—not unlike, at times, the pianist's music itself. Building in intensity, the song shimmies between several odd and even time signatures



SILVANO MONASTERIOS

as Monasterios leaves holes for the brief yet captivating solos of drummer Rodolfo Zuñiga and percussionist José Gregorio Hernández.

Monasterios continues the familiarity theme on the two-part "A Song for Jacques." The suite honors jazz DJ Jacques Braunstein, whose weekly FM radio show in Venezuela also inspired his love for the genre. Part one is a short, somber prologue showcasing the pianist's touch and a stately bowed bass line by Dadurka. The conclusion is as vibrant as its predecessor is dark, as Monasterios and Roberts engage in joyous interlocking lines propelled by the rhythms of Dadurka, Zuñiga and Hernández.

Phil Markowitz's composition "Sno' Peas" is the disc's only non-original cut. Discovered by Monasterios on Bill Evans' *Affinity* album, it's performed as a playful romp, with bassist Gabriel Vivas stepping in for Dadurka, as he does on the leader's gorgeous title ballad, as well. Monasterios' arrangement surfs between a swinging traditional feel, with Roberts playing soprano sax, and an insistent Venezuelan *gaita zuliana* rhythm.

WINNING SPINS

Roberts returns to his tenor for "Forgotten Gods," written by Monasterios while on the Mayan Riviera. Sounding inspired, the pianist offers a cascading solo that displays every facet of his musicianship. This, in turn, inspires the saxophonist to unforeseen heights.

For the concluding "Black Saint," Monasterios plays electric keyboards to pay homage to Miles Davis and his influential plugged-in keyboardists: Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett and Joe Zawinul. The results echo Miles' *Bitches Brew*, as Monasterios fuses a Venezuelan *chimbangle* rhythm with African and traditional jazz elements. Even as he salutes the fusion era, he keeps his eye on what appears to be a very bright future.



Silvano Monasterios performs with the Troy Roberts Quartet at 7PM on Aug. 12 at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach. Call 305-673-7530 or visit Bassmuseum.org. Follow Monasterios to the Van Dyke Café at 9PM and hear him with Sammy Figueroa & His Latin Jazz Explosion.

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DOUG DEMING AND THE JEWEL TONES
MATTISON'S CITY GRILLE, SARASOTA/AUG. 1, 26
PALLADIUM, ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE/AUG. 5
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/AUG. 6
OCEAN BLUE, SARASOTA/AUG. 19, 27
CORK'S, BRADENTON/AUG. 21, 28

Detroit-born, Bradenton-based Doug Deming clearly has an affinity for the jump blues and jazzy, late-night licks of T-Bone Walker. His expertise, and that of his topflight band The Jewel Tones, have kept Deming in demand as a sideman. He's worked with legends such as Louisiana Red and the late A.C. Reed, as well as Motor City blues royalty, such as Alberta Adams and Johnnie Dyer. Naturally, Deming learned plenty at the side of these masters, as evidenced by his instrumental

fluency and his sly and soulful tenor vocals. His 2009 CD, *Falling Through the Cracks*, showcased his deeply rooted original material. The guitarist was ably accompanied by a right-on-time rhythm section and a rotating roster of harmonica players, including Kim Wilson, Dave Morris and Dennis Gruenling. Gruenling will be performing with the 'Tones on the dates above. **BW**



HOT TUNA
VINYL MUSIC HALL, PENSACOLA/AUG. 3
PLAZA THEATRE, ORLANDO/AUG. 4
REVOLUTION, FORT LAUDERDALE/AUG. 5
SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE, TAMPA/AUG. 6

Steady As She Goes is not just the title of Hot Tuna's latest recording, it also describes the band's prime directive. Guitarist Jorma Kaukonen and bassist Jack Casady were childhood friends, playing music together while growing up in Washington, D.C. They'd go on to worldwide fame as the heart of The Jefferson Airplane, splintering off into the old-timey-blues-inspired side band Hot Tuna. A masterful finger-style guitarist with a warm and rootsy voice, Kaukonen delved into the songbooks of the Rev. Gary Davis, Robert Johnson and Mississippi

John Hurt, accompanied by Casady's liquid electric basslines and musicians including fiddler Papa John Creach and harmonica Will Scarlet. *Steady...* is Hot Tuna's first new studio recording in 20 years, showcasing their mellow, laid-back songcraft in acoustic and electric settings. The Florida shows will be acoustic, with Jack and Jorma joined by mandolin wiz Barry Mitterhoff. **BW**



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**PAULETTE DOZIER
EL BAR, CORAL GABLES/AUG. 3, 10**

The term "Renaissance woman" might have been coined with Miami vocalist Paulette Dozier in mind. Besides singing for audiences around the world, she's worked as a model, actress, voice-over artist, dancer and talent coach. Dozier's warm alto is perfectly suited for ballads. Her scatting ability shows a penchant for jazz, and she also displays elements of R&B, cabaret, Motown and international music. The native Floridian even learned to speak—and sing in—Spanish and Italian during trips to South America and Europe. Her 2005 CD *With You* features a medley of Marvin Gaye tunes, a dark reading of Peggy Lee's "Fever" and a version of Burt Bacharach's "Alfie."



Coral Gables audiences might also hear tracks from Dozier's 2007 release *Over & Over Again*, including standards like the title track, Van Morrison's "Moon Dance" and Al Green's "Let's Stay Together." The singer will be joined by South Florida all-stars Brad Keller on piano, Dave Tomasello on bass and James Cotmon on drums. **BM**

**SHANNON POWELL QUARTET
CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
AUG. 4**

If the headline atop your website's home page reads "The World's Greatest Drummer," you have set the bar stratospherically high. Yet Shannon Powell doesn't disappoint. The 49-year-old New Orleans native's online address, after all, reads "The King of Tremé," signifying his upbringing in the Crescent City's storied neighborhood. That's where he began playing at age 6, at the First Garden Christ Church, shortly before becoming an accompanist at Preservation Hall. Taught by Danny Barker, a singer and multi-instrumentalist in Cab Calloway's band, Powell went on to study at the Black Academy of Arts, where he played alongside



fellow students Wynton and Branford Marsalis. From 1987 to 1992, Powell recorded and toured with another New Orleans export, Harry Connick Jr., leading to work with Dr. John, Diana Krall and John Scofield. For this concert, Powell will lead a world-class quartet comprising Steve Masakowski on guitar, Jason Marsalis on vibes and Roland Guerin on bass. **BM**

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DARYL SHERMAN & JAY LEONHARDT
ROYAL ROOM AT THE COLONY HOTEL,
PALM BEACH/AUG. 5, 6, 12, 13

An accomplished pianist, Daryl Sherman's best-known for her light, almost childlike voice. Influenced by Mildred Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald and Blossom Dearie, the Rhode Island native moved to New York City in 1974 while in her mid-20s. Once there, the quirky singer was taken under the wings of pianist Dick Hyman and bassist Milt Hinton, among others, and even fronted clarinetist Artie Shaw's orchestra before starting her solo career in the mid-1980s. Her accompanist for her shows in Palm Beach, versatile bassist Jay Leonhardt, hails from Baltimore but also moved to the Big Apple in his 20s. Since then, he's worked with



everyone from Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett to Sting and Queen Latifah. Sherman and Leonhardt likely will perform standards from the vocalist's 2006 CD *Guess Who's in Town* (which also featured Leonhardt) at the Royal Room, an intimate 90-seater that has become a favorite for cabaret acts. **BM**

NATE NAJAR TRIO
THE ALE AND THE WITCH, TOWER PLAZA
COURTYARD, ST. PETERSBURG/AUG. 6

Whether playing electric or acoustic instruments, most jazz guitarists use single-note phrases to emulate horn players. Not Nate Najjar. The St. Pete-based guitarist phrases more like a pianist on a nylon-stringed classical guitar—a rarity in jazz—and the results are often classic. Najjar's trio includes upright bass and drums, and their concerts usually display material by jazz innovators from Bill Evans and Django Reinhardt to Antonio Carlos Jobim and beyond. Najjar's latest CD, *Until Now*, features several of his compositions plus a gorgeous, jazz-meets-classical arrangement of Michael Jackson's "Human Nature." His trio also has Christmas and live



recordings to their credit, all displaying the leader's unique approach and the influence of his hero, Charlie Byrd. Najjar performed during a 2008 salute to Byrd at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and will do so again alongside drummer Chuck Redd's ensemble at the Monty Alexander Jazz Fest in Easton, MD, over Labor Day Weekend. **BM**

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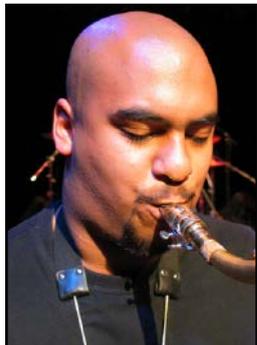
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**TROY ROBERTS QUARTET
BASS MUSEUM OF ART, MIAMI BEACH/AUG. 12
VAN DYKE CAFE, MIAMI BEACH/AUG. 25.**

Listening to saxophonist Troy Roberts on tenor and soprano conjures images of a young Wayne Shorter, rather than a musician who cut his jazz teeth in Australia. The Perth native earned a masters degree from the University of Miami (where he's since become a member of the adjunct faculty) after relocating to the U.S., and has worked with the likes of John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, Lauryn Hill and Silvano Monasterios. Roberts plays in the Miami-based Monasterios' band, and the pianist returns the favor in the saxophonist's quartet. The group will be playing music from Roberts' third CD, the 2008 release



The XenDen Suite, at the Bass Museum in Miami Beach. The simpatico musicians will have their hands full in re-creating Roberts' unique eight-part suite (originally performed by a jazz quartet with a string quartet). Roberts and Monasterios may also perform tracks from Roberts' latest CD, *Nu-Jive*, on which the pianist is also featured. **BM**

**RJ HARMAN
HARRY'S CIGAR AND BREW, OVIEDO/AUG. 20**

With a name like RJ Harman, you'd better be able to bring it on harmonica. After all, comparisons will be made to two of the baddest harpoon men around, James Harman and RJ Mischo. But the Longwood, Florida, resident more than holds up his end of the moniker, displaying a cutting tone and phrasing rooted in Walters big and little, Sonny Boys I and II, Sonny Terry and Kim Wilson, among others. In fact, his technique and showmanship was impressive enough to win the annual Florida Harmonica Championship two years running (2009-2010). The cat also boasts some soulful pipes, as heard on his quite-original sounding "Bottlecaps," his cover of Sonny Boy II's



"Nine Below Zero" and his frenetic take on "Rocket 88." Harman received his first harmonica as a gift from his granddad on his 13th birthday. Now in his early 20s, he's shared stages and traded licks with harp wizards Jason Ricci and Phil Wiggins and performed with the Rev. Payton's Big Damn Band and Selwyn Birchwood & Deuces Wild. **BW**

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SWEET CLAUDETTE BAND

BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/AUG. 25

Sweet Claudette Harrell-Manning is a classic blues singer. Hailing from Detroit, quite naturally she brings a great deal of soul and funk to the proceedings. But she's deeply immersed in blues tradition, as can be heard on tracks from her 2009 recording *That Man's Got to Go*, including her racy "23 Hours & 45 Minutes," the slowburning "Ain't Nobody's Bizness," and the jumping "Meet Me." The album ascended into the top 20 of the *Living Blues* Airplay Charts. Sweet Claudette followed it this year with *Shaking Up the Bucket*, which revisits repertoire staples such as the self-determined "Ain't Gonna Wash Your Dirty Clothes" and the slinky "Sending You to Man School."



No wonder she was a favorite at the late Willie King's Freedom Creek Festival in her native Alabama, as well as in the Motor City, where last year she was nominated for a Detroit Black Music Award. Having just celebrated her 75th birthday, Sweet Claudette swings down to Tallahassee before heading back to Tuscaloosa for the Johnny Shines Festival. **BW**

VICTOR WAINWRIGHT AND THE WILDROOTS

BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/AUG. 27

PARADISE BAR & GRILL, PENSACOLA/AUG. 28-30 Victor Wainwright's thundering boogie-woogie piano and partying blues growl mark him as a true descendant of Leroy Carr, Professor Longhair and Dr. John. Dubbed the "Piana" From Savannah," which is also the name of his 2005 release, Wainwright hails from the picturesque Georgia town, although he's currently based in Memphis. But Florida also plays a role in the piano man's tale, as he hooked up with bassist and collaborator Stephen Dees, with whom he formed his band The Wildroots, in Ormond Beach. In 2009, their album *Beale Street to the Bayou* earned rave reviews and lofty space on the blues and roots charts. Earlier this summer, Wainwright and



co. followed it with the raucous *Lit Up*, a mix of jump blues, gritty Chicago-style blues, Memphis/New Orleans boogie and even some swampy, acoustic Delta blues. The latter style is heard to beautiful effect on tracks like "Dixie Highway," an ode to the sprawling asphalt ribbon that connects the South and Midwest—much like Wainwright's music. **BW**

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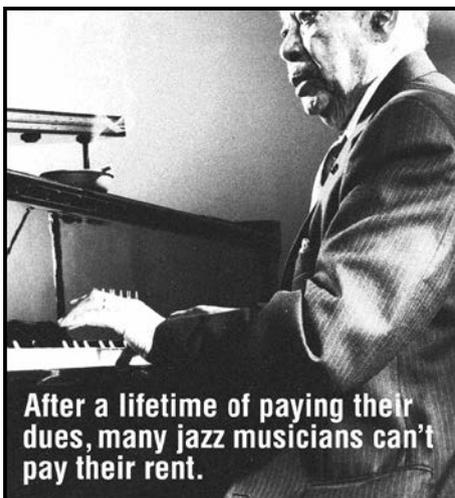
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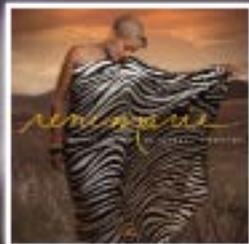
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