

JULY 2012

JAZZ & BLUES

F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



FEATURED ARTIST

**LYNNE
ARRIALE**



**TREVOR WATTS & VERYAN WESTON • SUGAR RAY & THE BLUETONES
MARC ANTOINE & BRIAN SIMPSON • JOHN MOONEY • ORIENTE
RICH DEL GROSSO & JOHN DEL TORO RICHARDSON • JESSE JONES JR.
RITA CHIARELLI • GARY CAMPBELL/MIKE GERBER DUO**

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NOT EVERY STAR NEEDS THE SPOTLIGHT.**

LYNNE ARRIALE

by Bill Meredith

MANY JAZZ STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY pianists, come to fruition by also studying classical music. It's a logical juxtaposition. Just as playing the classical canon's challenging pieces can advance a jazz musician's technique, jazz training can enhance a classical player's essential improvisational skills.

When Wisconsin native Lynne Arriale earned her master's degree in classical piano from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in 1991, she had only a casual knowledge of jazz. Nonetheless, she illogically switched career paths almost immediately thereafter, likening it to learning a foreign language. One could argue that had she known more about jazz, Arriale might have continued in her classical dialect. Yet the originals, standards and pop covers on her latest CD, the evocative *Solo*, offer the latest fruit borne of both that naiveté and her continued belief in herself.

"I actually had to learn how to improvise," Arriale says by phone from her home in Jacksonville, where she's Associate Professor of Jazz Studies and Director of Small Ensembles at the University of North Florida. "I knew almost nothing about jazz until my mid-20s, because my parents didn't listen to it. But as a little girl, I was able to play melodies by ear from the radio, mostly songs from musicals like *The Sound of Music*, *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*. I just couldn't come up with interesting chords yet."

That certainly isn't a problem now. Seven years of study at the conservatory with Rebecca Penneys taught Arriale the importance of singing the melodies to the tunes she was practicing, enhancing the melodic gifts she's showcased throughout a 20-year recording career. Important lessons were also imparted through her inclusion in the "100 Golden Fingers" ensemble. The all-star group, which featured jazz-piano legends Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, Kenny Barron, Monty Alexander, Harold Mabern, Junior Mance, Roger Kellaway, Cedar Walton and Ray Bryant, toured Japan in 1991.



"I got the call to do that with about two weeks' notice," Arriale says. "But listening to all these great veteran artists playing on the same piano I played on, night after night, taught me so much. Each had a different touch, which was evident in how different their sounds were. I learned a lot just being around them, as well. It was a great experience."

Arriale proved a quick study, winning the International Great American Jazz Piano Competition in 1993. Her debut CD, released that same year, was the start of a string of recordings revealing the influences of Keith Jarrett and Richie Beirach (pianist for Stan Getz and Chet Baker). Arriale's early recordings featured dynamic drummer Steve Davis. Bassist Jay Anderson joined later, solidifying the trio for notable releases like 2003's *Arise* and 2004's *Come Together*.

Arriale has lived in Florida for nearly the past decade, spending time in Tampa before taking the UNF job six years ago. She's shuffled her

LYNNE ARRIALE

personnel, as well. The combo for her 2009 recording *Nuance: The Bennett Studio Sessions* included veteran jazz stars in trumpeter Randy Brecker and bassist George Mraz. Also on-board was drummer Anthony Pinciotti, who stayed on for Arriale's 2011 gem *Convergence*, with saxophonist Bill McHenry and bassist Omer Avital.

Pinciotti and Avital now round out Arriale's touring trio, with McHenry joining them for quartet shows. But the pianist thought it was time to finally go it alone for *Solo* and for her current tour. The disc was actually recorded live, but with the audience mixed out, during a performance at the HCC Ybor Performing Arts Center in Tampa.

"About half of the CD was recorded in concert," Arriale says, "and the other half after the audience had left, so I could focus on recording over performance. There's a flexibility playing solo that doesn't exist with a band. It's just me trying to create an orchestra out of the piano."



Lynne Arriale performs 8 PM July 28 at the Arts Garage in Delray Beach. Call 561-450-6357 or visit Artsgarage.org.

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SUGAR RAY & THE BLUETONES BOSTON'S, BLUES FEST, DELRAY/JULY 1

Sugar Ray Norcia is blessed with a soaring tenor that's perfectly suited to jump blues and vintage R&B. Swinging like John Henry's hammer, the vocalist and harmonica man boasts deep roots in the Rhode Island blues scene. He's helmed incarnations of his Bluetones since the '70s; backed genre giants such as Big Joe Turner, Big Mama Thornton and Roosevelt Sykes; fronted Roomful of Blues in the '90s; and boasts a harp sound that borrows from Walters "Little," "Big" and "Shaky." On last year's *Evening*, Norcia and his Bluetones kicked it Chicago old-school, revisiting Willie Dixon's sultry "You Know My Love," and Johnny Young's boisterous "I'm Having a Ball."



And Norcia originals such as "Dear John" and "Dancing Bear (Little Indian Boy)" sound like classic jukebox fare. The current Bluetones are a blues lover's dream, with guitarist Monster Mike Welch, pianist Anthony Geraci, bassist Mudcat Ward and drummer Neil Govin. For more info, visit Bostonsbluesfest.com. BW

JOHN MOONEY BOSTON'S, BLUES FEST, DELRAY/JULY 2

John Mooney is among the most riveting blues performers in the biz. Having studied with Son House and Professor Longhair, Mooney culls from both of their styles, ripping deeply emotional Delta blues and feverish Bourbon Street boogies from electric, acoustic and steel-bodied guitars. His vocals are never less than urgent, a keening counterpart to his razor-edged slide, as Mooney laments lost love, examines existential matters and exults in earthly delights. Mooney not only updates tunes by his heroes and mentors, but he internalizes their essence on his original material, which can be heard on excellent albums such as



1996's *Against the Wall* or 2002's *All I Want*. His latest studio recording, 2006's *Big Ol' Fiya*, follows suit and includes Grayson Capp's "Drinka Little Poisen (4 U Die)," which was also used in HBO's *Treme*. And, as he has since 1977, Mooney performed at this year's New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Fest. Visit Bostonsbluesfest.com. BW

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S P O T L I G H T

BETTY FOX & THE DIRTY BASTARDS
YEOMAN'S ROAD PUB, TAMPA/JULY 6
THE ALLEY, SANFORD/JULY 14
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/JULY 17
SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE, TAMPA/JULY 21
ACE'S, BRADENTON/JULY 22

Not many young singers could do justice to the late Etta James. But Tampa's Betty Fox was asked to do just that when she performed during a tribute to the soul-blues icon at Skipper's Smokehouse in March. (Her heart-ripping read of "I'd Rather Go Blind" explains why.) Like many of her predecessors, Fox sang in church before getting bit by the blues. Her songbook includes Muddy Waters' "Champagne and Reefer" and Howlin' Wolf's "Built for Comfort," as



well as soul gems by Sam Cooke and Bill Withers. Helmed by exceptional guitarist Josh Nelms, Fox's Dirty Bastards are among the workin'est groups in the region. The singer also pens plenty of her own tunes, which can be heard on her new release *Down*. For more July shows, check Bettyfox.net. **BW**

RICH DEL GROSSO
& JONN DEL TORO RICHARDSON
BRADFORDVILLE BLUES, TALLAHASSEE/JULY 7
BOSTON'S, DELRAY/JULY 10

Just because he's steeped in the music of Johnny Young and Yank Rachell, don't think mandolin master Rich Del Grosso is mired in the past. On recordings such as 2010's *Time Slips on By*, the Houston-based blues vet reboots the classic stringband sound. Joined on that album by guitarist Jonn Del Toro Richardson, Del Grosso deftly plucks resonator mandolin and mandola, and the pair take turns on lead vocals throughout. Del Grosso boasts a Muddy-like growl on tunes such as "Mandolin Man," a shout-out to his mando mentors, while Richardson offers a heated soul-blues contrast.



The record generated raves as it scaled radio charts and won best-of-the-year accolades. For the sixth time, Del Grosso was nominated this year for a Best Instrumentalist Blues Music Award. Richardson snagged a BMA and a Grammy for his work on Pinetop Perkins' *Last of the Great Mississippi Delta Bluesmen*. **BW**

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 MUVICO BAYWALK 20, ST. PETE/JULY 22
 ALL SAINTS CINEMA, TALLAHASSEE/JULY 24

In 2010, big-voiced Canadian blueswoman Rita Chiarelli filmed a documentary at the notorious Angola Prison in Louisiana. While visiting the prison that once housed Leadbelly — and inspired many a blues lyric — she performed with inmates, some 90 percent of whom are serving life sentences. The results were captured on *Music From the Big House*, a film and accompanying soundtrack. The soulfulness of the inmates' performances obviously inspired Chiarelli, as did their powerful testimony about the transformative nature of music. The Juno and Maple Blues award-winning singer brings her movie, her message and her music to Florida this month. She'll answer questions and perform following screenings. BW



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S P O T L I G H T

MARC ANTOINE
SEA WALK PAVILION, JACKSONVILLE BEACH/
JULY 8 (WITH BRIAN SIMPSON)
CROWNE PLAZA, MELBOURNE/JULY 11

Paris-born Marc Antoine's finger-picked lines on a nylon-stringed acoustic guitar have made him a worldwide contemporary-jazz phenomenon. And he's certainly enhanced that rep by traveling to nearly every edge of the Earth. The classically trained guitarist relocated to London to work with Basia in 1988, then to Los Angeles (where he worked with Sting, Celine Dion, George Benson and Rod Stewart and contributed to soundtracks for films). Now based in Madrid, Antoine has released CDs from 1995's *Urban Gypsy* to 2010's *My Classical Way* that point toward autobiographical descriptions of both his wanderlust and hybrid style. In keyboardist Brian Simpson, Antoine finds a like-minded contemporary. The Illinois native also moved to LA to work with pop stars (Janet Jackson, Teena Marie, Sheena Easton); often tours to beachside locales; and serves as Dave Koz's musical director. **BM**



TREVOR WATTS AND VERYAN WESTON
TIMUCUA WHITE HOUSE, ORLANDO/JULY 8

British alto and soprano saxophonist Trevor Watts has never been constrained by jazz tradition. Having experimented with free improvisation in the mid-'60s with his groups Spontaneous Music Ensemble and Amalgam, Watts, 73, has introduced more rhythmic and melodic ideas for the past 40 years through the Moire Music Group. Early incarnations of that ensemble also featured British pianist Veryan Weston, who's a decade younger but likewise displays every jazz nuance from free to mainstream. The duo reunited for the 2002 CD *6 Dialogues*. A far-reaching series of musical conversations, the album further blurred the lines of demarcation, echoing Weston's avant-garde film experience and Watts' previous collaborations with independent thinkers like Archie Shepp, Don Cherry and Steve Lacy. Their 2011 update, *5 More Dialogues*, features Watts' soaring sax and Weston's harmonic vocabulary, and shows how free jazz can be. Attendees are encouraged to bring food and wine to this unique venue. Visit Timucua.com. **BM**



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ORIENTE

VAN DYKE, MIAMI BEACH/JULY 8
CAFÉ AT BOOKS & BOOKS, CORAL GABLES/JULY 13
ARTS GARAGE, DELRAY BEACH/JULY 14

After playing their first New Orleans gig at the Snug Harbor Jazz Club in 1994, Oriente added Crescent City spice to their already-potent gumbo of Cuban, jazz, funk, blues and Caribbean influences. As conceived by guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Eddy Balzola, the band's twist on Afro-Cuban roots-fusion created quite a stir in the French Quarter, as well as in South Florida, where their danceable, percussive and horn-driven sound has become a mainstay on club and festival stages. While Oriente suffered a huge loss with the sudden passing of bassist Pepe Aparicio last year, the multititled Balzola remains at the helm of a band whose members can list Mongo Santamaria, Jaco Pastorius, Celia Cruz and Cachao on their résumés. The lineup includes trumpeter Stuart King,



trombonist William Paredes, bassist Dony Felix, percussionist R a y m e r Olalde and drummer Orlando Machado. BM

GARY CAMPBELL/MIKE GERBER DUO

BASS MUSEUM OF ART, MIAMI BEACH/JULY 27

They both hail from the Midwest, but tenor saxophonist Gary Campbell and pianist Mike Gerber have become synonymous with Miami jazz during the past 30 years. Campbell honed his warm tone at Indiana University and the University of Miami before playing in the NYC loft scene with John Abercrombie, Jan Hammer and Bob Moses in the '70s. The saxophonist moved back to Miami in 1982, earning his Masters of Music from UM; teaching there and at Florida International University; and releasing a series of acclaimed CDs and educational books. He'll trade phrases with Gerber, whose musical genius was honed at UM with instructor Vince Maggio (who



calls him "one of the most spontaneously creative pianists in the country"). Blind and partially deaf since birth, Gerber attended UM off and on from 1969 to 1999 before graduating — long enough to acquire fans like trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, who has said the pianist's technique is "on the level of an Oscar Peterson or Art Tatum." BM

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SPOTLIGHT

JESSE JONES JR. DEERING ESTATE AT CUTLER, MIAMI/JULY 28

At age 68, saxophonist Jesse Jones Jr. is likely to have been there, done that in a circular jazz career that's taken the Miami native around the world and back. Listen to his composition "Cannon B," from his 2009 CD *The So Then Collection*, and you hear the hard-bop impact that fellow alto saxophonist Cannonball Adderley has had on his entire career. Yet Jones has also been a soprano and baritone saxophonist, flutist, scat-singer, clarinetist, comedian and tap dancer as he's traveled through North and South America, Russia, the Ukraine, Austria, Italy and Germany as a member of the United States Navy Show Band and as a touring artist. Jones returned to



Miami after attending Mississippi Valley State University, serving his four-year military term and a stint living in Boston, and he retired as a bailiff in 2010 after 23 years in the Miami-Dade County court system. When he's not touring with vocalist Allan Harris, Jones performs club dates and concerts throughout South Florida. **BM**

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