

JAZZ & BLUES

AUGUST 2017



F L O R I D A

FLORIDA'S ONLINE GUIDE TO LIVE JAZZ & BLUES



FEATURE:
BLUES ARTISTS

Cassie Keenum & Rick Randlett

JAZZ ARTISTS

GIANNI BIANCHINI

MARI MENNEL-BELL

TONY MONACO

JAVIER NERO

KATE REID

JACK SIMPSON

BLUES ARTISTS

MIA BORDERS

SEAN CHAMBERS

JOSH GARRETT

DONNIE MILLER

THE NEW 76ERS

REGI OLIVER

CASSIE KEENUM &

The unique acoustic duo of Cassie Keenum and Rick Randlett blends various styles of blues, drawn from each member's background and musical taste.

Though only together for two years, the duo's mix of traditional early blues and more beat-driven modern blues, combined with Keenum's strong soulful vocals won them the 2016 North Central Florida Blues Challenge. This allowed them to compete in the 2017 International Blues Challenge, held annually in Memphis, Tennessee. Over 260 musical acts participated in the competition,



AUGUST 3
SACHEL'S PIZZA
GAINESVILLE

AUGUST 4 & 26
MARION STREET
BISTRO BREWHOUSE
LAKE CITY

AUGUST 12
MOJO GRILL
ON 17TH
OCALA

AUGUST 20
NCFBS JAM HOST
DIRTY BAR
GAINESVILLE

AUGUST 27
ONE LOVE CAFÉ
GAINESVILLE

and the Keenum & Randlett duo placed in the semifinals. "I was shocked when we made it to the semifinals" Keenum said. "The caliber of musicianship at this event is staggering, and to be on the same stage as so many talented musicians was inspiring."

What got them there was their original sound and songwriting capability. Keenum and Randlett come from very different backgrounds and musical interests. Cassie Keenum was born in Kentucky, and was raised as the daughter of a baptist preacher. She began singing in church as a young girl, with gospel and bluegrass as early influences, and even considered becoming a choir director. Yet she always had a rebellious and independent attitude that would push her to fall in love with blues music and the lifestyle around it. After moving to Alachua, Florida 13 years ago, Keenum quit performing until five years ago when a friend took her to a music jam where her love for the blues was reignited. Keenum's vocals blend the soulful sound of early blues singers like Big Mama Thornton and Bessie

Smith with a powerful voice and dynamic range. Keenum also plays guitar with a finger-picking style reminiscent of earlier decades. Keenum is also the past president of the North Central Florida Blues Society and founder of the Women's Musician Group of Gainesville.

Rick Randlett has always been involved in music. As a teen, he played clarinet in his school band and learned guitar. In college, while pursuing an Education in Music degree, Randlett was introduced to rock blues artists such as Cream, The Yardbirds, and John Mayall... and a lifelong passion for the blues began. After moving to Florida in the 1980s, Randlett worked in country bands and added that influence to his guitar style. He has taught music professionally since college graduation, as well as being a performing artist and songwriter. He released his first CD in 1999 and produced three more in 2002, 2012 and 2014. As part of the duo, Randlett mainly performs on guitar and lap steel, but also plays other instruments including Dobro, pedal steel and mandolin. His vocal style is different from

& RICK RANDLETT

Keenum, sometimes approaching a low raspy growl reminiscent of Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker or Howlin' Wolf, which allows the duo's music a variety of styles.

Their diverse musical influences and songwriting styles blend to create their unique sound. Most of their music is comprised of original compositions, contributed separately or in collaboration. In September 2017, they will release their first CD as a duo, entitled *Hauntings*. This collection of songs explores the depth of acoustic blues and echoes the roots of the genre, with influences from both members. According to Keenum, they did not have a name for the CD while they were producing it. After reviewing the recordings, they realized that many of the songs dealt with life's decisions and the consequences of what we choose. Whether they be decisions about love, lifestyle

or family, the consequences can haunt us or bring regret, so they let the title reflect that. The songs reflect different genres of blues. Some are reminiscent of the early blues of the 1920s and 1930s, while others represent later generations with a strong and steady beat. Some of the songs have a haunting, soulful melody while others are upbeat with humor to the lyrics. Both Keenum and Randlett express their individual styles and talents on this CD, but it is the mixing of influences that creates a diverse collection of songs with a signature sound. More at cassiekeenum.com and rickrandlett.com.



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AUGUST 4

SELWYN BIRCHWOOD

AUGUST 11

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SEPTEMBER 1

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NOVEMBER 11

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AUGUST 3
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Tony Monaco

Mentored by the legendary Jimmy Smith in what is considered the more classic style, Tony Monaco does not swing, smolder or smoke. After taking up keyboards at age eight, Monaco's destiny as a jazz organist was sealed at age

12 when he first heard Jimmy Smith. An enthusiastic student, Monaco began working in jazz clubs as a teenager in his native Columbus, Ohio, guided by local organ gurus Hank Marr and Don Patterson. Four years later, Jimmy Smith invited Monaco to come play at his club in California. In April 2000, Monaco met fellow jazz organist Joey DeFrancesco, who offered to produce a debut CD for him. This collaboration resulted in the critically acclaimed *Burnin' Grooves*. The international success of the recording served as the catalyst for regional and national tours. Monaco has since released eight international releases and toured around the globe many times. He also toured and recorded with Pat Martino for more than two years. As an ardent student of the organ, it's no surprise that Monaco is an accomplished teacher as well. In addition to private students, classes and clinics, Monaco has produced a series of instructional DVDs titled "Playing Jazz Hammond." He continues to expand his catalogue, and gives one-on-one lessons online to students around the globe. Monaco is now Hammond/Suzuki's prime instrument endorser worldwide, and Executive Producer of the Summit Records subsidiary Chicken Coup Records. His latest release is 2016's *At One*, with Yosuke Onuma. More at b3monaco.com.



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Sean Chambers

Florida-born Sean Chambers began his blues career in 1998 when he toured with the

legendary Hubert Sumlin, as his guitarist and band leader, until 2003.

At that time, Britain's *Guitarist* magazine named Chambers "One of the top 50 blues guitarists of the last century." When *Ten Til Midnight* was

released in 2009, it garnered rave reviews and also appeared on the Living Blues chart for three months after its release. *Live from the Long Island Blues Warehouse* was released in 2011, and it hung on the Roots Music Report Weekly Blues Roots Chart for 15 weeks, and on the House of Blues Radio Chart for 11 weeks. The album was voted Best Live Blues Album of 2011 by Canada's Blues Underground Network and ranked as one of the Top 3 Live CDs in Germany by *Wasser Pravda* magazine. *Guitar Player* and *Vintage Guitar* magazines both ran feature stories on Sean in February, 2012. Chambers' 2013 release, *The Rock House Sessions*, received great reviews and was nominated for a Blues Blast Music Award in 2014 for Best Blues Rock Album of the Year. Just a few months back, Chambers released his latest CD, *Trouble & Whiskey*. The album is produced by Ben Elliott (Eric Clapton, Keith Richards, Billy Gibbons), and the core band on the album includes Michael Hensley on Hammond B3 and keyboards, Todd Cook on bass and Kris Schnebelen on drums. It too has been nominated for a Blues Blast Best Blues Rock Album of the Year award. More at seanchambers.com.

AUGUST 11
THE BARREL ROOM
FORT MYERS

SEPTEMBER 2
PORKYS
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Cassie Keenum & Rick Randlett

August 3
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Gainesville

August 4
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August 12
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NCFBS Blues Challenge

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Gianni Bianchini

AUGUST 4
ARTS GARAGE
DELRAY BEACH

International recording artist Dr. Gianni Bianchini is among the leading pianists, vocalists and organists on today's jazz scene. He has played, recorded or studied with such prominent jazz artists as Jason Marsalis, Arturo Sandoval, Joshua Redman, John Scofield, Stefon Harris, Kenny Werner, Duffy Jackson, and countless others across from around the world. Born and raised in South Florida, Bianchini began playing piano at age four. By the time he attended Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, he had already begun performing jazz concerts regularly in the South Florida area. After a year at Florida International University, where he was selected to play with Grammy winner Arturo Sandoval in the FIU big band, Bianchini accepted a scholarship from Berklee College of Music in Boston. After graduating magna cum laude with a bachelors degree, then obtaining a masters degree in Jazz Performance from New York University, Bianchini was awarded his Doctorate in Jazz Piano Performance from the University of Texas. He is currently on staff as a professor of jazz piano at Berklee College of Music's La Universidad de San Francisco de Quito, in Ecuador. Prior to accepting that position, Dr. Bianchini worked as a Teaching Assistant at the University of Texas and as an Adjunct Professor at New York University. In addition to teaching, Dr. Bianchini continues to perform with his piano trio, organ trio (GOT), and his quintet (The Quintini) across the globe. More at giannibianchini.com.






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- Aug 12 David Julia Band**
- Aug 18 Doug Deming & The Jewel Tones**
- Aug 19 Donnie Miller Band**
- Aug 25 Beautiful Bobby Blackmon**
- Aug 26 3rd Annual Greater SE Blues Harmonica Championships @4PM**
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Mia Borders

AUGUST 6 & 8
PARADISE INN
PENSACOLA BEACH

Born and raised in New Orleans, Mia Borders' original music genuinely reflects the oft-referenced melting pot of her hometown. Her catalogue of 11 releases spans from 2007's pop-rock-influenced debut *the EP*, through 2016's R&B LP *Fever Dreams*. Most, including *Fever Dreams* (which was nominated for four Best of the Beat awards and praised as "completely authoritative" by the Big Easy's own *Offbeat Magazine*) have been released through her own Blaxican Records label. Heralded locally and nationally as one of New Orleans' best talents, Borders has performed at such renowned venues as Essence Festival, House of Blues New Orleans, The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, and Brazil's Bourbon Street Fest. With musical influences from Stax to Motown and from the Beatles to The Police, Borders loves being in the studio, where writing and performing are joined by mixing and mastering. She enjoys the process so much that she hopes to begin producing other artists in the near future. Borders has an English degree from Loyola University, and she is putting it to good use... and not only via songwriting. She is also working on a memoir, a children's book and screenplays (she originally planned to study film away from her home state, but changed plans and stayed put after Hurricane Katrina). Her live shows are regularly praised as "deeply funky" (*USA Today*) and "confident and cool" (*The Times-Picayune*). Borders herself is "a chanteuse of the highest order," with "miles of style and charisma" (AXS.com). More at miaborders.com.



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AUGUST 7
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AUGUST 30
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Javier Nero

While in high school, Javier Nero was selected as lead trombonist in both All-State and All-Northwest Jazz Ensembles. He also served on the Gibson/Baldwin Grammy Jazz Ensemble, the Monterey Jazz Festival's Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, and well as the Jazz

Band of America. An accomplished trombonist, composer and arranger emerging from the Pacific Northwest, Nero attended Juilliard in New York City on the Irene Diamond scholarship. Nero was the winner of the 2011 International Trombone Association's Carl Fontana Jazz Trombone Competition. He was also selected to take part in the annual Betty Carter Jazz Ahead program, which focuses on composition and performance, and was awarded a Downbeat Student Music Award for his arranging skills. While at Juilliard, Nero made the most of his opportunities to study and play with many of the world's most distinguished jazz musicians, including: Steve Turre, Conrad Herwig, Benny Golson, Frank Wess, Carl Allen, Terence Blanchard, Mulgrew Miller, Christian McBride, Kenny Barron, Joe Temperley, and Lew Tabackin. Nero holds a Master of Music from University of Miami in studio/jazz writing, and is a recent recipient of a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a minor in classical trombone performance from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. Find him on [Facebook](#).



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Sept 8 & 9 A1A Ale Works, St Augustine

Regi Oliver

WITH SELWYN BIRCHWOOD

AUGUST 4
BUCKINGHAM
BLUES BAR
FORT MYERS

AUGUST 12
HIGH DIVE
GAINESVILLE

AUGUST 16
PARADISE INN
PENSACOLA

By age 10, Louisiana native Regi Oliver knew he would become a musician. By the time he graduated from high school, Oliver was playing woodwinds, brasswinds, mallet and tuned percussion. These skills earned him a full music scholarship to Louisiana State University. To further his quest for knowledge, Oliver cross registered and began directed studies with Alvin Batiste at Southern University, and also studied privately with Tony Digradi. In 1984, Oliver was awarded a full scholarship to the Berklee College of Music, and he graduated in 1987 with a major in Professional Music. While attending Berklee, Oliver studied classically with Joe Viola and studied jazz with Billy Pierce. He also toured, as a Berklee College representative, in student/faculty ensembles with faculty jazz trombonist, composer and arranger Phil Wilson. After a 1988 relocation to the San Francisco Bay Area, Oliver joined the summer jazz faculty at Stanford University's Jazz Workshop. For the next decade, Oliver focused on arts education, facilitation and administration, and his bands: Remote Control and Modern Art. After meeting his wife in 1998, the two resettled in Miami and Oliver began touring internationally, visiting 38 countries to date. He has played, recorded and toured with a long list of artists including Little Feat, The Pointer Sisters, Lucky Peterson, Chubby Carrier, Joey Gilmore, Selwyn Birchwood (as a member of the 2013 International Blues Challenge winning band), The Smokin' Torpedos and others. Currently residing in Central Florida, Oliver continues touring, performing, recording and honing his many and diverse talents as a musician, bandleader and producer. Find him on [Facebook](#).



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Mari Mennel-Bell

AUGUST 9
OLYMPIA THEATER
MIAMI

Holding a dual Masters degree in Elementary Education (K-6) and Music Education (K-12) and a

Masters degree in Social Work, Mari Mennel-Bell has worked for The Children's Television Workshop as a researcher, as an independent consultant on "Using Music to Teach Reading," and in a program designed to use music and lyric writing to motivate students with low reading scores. A 1998 relocation to Fort Lauderdale found Mennel-Bell with one child each in elementary school, middle, and high school. Their challenges inspired her to create an experiential, hands-on approach to academic skills. JazzSLAM (Jazz Supports Language Arts & Math) uses students' interest in music to help them understand the inherent underlying structures found also in language arts and math. JazzSLAM is approved by the Broward County School Board, and meets the Florida Sunshine State/Common Core Standards for Education. Mennel-Bell received 2014-2017 Herb Alpert Foundation grants from the Jazz Education Network, and was a clinician at the national 2015 JEN Conference. To date, JazzSLAM has offered presentations to over 40,000 students in both public and private schools. Mennel-Bell has also worked extensively as a solo pianist/singer and quartet leader. When she's not attending live performances in the community, she does duo and quintet work with Scott St. John and the Red Eye Band, and plays piano for the Beach Combers on the Hollywood Beach Boardwalk. As a

member of the world drumming group Mondo Vibe, she performed on African djembe drum. JazzSLAM presentations provide a lively and education experience for both students and faculty. More at jazzslam.com/aboutmari.



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AUGUST 26
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TALLAHASSEE

The New 76ers

Acoustic folk trio The New 76ers hail from North Florida. Kelly Goddard, rhythm guitarist and vocalist, is joined by husband Danny on lead guitar and vocals, and Kelly's brother, Brian Durham, on upright bass and vocals. As a family, they rely on instinct to meld vocals into harmonies and let them take the spotlight. Deeply rooted in Southern musical heritage, their original music aspires to move you physically and spiritually, evidencing their belief that music is, and always will be, a force to compel change. Their influences include folk, country, bluegrass, pop, rock, blues, R&B, and Neil Young. They've been busy on the state and regional festival circuit, and frequently contribute to other artists' performances and recordings. The New 76ers have released multiple recordings on their own Ping Records, including *I Try to Sing Along* (2010), their full-length debut *Superhighway* (2011), the *Demolition Man* EP (2013), and a second full-length record *In the Light* (2014). In addition, Ping Records boasts releases by other local artists such as Belmont and Jones, Belle and the Band and Dan Newman. Stripping music down to its purest form makes for a timeless, relevant and accessible listening experience. More at acoustic happiness.com.



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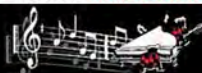
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Jack Simpson

It was 1967, the Summer of Love, and WKRT in Cocoa gave Jack Simpson an hour a week to play jazz from his own collection. Fifty years later, "Jazz on the Beach" is still on the air. Co-founder of the Space Coast Jazz Society and former Jazz on the Beach columnist for Florida Today, the 92-year-old Simpson brought his radio tenure to a close with the broadcast of one last live show July 29 on WUCF, Orlando's Public Broadcasting Service outlet. As a wireless mechanic in the Royal Air Force, he transformed himself into a disk jockey for fellow troops. After serving more than four years, he moved to New York in 1947 and became a manager at RCA television. In 1958, RCA moved him to Florida to run Cape Radio Communications. Less than ten years later, "Jazz on the Beach" was on the air. Simpson served as president of the Space Coast Jazz Society for a decade, and produced charity concerts in Brevard County for 30 years. Of Simpson, who helped her open her eponymous Cocoa Beach jazz club, Heidi Deleuil says, "He is like a walking library. He knows everything about jazz, which makes it easier. It's easier to talk to someone who knows it than to look it up on Google. He also pointed out some great, great musicians, who we have featured." He officially retired about two years ago, but he still enjoys performances at Heidi's. "I write a column for the Central Florida Jazz Society (newsletter), so I'm not fully retired," says Simpson. "It's been an interesting 50 years." Jack's final live broadcast was July 29, 2017 on WUCF 89.9 FM out of Orlando, the mainstay of jazz on the airwaves in central Florida.



Thanks, Jack!

AUGUST 19
BRADFORDVILLE
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Donnie Miller

Born Kerry Duane Johnson, Donnie Miller hit his stride when he discovered the Stratocaster and Marshall half-stack. In 1977 he formed a band, and then another, and then another, playing 250 shows a year for ten years before eventually releasing a star-studded solo album, *One of the Boys*, in 1990. Critically received, it was a synth-laden, golden-mullet, leather-pants slab of pop-metal wonder. One reviewer called it "the last great rock album of the 1980s." Then Miller severed a nerve and tendon on the palm of his left hand. Doctors told him he would never play guitar the same way again. They were right, but that tragedy turned into a life-altering blessing. Miller started playing blues as physical therapy, but it grew into a passion and a bona fide calling. With a completely different genre in his sights, he relocated to Nashville. 2014's *My Name is Kerry Duane Johnson* earned nominations for Best Live Blues Performer, Best Blues Band and Album of the Year in the Nashville Industry Music Awards. It was followed by Miller's latest release, 2015's *5 Times A Fool*. Donnie captains The National Blues Network on Facebook, YouTube and Google+, providing hours of classic archival content to thousands of online blues fans. He gigs nonstop, and he hosts blues jams around Nashville, providing stage time, support and encouragement for area blues veterans and newcomers. Catch him as he makes his club and blues festival rounds. More at donniemiller.bandcamp.com.



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Kate Reid

Jazz singer and pianist Kate Reid appears as a duo and with her trio and quartet at

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jazz venues in the Los Angeles and Miami areas. She can be heard performing with Miami pianists Martin Bejerano and Tal Cohen, guitarist John Hart and trumpet player John Daversa and his Progressive Big Band. A featured performer presented by the Miami Jazz Co-op, Reid's latest CD, *The Love I'm In*, features tenor saxophonist Ernie Watts and pianist Otmaro Ruiz. Like her previous release, *Sentimental Mood*, *The Love I'm In* features tunes from the American Songbook and has received extensive airplay on jazz radio stations throughout the US, Canada, Europe and South Africa. Working as a studio/session singer in Los Angeles, Reid's film credits include *Planes*, *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Oz-The Great and Powerful*, and *Men In Black III*. She has lent her voice to network television series, commercial spots for Ace Hardware, T-Mobile, Suntory Whiskey and backing vocals for artists MUSE, X Japan and Josh Groban. Reid also co-authored the *GLEE Vocal Method* book. Dr. Reid is associate professor of jazz voice in the Studio Music and Jazz department and Director of Jazz Vocal Performance at the University of Miami Frost School of Music. She is highly sought after as a guest artist, conductor and a returning clinician and adjudicator at jazz and choral festivals. More at katereidmusic.com.



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Josh Garrett

Josh Garrett is a songwriter, singer and guitar player from New Roads, Louisiana, just north of Tab Benoit's home of Houma, where Josh can often be seen on Benoit's Voice of the Wetlands festival stage. After picking up his father's guitar when he was 12 years old, he started writing songs soon after. And at age 24, he recorded his first album, *Changed Man*, and never looked back. Josh and his band traveled regionally to promote the album, and in 2008

he relocated to Nashville where he recorded his second album, *Live on*

Printer's Alley. Returning home to Louisiana, Josh began work on his third album, *String of Problems*, which hit No. 1 on the Roots

Music Louisiana Blues Charts, and hit the No. 1 spot two

weeks in a row on American Blues Scene's Blues Top

Five. While continuing to tour and promote his unique

brand of Louisiana roots and soul, Garrett recorded his

latest album, *Honey For My Queen*. Josh will tell you

that Honey "is about leaving... no... it's about coming

home." In reality it's a little bit of both. The groove captures

you right from the start as you travel with him to

find the balance between his love of the road and his love

of home. "I feel like I'm at the beginning of my career.

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lot more shows to play, and a lot more albums to record."

More at joshgarrett.com.



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