

31st Cambridge River Festival: Sat., June 5, Noon-6pm

CREATE STAGE: Jazz & World Music Schedule and Biographies

Location: Weld Boathouse at JFK Street

Hosts: Shelley Neill, Executive Director of the Multicultural Arts Center
Steve Schwartz, WGBH 89.7fm

Performers selected by Shelley Neill, Executive Director of the Multicultural Arts Center, home of The Jazz Club, which has been described by *The Boston Globe* as "a room to hear music where the views are unobstructed, the sound system is clear...impeccably achieved," and a place where some of the most dynamic and talked about jazz concerts of this past year have been presented. For information about upcoming events, or to join their mailing list by visiting www.cmacusa.org

12:00 **Valerie Stephens Group** – tribute to Nina Simone with vocalist Valerie Stephens, Kevin Harris, keyboard, Stanley Swan, drums, and Daniel Day, bass

Valerie Stephens Group soothes, teases, cajoles and thoroughly entertains the audiences with renditions of Blues, Jazz and Spoken Word at nightclubs and eateries throughout the area, such as The Beehive, Scullers Jazz Club, Regatta Bar, Ryle's Jazz Bar, House Of Blues, Les Zygomates, Limbo's, Slade's Bar & Grill, the former Bob's Southern Bistro, Mirage and Boston's Steppin' Out event as a featured artist. The Valerie Stephens Group has become a celebrated attraction at the Beantown Jazz Festival, Elma Lewis Playhouse In the Park concert series, the Lexington Arts Festival, Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center's Summer Concerts in the Courtyard, JazzBoston Festival and the Boston "Ahts" Festival. Her first CD *Potpourri* has received great reviews and can be heard locally on WGBH Radio Jazz and Blues programming. Production for her second CD, working title *Nina & Friends*, is underway. www.valeriestephens.com

1:15 **Yoron Israel Group** – tribute to David "Fathead" with Yoron Israel on drums, Bill Thompson, saxophones and flute, John Lockwood, bass, George Russell, Jr., piano & keyboard, John Stein, guitar

Yoron Israel's exciting drumming, along with his compositional talents are spotlighted throughout his CDs: "**Basic Traneing**" (Ronja Music Company), "**Chicago**" (Double Time), "**Live at the Blue Note**" (Half Note), "**A Gift for You**" (Ronja Music Company). He brings his unique influences and experiences in the Jazz, Latin, Gospel, Funk, R & B and orchestral idioms full circle with his compositions, arrangements, repertoire and ensemble concepts. Israel's CD, "**Basic Traneing**" reached number three on the National Jazz chart in 2004. www.yoronisrael.com

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2:30 **Stan Strickland Group** – tribute to John Coltrane with Stan Strickland, saxophones and flute, John Lockwood, bass, Laszlo Gardony, piano, and Yoron Israel, drums

Singer, saxophonist, flutist, actor Stan Strickland has performed around the world. In addition to numerous radio and television appearances, Stan has performed in many clubs and concert halls, including Jordan and Symphony Halls in Boston, Carnegie Recital Hall and Town Hall in New York, and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. His work has been featured on recordings by Bob Moses, Marty Erlich, Webster Lewis and Brute Force. Stan has performed with jazz greats Yusef Lateef, Pharoah Sanders, Herbie Mann, Danilo Perez, Shirley Scott and Marlena Shaw. *Love & Beauty*, Stan's new jazz vocal CD, featuring new arrangements of great jazz classics as well as original material, was released by Hawkline Records in 2005.

Later tonight (at 7:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.) Stan Strickland plays with Juanito Pasqual at the Regatta Bar in Cambridge. www.stanstrickland.net

3:45 **Shelley Neill Group**
Irish Eyes Gypsy Soul with Laszlo Gardony, Yoron Israel, and Ron Mahdi

Shelley Neill has been singing in and around the Boston for 20 years and has released five albums since 1999. Three of these recordings, which she refers to as "the trilogy," took a look at the impact of Blues on Jazz from a vocalist's perspective. Her latest recording, (her first in five years), is *Irish Eyes Gypsy Soul*, and it reflects her personal history and her wide-ranging musical interests. It also celebrates her collaboration, over the last decade, with pianist Laszlo Gardony, bassist Ron Mahdi and drummer Yoron Israel.

5:00 **Mango Blue**
with Alex Alvear, bass & vocals, Rebecca Cline, keyboards, Ernesto Diaz, congas, Manolo Mairena, vocals, timbal & percussion, David Rivera, drums, Felipe Salles, tenor sax, Jared Sims, alto sax, and Yuriana Sobrino, vocals, timbal & percussion

Mango Blue blends an exciting mixture of musical styles to create a refreshing new sound in Afro-Latin and World music, through songs of celebration and social conscience. Led by Ecuadorian composer, bassist and singer Alex Alvear, this invigorating hybrid playfully integrates a wide array of influences from Rhythm & Blues, Jazz and Funk to Caribbean Roots, with a strong rhythmical foundation that draws from diverse Afro-Latin musical traditions. This stylistic fusion allows for a concoction that translates into music that transcends ethnic boundaries, providing a new color in the Latin music palette.