## CENTRUM creativity in community

## SUMMER FESTIVAL SCHEDULE ACOUSTIC BLUEB

Jontavious Willis, Artistic Director

AUGUST 1-7

Jontavious Willis

FORT WORDEN STATE PARK, PORT TOWNSEND SUPPLEMENT TO THE JULY 27, 2022 PORT TOWNSEND & JEFFERSON COUNTY LEADER

# SUMMER AT CENTRUM

### WELCOME TO CENTRUM'S 49<sup>TH</sup> SEASON!



AS WE RETURN to programs in-person again at Fort Worden State Park, I invite you to join the global Centrum community of artists in the pursuit of lifelong learning, the arts, and the honoring of diverse cultures and traditions.

DISCOVER creative workshops, mainstage performances, nightclub events, free literary

readings, lectures, dances, artist residencies, youth programs, and so much more.

OUR PROGRAMS this year will welcome participants in-person (up to date vaccine required for all campus visitors in 2022) as well as online. As always, we welcome youth age 18 and younger to all performances for free, with an advance reservation, following our COVID protocols.

AGAIN THIS SUMMER our Blues and Jazz in the Clubs concerts will occur in venues throughout Fort Worden. We encourage club-goers to enjoy a meal and shopping in downtown Port Townsend before heading to the Fort.

And for afternoon McCurdy Pavilion concerts in the summer, gates open at Noon with BBQ available on site.

THE CENTRUM COMMUNITY is grateful for support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington State Arts Commission, Washington State Parks Commission, City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, and the Fort Worden PDA. On behalf of the Centrum staff and board, I extend our thanks to all of our donors and sponsors who support our mission and Centrum's unique role in the Puget Sound community.

See you at Centrum!

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Robert A. Birman Executive Director

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Summer Concerts at Centrum in the McCurdy Pavilion

## FREE FRIDAYS AT THE FORT

Bring a picnic and some sunscreen to enjoy Centrum's annual Free Fridays at the Fort concert series showcasing jazz, blues and fiddle tunes performers, among others.

This free lunchtime concert series is on the lawn of the Nora Porter Commons. Weather in June and July is usually nice, but in the rare event of inclement weather, an alternative venue will be posted at Centrum.org.

#### CONCERT AT NOON

Friday, August 5: Acoustic Blues Showcase

Free Fridays Family Concerts are made possible with the generous support of the following sponsors:



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## THANK YOU

Centrum offers profound thanks to the foundation and government entities that support our distinctive mission. Their grants help fuel our programming and their imprimatur assists Centrum's efforts to broaden support for its services throughout the state and nation.



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Centrum's corporate sponsors include regional, national, and international corporations that understand the value of supporting the arts. Their contributions foster the creativity and sense of kinship that has thousands of workshop participants and audience members converging for Centrum's 2022 summer season.

## SUMMER SEASON SCHEDULE

### AUGUST

Port Townsend ACOUSTIC BLUES FESTIVAL

Saturday August 6, 1:30 pm Acoustic Blues Showcase

## **BLUES IN THE CLUBS**

Fort Worden Venues

Friday, August 5, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm Saturday, August 6, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm

### SEPTEMBER

Port Townsend UKULELE WORKSHOP

Thursday, September 8, 7:30 pm Ukulele Bonanza Concert #1

Friday, September 9, 7:30 pm Ukulele Bonanza Concert #2



2022 CENTRUM SUMMER SEASON • The Port Townsend & Jefferson County Leader 3



Jontavius Willis

I want to welcome everyone back to Centrum Acoustic Blues festival. I know we've been away for 2 years and many things in our lives have changed. I hope we can take this time to enjoy ourselves and appreciate one another's company. I know I'm excited to be back and in action! We have new faces and old faces for faculty, and I can't wait to see you all. This time of year really makes me happy and this time around it'll mean that much more. See you soon!

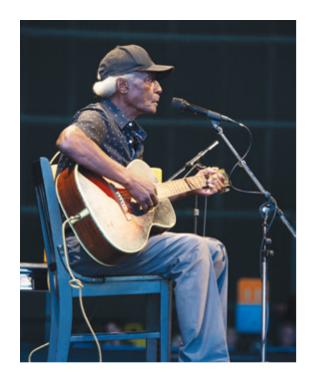
Jontavious Willis, Artistic Director Port Townsend Acoustic Blues

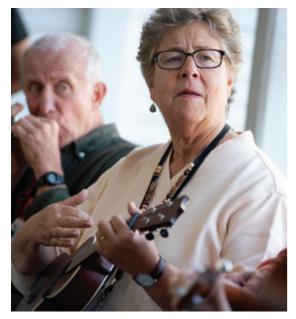




## Welcome to the PORT TOWNSEND ACOUSTIC BLUES FESTIVAL

With daily classroom instruction in traditional acoustic blues, its history, songs, and styles as well as technical skills, and how to play well with others in the form, Centrum's Acoustic Blues Workshop is a must-see, if you're in town. Afternoon workshop sessions include discussions on relative topics and evenings present faculty concerts celebrating various regional styles, both traditional and modern - moving the genre forward. Come hear the best of acoustic country blues!











## 2022 PORT TOWNSEND ACOUSTIC BLUES PRESENTS

### Friday August 5 • Free Fridays

Noon – 1 pm

#### Fort Worden Commons Lawn

Jayy Hopp and Andrew Alli - New Blues

### FRIDAY, AUGUST 5 • BLUES IN THE CLUBS 7:30 pm - 10 pm

#### Fort Worden Building 204 Up South

7:30 pm – Meagan May 9 pm – Jimmy Duck Holmes

#### Fort Worden Building 204 Up North

7: 30 pm – Jontavious Willis and Jayy Hopp 9 pm – Benjamin Hunter

#### Fort Worden Commons A/B

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm and 9 - 10 pm Albanie Falletta; Jerron Paxton; Ethan Leinwand; Rich DelGrosso; Rodrigo Mantovani

### SATURDAY AUGUST 6 • BLUES IN THE CLUBS 7:30 pm - 10 pm

#### Fort Worden Building 204 Up South

7: 30 pm – Roy Bookbinder 9 pm – Valerie and Benedict Turner

#### Fort Worden Building 204 Up North

7: 30 pm – Lightnin' Wells 9 pm – Carl Sonny Leyland, Maime Minch; Briar; Dean Mueller

#### Fort Worden Commons A/B

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm and 9 - 10 pm Jimmy Vivino; Jayy Hopp; Andrew Alli; Sunpie; Jontavious Willis; Rodrigo Mantovani; Eric Eagle

### SATURDAY AUGUST 6 • ACOUSTIC BLUES SHOWCASE McCurdy Pavilion – 1:30 - 3:30pm

#### Noon - Participant Ensembles on the green 1:30pm Blues Showcase Concert

Carl Sonny Leyland Rodrigo Mantovani, Jimmy Vivino and Andrew Alli w/Carl Sonny Leyland Rich DelGrosso, Rodrigo Mantovani, Jayy Hopp, Jontavious Willis Jontavious Willis and Jayy Hopp Ethan Leinwand and Briar Lightnin' Wells Valerie and Benedict Turner Jerron Paxton Benjamin Hunter Roy Bookbinder Jimmy Duck Holmes and Meagan May Sunpie Barnes and Albanie Falletta, Sam Doores, Rodrigo Mantovani



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## FEATURED ARTISTS

#### **Jontavious Willis, Artistic Director**



Jontavious grew up singing gospel music at the Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church with his grandfather. At the age of 14, he came across a YouTube video of Muddy Waters playing "Hoochie Coochie Man" and was hooked. That's when he set his course on the blues. All types—Delta, Piedmont, Texas, gospel.

As a fingerpicker, flat-picker and slide player; on guitar, harmonica, banjo and cigar box. And four years later, he was touring with Taj Mahal. "That's my wonderboy, the wunderkind," Taj Mahal said after inviting Jontavious to play on stage in 2015. "He's a great new voice of the twenty-first century in the acoustic blues. I just love the way he plays." Jontavious accepted an invitation to lead the Port Townsend Acoustic Blues workshop as Artistic Director in 2020.

#### Andrew Alli



This Richmond, Virginia native was always passionate about music and stumbled upon the blues while taking up his first instrument, the harmonica. He instantly fell in love with the blues and the history that comes with the harp. Andrew developed his style of playing by studying from the harmonica greats

including: Little Walter, Big Walter Horton, Sonny Boy Williamson II, and Junior Wells. Co-founding "Andrew Alli and Last Night's Blues Band", with drummer, Charles Hibbler in 2012, the band had a particular interest in the Chicago and Delta styles of blues. Andrew also has had the privilege to tour with folk musicians Tim Barry and Josh Small during a U.S., European, and Australian music tour. The Richmond Folk Festival has featured Andrew for three years teaching harmonica lessons and performing.

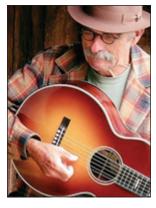
#### Bruce Sunpie Barnes



Sunpie is a veteran musician, park ranger, actor, former high school biology teacher, former college football All-American, and former NFL player (Kansas City Chiefs). Sunpie Barnes' career has taken him far and wide, and he has traveled to over 35 countries playing his own style of blues, zydeco and

Afro-Louisiana music incorporating Caribbean and African influenced rhythms and melodies. He is a multi-instrumentalist playing piano, percussion, harmonica, and he learned to play accordion from some of the best, including Fernest Arceneaux, John Delafose, and Clayton Sampy. With his musical group Sunpie and the Louisiana Sunspots, he has played festivals and concerts across New Orleans and the U.S., as well as internationally, and they have recorded five critically acclaimed CDs. Sunpie is deeply involved in New Orleans parade culture and takes his music to the streets. He is Second Chief of the North Side Skull and Bone Gang, one of the oldest existing carnival groups in New Orleans, and a member of the Black Men of Labor Social Aid and Pleasure Club.

#### **Roy Book Binder**



Roy Book Binder has been rambling around the world for the past 45 years! He gave up his Greenwich Village "pad" in the early 1970's and lived in his "Tour Bus" for the next 15 years crisscrossing the U.S. and appearing at festivals throughout Canada & Europe. Book Binder, travelled with the legendary Rev. Gary Davis in the late 60's. The

Book, recorded his first solo acoustic blues album in the 70's, which was the first to receive 5 stars in Downbeat magazine. In the late 80's, he was part of Bonnie Raitt's east coast tour, which included an appearance on The Grand Old Opry which led to almost 30 appearances on NASHVILLE NOW's, Ralph Emory Show.

#### Briar



Briar is a singer of vintage jazz, blues and original music. By blending a powerful voice with stories about the history and origins of her music, she shines a light on singers and tales that have been forgotten by the country that created them. Raised in the small community of Chimacum, Washington,

Briar uses her music to help explore her unique background as a black woman from the rural Pacific Northwest.

Whether belting Bessie Smith numbers or crooning original songs about Sherlock Holmes, her performances are defined by her combination of grace and playfulness, elegance crossed with down-home bravado. In addition to her regular engagements as a singer and ukulele player, Briar teaches music for Seattle JazzEd, is a leader of the Rhapsody Project, and is currently pursuing a degree in Environmental Science from Olympic University.

#### **Rich DelGrosso**



Rich DelGrosso's performances at clubs and festivals, and airplay of his recordings, have garnered him eight Blues Music Award nominations. Six of the eight were for best instrumentalist for his mandolin work, and the others were best acoustic album of the year; one with Fiona Boyes and

Mookie Brill in 2009," "Live From Bluesville," and the other in 2015, "The Ragpicker String Band." Writer, teacher, performer, DelGrosso widely regarded as the leading exponent of mandolin blues. For over thirty years he has performed and written articles for Blues Revue, Living Blues, Mandolin Magazine, Frets, and Sing Out!, and he has published mandolin and guitar instruction books for Hal Leonard. He has presented workshops across the Americas and Europe, earning him a Keeping the Blues Alive Award from the Blues Foundation in Memphis.

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#### Albanie Falletta



In her formative years, Albanie was exposed to the local music of Louisiana: the sounds of Cajun, zydeco, blues and gospel music at festivals and backyard parties. After relocating with her family to Texas at the age of nine, she began taking guitar lessons and developing an interest in

acoustic roots and electric blues, punk rock, and hair metal. Albanie began her love and study of early American jazz as a freshman in high school when she was exposed to the Parisian Romani guitarist Django Reinhardt. Listening fervently to recordings of Reinhardt, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Fats Waller, and other great figures, she began to develop her feel for swing. Soon she was performing alongside mentors and other players of the Austin scene. In the summer of 2013, Albanie relocated to New Orleans, where she currently lives and performs solo and with various ensembles.

#### Jimmy "Duck" Holmes



Jimmy "Duck" Holmes is the proprietor of one of the oldest juke joints in Mississippi, the Blue Front in Bentonia. In the mid 2000's he began performing blues actively after many years of performing casually, and has already garnered several awards and many accolades. He is a

practitioner and conscious advocate of a distinctive

blues style from his hometown Bentonia, whose most famous proponent was blues pioneer Skip James.

#### Jayy Hopp



Jayy Hopp started with gospel music (drumming at first until his cousin formally introduced him to the guitar). Gospel and R&B music was very influential in his formative years. The guitar grooves and distinctive sounds always caught his ear. As he aged, Jayy expanded his musical vocabulary. He started listening closely to

Jimi Hendrix playing style, which lead him to people like Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Jimmy Dawkins, Johnny "Guitar" Watson, Son Seals, Hubert Sumlin, Robert Ward (his uncle) and Ike Turner. His longtime friend, Jontavious Willis enlightened him about the roots of blues and different playing styles. Under the wings of Willis, he has learned more about the roots of the blues and how it affected the different genres we have today. He has become more fluent in the country blues playing style. He has also been rewarded a Certificate for completing



the Bentonia Tuning Workshop where Grammy nominated Jimmy "Duck" Holmes was the instructor, in Bentonia, MS.

#### **Ben Hunter**

Ben Hunter is a multiinstrumentalist whose interests lie in roots music from around the world. Born in Lesotho, raised predominantly in Phoenix, with stints in Seattle and Zimbabwe, Ben was "raised classically" on violin, but now plays a variety of styles—roots, folk, jazz, blues, world, gospel, you name it. At Whitman College, Ben came upon two violinists who influenced him most: Stuff Smith and Eddie South. Like Ben, Eddie South was an African American classical violinist who made the transition to jazz and blues styles. Ben plays in the internationally touring duo, Ben Hunter & Joe Seamons, as well as solo and with other local Seattle jazz groups. In 2017, Ben composed music for a dance piece, Black Bois, that has received critical acclaim, and is currently an artistin-residence for Seattle's On The Boards theater group.

#### **Ethan Leinwand**



Barrelhouse blues pianist and preservationist based in St. Louis, MO, and a student of the music's rich history and varied regional styles, Ethan Leinwand presents personal interpretations of many of the great (and forgotten) old-time masters. Though rarely championed and little remembered today, barrelhouse piano is an

important and impressive piece of the blues story. Combining elements of ragtime, boogie-woogie, and early jazz – all with a low-down blues feeling – barrelhouse blues is a two-handed piano style built to keep folks dancing. Ethan shares his passion for this forgotten genre through storytelling and performance, shedding light on the music, the players, and the environments whence they came. Originally from Middletown, CT, Ethan has spent time living in New Orleans and Brooklyn. He moved to St. Louis, MO in 2014 and performs regularly in his adopted home city. In addition to his solo work,



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Ethan is a part of multiple projects, including Miss Jubilee and the Yas Yas Boys, The Bottlesnakes, and The St. Louis Steady Grinders.

#### **Carl Sonny Leyland**



Raised on the South Coast of England, as a child Carl was drawn to American music on LP records his father would play. He developed an appreciation for Dixieland jazz, the rock n roll of the 1950s and the country music of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams. At 15, Carl discovered boogiewoogie. Captivated by

the sound of the repeating 8-to-the-bar left hand pattern, he was inspired to begin on a path that would become his life's purpose. Within three months, he became a member of a respected local group "The Bob Pearce Blues Band," In 1988 Carl's initial visit to New Orleans inspired him to relocate to that city where he spent the next nine years. In 1997, he moved to Southern California and joined Big Sandy and His Flyrite Boys and toured for over three years. His repertoire had expanded to include ragtime and early jazz styles and became part of the traditional jazz scene around Los Angeles and San Diego. In June of 2003 the Carl Sonny Leyland Trio was formed. Whether playing solo or with his trio, Carl's playing displays an infectious spontaneity, providing plenty of surprises for the listener.

#### Meagan May

Born in Jackson, Mississippi, Meagan May was born into generations of farming and music. May learned to play guitar as a child from her maternal grandmother, Jeanette Stewart Austin, who introduced her to artists such as, Hank Williams,



Ray Charles, and Elvis. Her paternal grandmother, Jean Pickering May, was a professional musician before she married, known for her boogie woogie piano style. Family members and close friends gathered on Sunday afternoons to sing from the Old Heavenly Highways hymnal while her great grandfather,

Lester Stewart, would buck dance and yodel his "Lonesome Cowboy Song," and "Amazing Grace." Meagan's mother, Paula May, a respected gospel tenor, taught her harmonies that now support the vocal arrangements that can be heard on her song, "Broke Down Up The Road or Deep Inside." May is recorded giving a chilling performance of The National Anthem during the inauguration of the U.S.S. Cole that is archived in The Library of Congress. Memphis, Tennessee guitar prodigy, Khari Wynn, recorded May's debut album, A Long Time Comin', that is set to be released in 2023.

#### Rodrigo Mantovani



Born and raised in Brazil, Rodrigo has always had a deep love for American blues and roots music from a very young age. Rodrigo has been a member of some of the first ground breaking blues bands in Brazil and because of his deep knowledge regarding traditional blues, he has also been a first call

bassist for many of the premier American blues acts touring and recording with heavy weights of

the scene. Rodrigo's work can be heard on many recordings, as a member of various bands, and also playing on and producing his own projects worldwide. Living in the U.S since 2019, playing full time with the Nick Moss Band, Rodrigo has been collecting a lot of success on his path, winning two BMAs in 2020 (Best Traditional Blues Band of the Year, and Best Traditional Blues Album of the Year), recording several albums with different artists and projects and also been featured as the cover of one of the most important blues magazines, the Blues Blast Magazine.

#### **Mamie Minch**



Mamie Minch is a longtime staple of New York's acoustic blues scene. The Delaware native grew up in a music loving family and started playing fingerstyle blues in her teens. She developed a guitar style that's a soulful combination of Piedmont style picking and a looser right hand, (think Mississippi John Hurt

and RL Burnside's baby) and her smoky, emotive alto has gotten her compared to Nina Simone and Terry Collier. She writes and performs blues and ballads that bridge between historical record and contemporary city life, and especially loves including material from women musicians writing over the last 100 years. Her recent album, Slow Burn, made the New York Daily Best 50 Albums of 2020. She is also a luthier doing guitar repair and restoration, and along with her business partner Chloe Swantner (a Port Townsend native) co-owns Brooklyn Lutherie, the New York City's only woman owned and run instrument repair shop.

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#### Jerron Paxton



Jerron Paxton served as the Artistic Director of the Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Festival from 2014-2019 and we are honored to have him return as artist faculty, along with Phil Wiggins, the first artistic director, who has not missed many blues weeks. Jerron's talent rivals the greatest. He plays in the true songster tradition:

ragtime, hokum, old-time, French reels, Appalachian Mountain music, early jazz and blues and more. Paxton was born into an African American Jewish family with mixed Creole /Choctaw Indian ancestry who moved to South Central Los Angeles, where he was rasied. He is a highly sought after multiinstrumentalist who picks banjo and guitar, plays harmonica, piano and other instruments, including the fiddle. his first instrument.

#### **Benedict Turner**



Benedict Turner is a roots percussionist specializing in lap-style washboard and bones. As a professional graphic designer and senior art director. Benedict curates vintage washboards and bells from around the world and uses these artifacts to create his unique line of Darlington washboards which feature

detailed carvings and sculpted attachments.

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In depth • In touch • Independent The Leader Benedict has studied with Washboard Chaz of Louisiana fame, as well as with Newman Taylor Baker of the Ebony Hillbillies. Inspired by these two talented percussionists. Benedict has his own style of washboard playing, which is influenced by the melodic and percussive sounds of the steel drums of his birthplace. Trinidad and Tobago. Benedict and his wife, Valerie Turner, comprise the Piedmont Blūz Acoustic Duo, dedicated performers and preservationists of Piedmont style musical traditions.

#### **Valerie Turner**



Valerie is a native New Yorker with southern roots in Virginia and Georgia. She plays finger style country blues guitar and specializes in the Piedmont style of fingerpicking. She has taught at the Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Workshop, Blues & Swing Week, and at Blues in the Gorge, A 2018 inductee

into the New York Blues Hall of Fame, Valerie is also the author of Piedmont Style Country Blues Guitar Basics, an independently published book. Her eclectic repertoire was heavily influenced by the late John Cephas, a world-renowned country blues musician in the Piedmont style, and her guitar playing is reminiscent of traditional blues greats like Mississippi John Hurt, Etta Baker, and Elizabeth Cotten. Valerie and her husband Ben perform as the Piedmont Blūz Acoustic Duo and, in addition to a host of domestic venues and festivals, the duo have traveled as far as Europe and the Middle East to share their music.

#### **Jimmy Vivino**



Jimmy Vivino (aka Jimmy V) has always considered himself "a blues man with a job." Although best known for serving 26 years as Conan O'Brien's musical director, guitarist and bandleader, his experience in the music business predates that by 20+ years. Jimmy V has produced, lead bands and recorded with a

countless number rock and roll and blues artists for five decades including the likes of Hubert Sumlin, Warren Haynes, Bob Weir, Keith Richards, Elvis Costello, Johnnie Johnson, Son Seals, Shemekia Copeland, Levon Helm, Phoebe Snow, Dion, Laura Nyro, Bob Margolin, Lowell Fulson, John Sebastian,

Joe Louis Walker and Al Kooper to name a few. When not producing, recording or touring with other artists, Jimmy still tours the country and the world with his own band and is due to release a new blues album later on this year (2022).

#### **Lightnin Wells**



Mike "Lightnin" Wells breathes new life into the vintage tunes of the 1920s and depression era America employing various appropriate stringed instruments in a dynamic style which he has developed in over thirty years of performing. Raised in eastern North Carolina, Wells learned to play harmonica as a young

child and taught himself to play the guitar as he developed a strong interest in traditional blues and folk music. He has presented his brand of acoustic blues throughout North Carolina, the United States and Europe. Lightnin' remains an insatiable student and researcher, studying the various forms of American roots music from bygone eras. His musical style is personal and energetic yet remains true to the original root form. His goal is to entertain and educate using a variety of sources, influences and techniques to express his dedication, respect and pleasure in presenting this unique American art form.





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