

OPENING NIGHT CONCERT

Trumpeter and road warrior Chris Botti returns to the festival for the first time in 10 years.

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SAX MAN

Festival favorite Boney James is eager to break out songs from his latest album, 'Solid.'

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Berks Jazz Fest

Aug. 13 - 22



AN ENCORE EVENT

Carol Riddick, Gerald Veasley will pay tribute to Nina Simone in a festival warm-up. PAGE 2

Check out the full schedule of major Berks Jazz Fest concerts and start making your plans. PAGES 4-5

MUSIC

Encore performance

Saturday's Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest preview event will feature Gerald Veasley and Carol Riddick paying tribute to Nina Simone, as they did two years ago.

By Jon Fassnacht

[jfassnacht@readingeagle.com](mailto:jf Fassnacht@readingeagle.com)
[@jonfassnacht](https://twitter.com/jonfassnacht) on Twitter

When a collective led by Gerald Veasley and Carol Riddick paid tribute to Nina Simone at the 2019 Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest, they put a spell on attendees.

The response was so positive, they're back for more this year.

"I Got the Life: The Music of Nina Simone" will have an encore performance at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the WCR Center for the Arts, 140 N. Fifth St., Reading. The show is billed as a Jazz Fest preview event leading up to the main festival running Aug. 13-22.

"Nina Simone has been in

the soundtrack of our family with my wife and particularly my youngest daughter as she was growing up," said Veasley, a Philadelphia-based bassist. "We played her music often in the household. It's very uplifting, especially when you're raising a young woman of color. Her music is universal. It goes across any kind of barrier you might think — across genre, across race, across generations — because it is so inspiring and so passionate.

"She touched on so many aspects of music: Black American genres such as R&B and blues and even hints of gospel, but also folk music, and she was a classically trained pianist."

Rounding out the ensemble

are pianist Aaron Graves and drummer Tim Hutson; Veasley has histories with each of them, calling them versatile and tasteful.

Riddick handles Simone's vocals, and Veasley says she's a perfect fit. He praised her range, expression and phrasing, but said her heart and soul is what makes her so appropriate. It's not uncommon for the subject matter of a song to move her to tears.

"Her empathy for what she's singing, I've never seen anything like it," he said. "And it moves the audience, which is the whole intent, but it's not by design that she emotes like that; it's just who she is."

Four moods

One of Simone's best-known songs is 1966's "Four Women," a haunting, sparse groove that tells the story of four Black women, each representing a stereotype.

Fittingly, while studying her music to curate the show, Veasley discovered her music could be divided into four different moods, which he labeled quest, passion, fury and hope.

Quest represents a search

IF YOU GO

Event: Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest presents a festival preview concert featuring Carol Riddick and Gerald Veasley, with Aaron Graves and Tim Hutson, performing the music of Nina Simone

When: 7:30 p.m. Saturday

Where: WCR Center for the Arts, 140 N. Fifth St.

Tickets: \$30

Phone: 800-745-3000

Web: www.berksjazzfest.com

for identity. Songs fitting that mood include "Sinnerman" and "I Wish I Knew How It Feels To Be Free."

Passion, aka love songs, will be illustrated by tunes like "My Baby Just Cares for Me" and "I Put a Spell on You."

Fury represents her role as a civil rights activist; "she was really outraged at some of the things she saw that people experienced and that she even experienced in America," Veasley said. And that mood will be featured in protest songs like "Strange Fruit" and "Mississippi Goddam."

The final, triumphant mood of hope will close the evening, with her cover of



Carol Riddick



Gerald Veasley

w/ the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun."

'Something that's timeless'

"Carol Riddick and Gerald Veasley brought Nina Simone's music to life with their mesmerizing performance (in 2019)," Jazz Fest General Manager John Ernesto said. "Carol's emotional vocals backed by Gerald's powerful musicianship keep audiences on the edge of their seats from the first to last note."

Bringing the music of deceased legends to life has

become a yearly highlight at the Jazz Fest.

Artists who have been the subject of recent tributes include Grover Washington Jr., Miles Davis, James Brown, Aretha Franklin and Motown greats.

Participating in tribute shows is affirming, Veasley said, because it's a reminder that he's part of a lineage.

"You're paying homage to these artists who not only blazed a trail as innovators, but for someone like Nina Simone, they really put their life on the line: their reputation, their credibility and sometimes even their safety," Veasley said. "It never could take the place of the artistry of these amazing people, but it just reminds you how significant their contributions are."

"And it's not much different than when an orchestra plays the music of Beethoven or a chamber ensemble plays the music of Mozart. You feel grateful to have the ability to play that music. Because you're touching something that's timeless."


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OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

Return of road warrior Chris Botti

The trumpeter makes a pandemic-delayed return to the Berks Jazz Fest to headline opening night.

By Jon Fassnacht

jf Fassnacht@readingeagle.com
@jonfassnacht on Twitter

Hearing Chris Botti discuss his latest tour brings to mind J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" lyric, "the road goes ever on and on."

"Twenty years into it, it's going great," the trumpeter said, not entirely joking.

Botti is a true road warrior, having played 250 to 300 shows each year from the early aughts to 2019, before the pandemic stopped all touring in 2020.

Botti will make a delayed return trip to the area on Aug. 13 when he plays the 30th annual Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest's Opening Night Celebration at the Santander Performing Arts Center. It's his first appearance at the event in a decade. Quite a bit has changed since then.

"I think I'm a much, much better bandleader and a much better trumpet player," Botti said. "I've re-invigorated my commitment to the instrument, and I'm practicing many, many, many hours a day. And I feel so much stronger as a player than I did even five years ago."

His onstage support includes revered saxophonist Andy Snitzer, drummer Lee Pearson, bassist Reggie Hamilton and 28-year-old Estonian phenom Hol-

ger Marjamaa on piano.

"When we were planning the anniversary fest, Chris was on our short list of artists to perform opening night," Jazz Fest General Manager John Ernesto said. "Chris played the fest when he was getting started in the business. His career has exploded since those days."

Jazz, and then some

Botti's career includes supporting roles and guest appearances with a wide range of artists: Sting, Tony Bennett, Lady Gaga, Josh Groban, Yo-Yo Ma, Paul Simon, Joni Mitchell and John Mayer, to name but a few.

Many of his guest stints were for artists with little or nothing to do with jazz. No matter, Botti says. Music is music.

"When I got into the business, my first big break was joining Paul Simon's band for a tour with Michael Brecker, Paul Gadd and Richard Tee, so I've been around jazz musicians that operate in popular music," he said. "I've never really had an absolute purist sort of viewpoint. And those that are purists, more power to them, it's fantastic. But for me, that was sort of my way in, being the jazz musician that singers went to."

IF YOU GO

Event: Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest Opening Night Celebration featuring Chris Botti

When: Friday, Aug. 13, at 7 p.m.

Where: Santander Performing Arts Center, 136 N. Sixth St., Reading

Tickets: \$59 to \$69

Web: www.berksjazzfest.com

The fulcrum of Botti's ever-evolving setlist is a residency at the Blue Note club in New York. That standing engagement features 56 shows in 28 nights each December and January. Botti calls his set's arrangements ever-evolving and free-flowing, but says changes in the material are much more gradual.

"It's like when Miles Davis went basically 11 years and did the same songs but they sounded so radically different because of the personnel of the band and how the muscle changes when you're on the road that long," he said. "That's kind of what we do."

The group slowly shifts content throughout its summer and fall shows so that by the time the Blue Note residency rolls around, the set list features about 30% to 40% new material.



Chris Botti has played 250 to 300 shows each of the last 17 years.

The sweet spot

Like the Berks Jazz Fest, Botti's professional career stretches back into the early '90s. During that period, the recording industry experienced upheaval numerous times, resulting in a landscape that barely resembles the one that existed when Botti was breaking in.

Luckily, the bread and butter of today's artists just happens to fit into Botti's sweet spot.

"For so many years, we would think about record sales or chart positions or getting on a TV

show, and now it's much more like an exit poll in politics," he said. "In other words, I roll into a city, we perform a show, and within 10 minutes after that show, that audience goes onto Twitter or Instagram or Facebook and they say: 'We went to the Chris Botti show. It was fantastic. You need to see him in Atlanta.'

"And two things happen: The people in Atlanta say, 'I want to go see the Chris Botti show' and the promoter goes, 'Did the people enjoy themselves?' If they enjoyed them-

selves, then two or three years later we're asked back. That is the whole game. There's no award, there's no chart position, there are no record sales anymore that trump that."

Despite recordings losing their importance in terms of the financial wherewithal of artists, Botti can't help but be thrilled that he recently signed with another legendary jazz label, Blue Note Records. He will record his first studio release since 2012's "Impressions" over the summer, and he expects the label to release it in the fall. He proudly notes that his discography will soon feature the three big jazz record labels: Verve, Columbia and Blue Note.

But as excited as Botti is to make new recordings, he's even more excited to use them as springboards for live shows.

"The only thing artists need to worry about is, 'Do you move emotions of the people at that gathering that night?' That's it," he said. "And until I am well out of the business, that's the only thing I'm going to concentrate on: moving the emotions of the people in that venue that night."

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30TH ANNUAL BOSCOV'S BERKS JAZZ FEST MAJOR CONCERT SCHEDULE ~ AUGUST 13-22, 2021



FRIDAY, AUGUST 13

7 p.m.: *Opening Night Celebration*
CHRIS BOTTI
 Santander Performing Arts Center: \$69 & \$59 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Boscov's and Quaker Maid Meats

7:30 p.m.: *Litchfield Jazz Camp Night*
ZACCAI CURTIS, LUQUES CURTIS & ALBERT RIVERA LATIN JAZZ BAND
 plus Opening Artists **TRADING FOUR**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$20 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by RKL

7:30 p.m.: *9-Piece Dance/Party Band*
BRASS POCKET
 Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park: \$10 in advance; \$15 at door (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Konopelski Katering

9:30 p.m.: *Cheers Lounge Jazz Party*
AL "DJ ACT" TAYLOR
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

9:30 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
PIECES OF A DREAM with special guest **MAYSA**
 and introducing **JUSTIN-LEE SCHULTZ**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$56 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Fraser Advanced Information Systems and Service Access Management

Midnight: **GERALD VEASLEY'S MIDNIGHT JAM**
 Blake Aaron, Tom Braxton, Albert Rivera, Nick Colionne, Andrew Neu, Alex Bugnon, Brian Bromberg, Eric Marienthal, Rob Zinn, Tony Exum Jr., Donald Robinson, Richard Waller and more
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Saucony Creek Craft Brewery

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14

1 p.m. & 7 p.m.: *SOUTH Kitchen & Jazz Parlor presents*
GERALD VEASLEY UNSCRIPTED AT BERKS
 featuring **NELSON RANGELL, ALEX BUGNON, MARC ANTOINE**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$40 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Landrigan Family Charitable Fund and Fromm Electric

1:30 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents*
KENNY NEAL & THE NEAL FAMILY REVUE plus **THE GABE STILLMAN BAND**
 Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park/Sinking Spring: \$49 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Performance Toyota

2 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
KEIKO MATSUI & KIRK WHALUM
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$56 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Channel 69 WFMZ-TV

3:30 p.m.: *A2Z Jazz Party*
ANDREW NEU & ROB ZINN
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

6 p.m.: *30th Anniversary All-Star Celebration*
RICK BRAUN, PETER WHITE, MINDI ABAIR, EUGE GROOVE, ERIC MARIENTHAL, NICK COLIONNE, LARRY BRAGGS, BRIAN BROMBERG, THE BERKS HORNS
 Santander Performing Arts Center: \$59 & \$49 (Reserved Seating)

Concert Sponsored by Inperium Affiliation Architects

7 p.m.: *Remembering Jim Connors*
READING POPS ORCHESTRA CELEBRATES THE SPIRIT OF DJANGO
REINHARDT featuring special guests **JULIEN LABRO, MAX O'ROURKE, JOSH KAYE, EDUARDO BELO, JOSH TAYLOR, CHRIS HESLOP**
 Miller Center for the Arts: \$49 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Connors Investor Services and Jerlyn Foundation

7:30 p.m.: *20th Anniversary Celebration*
REGGIE BROWN & BUNCH-A-FUNK
 Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park: \$15 in advance; \$20 at door (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Konopelski Katering

8 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents*
CHRISTONE "KINGFISH" INGRAM and **VANESSA COLLIER**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$49 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Lamar Advertising and Penn National Gaming

9:30 p.m.: *Cheers Lounge Jazz Party*
AL "DJ ACT" TAYLOR
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

Midnight: **GERALD VEASLEY'S MIDNIGHT JAM**
 Blake Aaron, Tom Braxton, Nick Colionne, Nelson Rangell, Alex Bugnon, Marc Antoine, Brian Bromberg, Andrew Neu, Albert Rivera, Rob Zinn, Tony Exum Jr., Donald Robinson, Richard Waller and more
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Saucony Creek Craft Brewery

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

10 a.m. doors, buffet/11:30 a.m. show: *Sunday Brunch hosted by Michael Tozzi*
JAZZ FUNK SOUL
 featuring **JEFF LORBER, EVERETTE HARP, PAUL JACKSON JR.**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$52 (Reserved Seating; Includes brunch)
Concert Sponsored by UPMC

2:30 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
SOUL PATROL featuring **LARRY BRAGGS, BLAKE AARON, TOM BRAXTON**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$42 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by American PowerNET and Kozloff Stoudt

3 p.m.: *WCR Center for the Arts presents*
JANIS SEIGEL with **JOHN DI MARTINO**
 WCR Center for the Arts: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by William G. Koch & Associates, CPAs

6 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents*
DAVID BROMBERG QUINTET plus **KING SOLOMON HICKS**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$45 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Alcon Foundation and TompkinsVIST

MONDAY, AUGUST 16

7 p.m.: *Get JazzED/Reading Musical Foundation Night*
RMF PROJECT PENSKE JAZZ JAM hosted by Mike Eben, Albert Rivera, Gerald Veasley, Brian Bromberg, Eric Marienthal, Aubrey Logan, Bobby Lyle, Tony Moore
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: (Donation at the door)
Concert Sponsored by Reading Musical Foundation, Penske, Service Electric Cablevision and CoActive Wealth Strategist

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17

7 p.m.: *A Night of Classy Jazz Vocals*
BOBBY LYLE & THE LADIES OF SONG featuring **TONI LYNNE, ANNETTE HINES, GRETCHEN PATTI, AMAANI LYLE**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$20 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Customers Bank and Morgan Stanley

7 p.m.: *Free Community Concert*
U.S. AIR FORCE RHYTHM IN BLUE JAZZ ENSEMBLE with special guest **ERIC MARIENTHAL**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: FREE with ticket (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by New York Life

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18

Noon: *Free Community Concert*
U.S. AIR FORCE RHYTHM IN BLUE JAZZ ENSEMBLE
 with special guest **RANDY BRECKER**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: FREE with ticket (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by New York Life

7 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents*
THE MUSIC OF LARRY CARLTON: CRAIG THATCHER & FRIENDS
 featuring **CHICO HUFF, CLIFF STARKEY, DAVE MOHN, NELSON HILL**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$20 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Quarter Note Systems and Fightin Phils

7 p.m.: **30TH ANNIVERSARY BERKS BOP BIG BAND**
 Andrew Neu, Eric Marienthal, Gerald Albright, Everette Harp, Skip Spratt, Randy Brecker, Rick Braun, Peter Neu, Craig Kenney, Tony Desantis, Aubrey Logan, Randy Kapralick, Jeff Bush, Dave Cianci, Brian Bromberg, Bobby Lyle, Tony Moore, Gil Parris plus Chuck Loeb Scholarship Winner **TRADING FOUR**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$45 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Sweet Street Desserts and Jerlyn Foundation

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19

7 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
CHUCK LOEB MEMORIAL ALL-STAR JAM featuring
 Rick Braun, Gerald Veasley, Brian Bromberg, Dean Brown, Chris "Big Dog" Davis, Randy Brecker, Eric Marienthal, Andrew Neu, Nick Colionne, Chieli Minucci, Eric Darius, Aubrey Logan, Bobby Lyle, Gerald Albright, Tony Moore, Tom Zink, Ray Fuller
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$58 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Stevens & Lee/Griffin Financial Group and Herbein + Co.

7 p.m.: **DOC MULLIGAN MEMORIAL JAM**
 hosted by **MIKE EBEN'S FROM THE HIP & FRIENDS**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$15 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Berks County Living

9:30 p.m.: *Cheers Lounge Party*
AL "DJ ACT" TAYLOR
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 20

6 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
BONEY JAMES
 Scottish Rite Cathedral: \$58 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by FirstEnergy Foundation and BMW of Reading

7 p.m.: Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz Night

PAT BIANCHI QUARTET featuring **JOE LOCKE, PAUL BOLLENBACK, BYRON LANDHAM** plus opening act **TEEN TOWN**
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by East Penn Manufacturing

7 p.m.: *Classic Music from 1968-1972*
DEAN BROWN'S SUMMER OF LOVE EVOLUTION
 featuring **ERIC MARIENTHAL, CHRIS ROGERS, HONEY LAROCHELLE, KEITH CARLOCK, JIM BEARD, SCHUYLER DEALE, DEVERON PATTERSON, BASHIRI JOHNSON, THE BERKS HORNS**
 Miller Center for the Arts: \$49 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Reading Eagle

7:30 p.m.: A Night of Soulful Blues

BILLY PRICE CHARM CITY RHYTHM BAND
 Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park/Sinking Spring: \$20 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Performance Toyota

9:30 p.m.: *Cheers Lounge Party*
AL "DJ ACT" TAYLOR
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

9:30 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
GERALD ALBRIGHT & JONATHAN BUTLER
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$56 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by EnerSys

Midnight: **GERALD VEASLEY'S MIDNIGHT JAM**
 Nick Colionne, Glenn Jones, Ragan Whiteside, Ray Fuller, Tony Moore, Tom Zink, Andrew Neu, Bobby Lyle, Chieli Minucci, Jazmin Ghent, Brian Bromberg, Art Sherrod Jr., Donald Robinson, Richard Waller and more
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Saucony Creek Craft Brewing

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21

9 a.m. registration/10 a.m. auction
BERKS JAZZ FEST AUCTION
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading Lobby: FREE

1 p.m. & 7 p.m.: *SOUTH Kitchen & Jazz Parlor presents*
GERALD VEASLEY UNSCRIPTED AT BERKS
FEATURING BOBBY LYLE, CHIELI MINUCCI, JAZMIN GHENT
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$40 (General Admission)
1 p.m. Concert Sponsored by Landrigan Family Charitable Fund and Fromm Electric
7 p.m. Concert Sponsored by BB&T/BB&T Wealth

1 p.m.: *WHUR 96.3 FM presents*
CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF STEVIE WONDER! featuring **CHRIS "BIG DOG" DAVIS, RICK BRAUN, MAYSA, KIMBERLY BREWER, ERIC DARIUS, NICK COLIONNE, ART SHERROD JR., RAGAN WHITESIDE, GLENN JONES, RAY FULLER, RACHAEL BRITTON HART, FRESH WIND GOSPEL ENSEMBLE**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$56 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by CFG and Customers Bank

2 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents Gulf Coast West Coast R&B Ramble*
2 P.M.: MARCIA BALL
3:45 P.M.: TOMMY CASTRO & THE PAINKILLERS
7:30 P.M.: JAMES SUPRA/SARAH AYERS BAND
 Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park/Sinking Spring: \$49 (General Admission)

Concert Sponsored by Performance Toyota

3:30 p.m.: *Brazil & Chill*
ANN WALSH & TOM ZINK featuring special guest **BRIAN BROMBERG**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

6 p.m.: *Jazz Cruises Night at Berks*
MARCUS MILLER & FRIENDS
 featuring **DAVID SANBORN, JONATHAN BUTLER**
 Scottish Rite Cathedral: \$58 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Jazz Cruises/Blue Note at Sea 2023

7 p.m.: *WDIY 88.1 FM presents*
THE BRUBECK BROTHERS CELEBRATE DAVE BRUBECK'S CENTENNIAL
 Miller Center for the Arts: \$49 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Highmark and Penn State Health

8 p.m.: *The Music of Steely Dan*
THE ROYAL SCAM with **THE RS HORNS**
 Raddison Hotel Reading Ballroom: \$25 (General Admission)

9:30 p.m.: *Cheers Lounge Party*
AL "DJ ACT" TAYLOR
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Cheers Lounge: FREE

9:30 p.m.: *WHUR 96.3 FM presents An Incredible Night of Music*
CHRIS "BIG DOG" DAVIS & FRIENDS PLAY THEIR HITS!
 featuring **KIM WATERS, MARCUS ANDERSON, MAYSA, ERIC DARIUS, NICK COLIONNE, LIN ROUNDTREE, BRIAN LENSIR, ALYSON WILLIAMS**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$56 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Hoffman Publishing

Midnight: **GERALD VEASLEY'S MIDNIGHT JAM**
 Nick Colionne, Eric Darius, Glenn Jones, Ragan Whiteside, Ray Fuller, Tony Moore, Tom Zink, Bobby Lyle, Chieli Minucci, Jazmin Ghent, Andrew Neu, Art Sherrod Jr., Donald Robinson, Richard Waller and more
 Club ECP at the DoubleTree/Small Ballroom: \$30 (General Admission)
Concert Sponsored by Saucony Creek Craft Brewing

SUNDAY, AUGUST 22

10 a.m. doors, buffet/11:30 a.m. show: *Sunday Brunch hosted by Michael Tozzi*
BRIAN BROMBERG'S UNAPOLOGETICALLY FUNKY BIG BOMBASTIC BAND
 featuring **EVERETTE HARP, RAY FULLER, TONY MOORE, TOM ZINK, ANDREW NEU, CRAIG FUNDYGA, THE BERKS HORNS**
 DoubleTree by Hilton Reading/Grand Ballroom: \$50 (General Admission; Includes brunch)
Concert Sponsored by Quaker Maid Meats /The Anderson Group

3 p.m.: *ljazzglobal.com presents*
DAVID BENOIT & LINDSEY WEBSTER
 Miller Center for the Arts: \$49 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Fraser Advanced Information Systems

6 p.m.: *30th Anniversary Finale*
RNR: RICK BRAUN & RICHARD ELLIOT with special guest **PETER WHITE**
 Scottish Rite Cathedral: \$58 (Reserved Seating)
Concert Sponsored by Penske

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SAX MAN

Boney James to unveil songs from 'Solid' at Scottish Rite

Reading Eagle

Sometimes, inspiration is slow in coming, evasive and stubborn. Other times, if an artist is very fortunate, it simply flows, the music practically writing itself. That's how "Solid," the latest release from four-time Grammy-nominee Boney James, came to be.

Released June 12, 2020, on Concord Records, the album is the saxophonist/composer's 17th as a leader and the follow-up to his smash 2017 release "Honesty," his 11th No. 1 Billboard Contemporary Jazz Album.

The new collection, which James will support with a Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest show on Aug. 20 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, West Reading, seemed to

IF YOU GO

Event: Boney James concert

When: 6 p.m. Aug. 20

Where: Scottish Rite Cathedral, 310 S. Seventh Ave., West Reading

Tickets: \$58

Web: www.berksjazzfest.com

fall right into place.

"This record really flowed at an unusually quick pace," James explains. "There was a lot of positive energy in making this music. 'Solid' feels like a very upbeat record. As I was writing them, these songs put a smile on my face."

All of "Solid's" 11 tracks were produced and written or co-written by James. Three songs — "Full Effect," "Tonic" and the ti-

tle track — were built from licks played at sound-check by James' guitarist Kendall Gilder while they were on tour in support of "Honestly."

"I said, 'Hey, what's that riff you're playing?'" James recalled. "And Kendall said, 'That's just something I'm messing around with.' I got my iPhone and recorded them, then took it home and wrote the songs."

Four other songs were initiated by longtime James collaborator, acclaimed writer/producer Jairus Moze (Anderson Paak, Nicki Minaj, Anthony Hamilton). One of those, "Be Here," was ultimately transformed into "Solid's" Adult Urban single featuring special guest Kenny Lattimore, best known for his Top 10 R&B hit "For You."

James says he's looking forward to heading out on the road and seeing how the "Solid" material evolves from night to night.

"I love playing live, maybe more than I ever did," he adds. "That has not gotten old at all. A lot of guys get tired of the traveling but it's still a joy for me every time I go out there and play."

It's still a joy to his multitude of fans, too.

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