

Patrick McCurry

I write about musical events--mainly the ones I would like to hear--in the area around the Auburn-Opelika community where I live in Alabama. I am a musician and coordinate A Little Lunch Music, a weekly series at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art during spring and fall.

[Blog](#) [My Sounds and Shows](#) [Lunch Music Schedule](#) [Event Sources](#)

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 2012

Jason Crane Arrives in Auburn!

Great jazz interviewer and traveling poet Jason Crane is in town! He arrived yesterday to the 104-degree Columbus, Georgia Greyhound station. Last night he read some of his poems at The Gnu's Room, and I caught some pictures, embedded at right. Actually the slide show at right is all my Flickr pictures tagged with "Jason Crane", so by the time you read this, it may have more than just last night.

He also made it to our premier jazz venue, Piccolo, the lounge at the Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center. There was a very good lineup that included Atlanta saxophonist Taylor Kennedy, pianist Jonathan Lynn, bassist Sidney Simmons and Atlanta drummer Jared Lanham on drums. I'm trying to be cool, but Crane with his interview show, The Jazz Session, is on my favorite celebrities list, for sure. We're hanging out, and I'm talking a lot, which is what I do when I'm nervous.

Jason will speak tonight, again at The Gnu's Room, at 7:00 PM. This time, he'll share about his interviews and his tour which started June 1. He keeps his tour diary on his personal and poetry blog. Here's the link to yesterday's entry: "Tour Diary: What's Gnu" at jasoncrane.org. In my [last post](#), I wrote more about tonight's event which will feature some of my original music to Jason's poetry. I would love to see you there!

After the TGR event, we have options for music tonight. [Piccolo](#)^{MAL} will have Montgomery saxophonist Coleman Woodson, Jr., headlining from 8-11 PM with no cover. I think there will be jazz* at Auburn's Balcony Bar (114 West Magnolia Avenue) as well to warm up the crowd before 11:00 when Big Deal Burlesque, a New Orleans Burlesque show featuring Roxie le Rouge will begin. I'm dead serious. [Here's a link](#) to the Facebook event page. We might also go check out a funk/jam band I've been wanting to hear live but have not yet had the chance, namely, The Good Doctor (reverbnation.com page) who will play at Bourbon St. Bar (103 N. College St.), \$5 cover. Why don't our bars have websites?

See you out there!

*UPDATE: No jazz at Balcony Bar. Opening for Roxie will be guitar duo the Tim Friedman Trio. I said that right.

A LITTLE LUNCH MUSIC

Coming UP...

We'll start back up September 6. [Click here](#) for more about the series.

LINK ALERTS

I put little codes after my links in case the linked site has certain issues that some people don't like. [Click here for more about this.](#)

FBD - Facebook Dependent

FBS - Flash-based Site

MAL - Music (or video) Auto-load

OOD - Out of Date

ABOUT ME



Patrick

Auburn, AL, United States

Jazz and concert saxophonist and flutist in the Auburn, Alabama area. Composer/arranger. Coordinator of the classical music series, A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art. Most notably, I'm a stay-at-home dad.

[View my complete profile](#)

BLOG ARCHIVE

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Posted by Patrick at 3:06 PM 0 comments 

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THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2012

Peter Cho, Nola Pianist, One Night Only! Jason Crane, Traveling Jazz Poet, Two Nights!!

I don't intentionally refrain from regular posting in the summertime, but with school out, my job as stay-at-home dad tends to preempt just about everything else. So if you want to check the same sites that I do, you can look at my [Event Sources page](#) and see what's going on if I'm not up to date.

This week is pretty special for a couple of reasons. New Orleans pianist and Auburn native Peter Cho ([website](#)) is in town and will be playing Thursday (6/28) at [Piccolo](#) MAL* with Jane Drake ([website](#)). In addition to being an extremely busy jazz pianist in New Orleans, since leaving Auburn Peter's career has touched some really interesting areas. Most has been in college administration, but also in rebuilding the city after Hurricane Katrina and some international musical diplomacy. He'll be there 8-11 PM with Jane. There's no cover, so support jazz at Piccolo by eating the lounge's good food, having some drinks and please tip the servers well. Plus I just got an e-mail from the Hotel advertising Peter and Jane. It's the first one I've seen where they're promoting Jane's weekly Thursday shows! Do it again, please.



Peter Cho

Before I get to the other really special thing, since I'm writing about Piccolo, for the rest of the weekend there we have Atlanta saxophonist Taylor Kennedy ([MySpace page](#)) on Friday and Montgomery saxophonist Coleman Woodson, Jr., on Saturday. Friday and Saturday's sidemen vary from night to night. Both nights are from 8-11.

Sunday morning will be jazz brunch at the hotel's restaurant, [Ariccia](#), 11-2. I know regular brunch guitarist Patrick Bruce is off the grid for the summer, so I'm not sure who's up that day.

*You can turn off Piccolo's website's auto-load music by clicking the little speaker thingy in its top-right corner.

Jazz or Bust

The other really special thing is that Jason Crane is coming to Auburn! I gushed about him in my [last post](#), but now we have actual dates and plans. He'll be at The Gnu's Room for two nights in a row. Jason is a published poet and will do a poetry reading On Friday (6/29) at 7:00 PM. Most of his poems don't have a whole lot to do with jazz, except for the fact that a few of them seem to lend themselves pretty well to being set to jazz. I know that because over the past three weeks I have written music for three of his recent ones for a small jazz group.



I'll be performing these with the aforementioned Jane Drake, guitarist Taylor Pierce and bassist Sam Altonji on Saturday. We'll pepper them through an interview format for Jason's second presentation at The Gnu's Room that night, also at 7:00 PM. Kyle Gassoitt ([about.me page](#)) will be our host. We'll record the event, and it will likely show up somewhere on-air in the coming days.

The poems we'll do are on Jason's blog at [jasoncrane.org](#). Below are links to the three if

► 2011 (75)

TWITTER

Patrick McCurry
luncharm

[luncharm @jeffalbert @jasoncrane](#) right. come to a reading, and you can creepily sneak up behind girls and take pictures of their shoulders.
10 minutes ago · [reply](#) · [retweet](#) · [favorite](#)

[JCSMuseum1](#) JCSM thanks Alabama Magazine for awarding the BEST BAMA Museum to the Jule Collins Smith Museum at Auburn University!!!
33 minutes ago · [reply](#) · [retweet](#) · [favorite](#)

[luncharm](#) If you go to a @jasoncrane poetry reading



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you're interested. Friday will be the beautiful and stark purity of a man alone reading his poetry. Saturday we'll glitz it up with music and microphones.

"uh thin philm of heir" ([link](#))

"the short kiss goodnight" ([link](#))

"props" ([link](#))

Other stuff

I am barely able to do this much of a post, so I'm not even going to look at my websites to see what's coming up. I'll tell you what I know. I'll be playing jazz at [Hamilton's on Magnolia](#) ^{FBS} Monday (7/2) from 6:30 - 9:00 PM with guitarist Taylor Pierce. Also, check out the [Columbus Jazz Society](#) for its July 8 event with Hotlanta Dixieland Jazz.

Now I'm off to [The Market at Ag Heritage Park](#) because it's only 93 degrees out today. (Hey, Jason, it will be 101 Saturday!) Pray I can get some sleep. This composing music thing is a ridiculous time-suck while being awesome at the same time.

Posted by Patrick at 4:08 PM 0 comments 

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Labels: [Columbus-GA](#), [events](#), [interview](#), [jazz](#), [My Stuff](#), [New Orleans](#)

TUESDAY, MAY 29, 2012

Jazz or Bust: NYC Interviewer on Tour, Auburn-Opelika in His Sights

If you're a jazz fan (or if you're an interview fan, for that matter) then you should get to know more about Jason Crane. He's a published poet who is also host of the jazz interview free podcast The Jazz Session ([thejazzsession.com](#)). Through his interviews, he touches on just about every possible outcropping of jazz music. He will interview complete unknowns, successful young players and many of the old guard.

Crane has the ability to encourage out the pith of his guests' philosophies, strategies, and points of view while making jazz more accessible to his listeners. Now, after about five years and 370+ interviews (a lot more if you include what he did before starting The Jazz Session), he is going on tour.



Jason Crane

A short list of some of the hundreds of people Jason Crane has interviewed at [thejazzsession.com](#):

John Abercrombie
Ray Anderson
Tim Berne
Jane Ira Bloom
Terence Blanchard
Ron Carter
Paquito D'Rivera
Eddie Daniels
Jack Dejohnette
John Ellis
Peter Erskine
Billy Hart
Jimmy Heath

Crane will move through the world, starting with the eastern US from NYC to New Orleans. The plan is to highlight jazz musicians wherever he goes. Beyond mid-June, his schedule is tentative, but the intent is to come through the Auburn-Opelika area.

There is no benefactor behind this effort, no filmmaker, no nonprofit, no public radio station, no federal or private grant. Crane is backed by dozens of members, individuals who have committed to supporting him on a monthly or yearly basis with no tax deduction. This is how good his show is.

At left I've made a list of some of the musicians he's interviewed and whose names you may recognize. Look over the website and listen to a few shows. In each show Crane includes excerpts of the artist's music. You can subscribe to the free podcast using iTunes or an RSS reader.

Fred Hirsch
 Vijay Iyer
 Steve Kuhn
 Rudresh Mahanthappa
 Ellis Marsalis
 Cecil McBee
 Christian McBride
 Marian McPartland
 John Patitucci
 Nicholas Payton
 Sam Rivers
 Sonny Rollins
 David Sanborn
 Henry Threadgill
 Jeff Watts
 Matt Wilson
 Rufus Reid
 Dave Leibman

Also, check out "Crashing on Couches to Talk to Musicians" a recent article about him on A Blog Supreme, National Public Radio's jazz blog.

And here's another article by The Village Voice: "Q&A: Jason Crane Takes The Jazz Session On the Road With The 'Jazz Or Bust' Tour".

Then support the tour by making a gift here: <http://thejazzsession.com/tour>. By joining the tour supporters, you can get benefits like a postcard from the road, a t-shirt, a CD, a copy of his poetry book (more about his poetry at jasoncrane.org), even a CD every month for 10 years.

Jason Crane and the people he has interviewed have changed my feelings and opinions about music, or at least revealed to me more about what they truly are. As a listener, a player and a businessman in this field, the decisions I make from this point on will have his

...and more

fingerprints on them, and I will forever be indebted to him for that. The least I can do is give him a couch to crash on for a night or two.

A Few Recommended Interviews

- The first one I heard was with a friend, trombonist and composer Jeff Albert, about the Open Ears series he curates in New Orleans.
<http://thejazzsession.com/2009/06/15/the-jazz-session-62-jeff-albert/>
- Some beautiful music in this one by Maria Schneider.
<http://thejazzsession.com/2011/05/02/the-jazz-session-262-maria-schneider/>
- Jane Ira Bloom's was the first time I had considered the notion that spontaneity was something that needed to be rehearsed.
<http://thejazzsession.com/2011/01/13/the-jazz-session-231-jane-ira-bloom/>
- This John Ellis CD is one of my favorite albums ever.
<http://thejazzsession.com/2008/08/13/the-jazz-session-37-john-ellis/>
- I was blown away by Dalton Ridenhour's complete lack of pretention and even more his skill in ragtime, stride and New Orleans piano genres
<http://thejazzsession.com/2011/10/06/the-jazz-session-315-dalton-ridenhour/>

Posted by Patrick at 3:01 PM 1 comments 

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2012

World-Class Jazz/Latin Concert in Columbus, Final Spring Lunch-Music Week, More

When I was in school in New Orleans (1988-1992), that town's native Terence Blanchard was finishing up his string of projects with saxophonist Donald Harrison and was beginning to make his rise onto the national scene. You can see them back in the day on [this YouTube video](#) (not the one embedded at right) performing "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise," a ubiquitous standard in Nola back then.

Since then, he and I have had a whole lifetime go by, not even once intersecting until now, when we will be hanging out with a few friends at Columbus's RiverCenter on May 26. When I say hanging out, I mean that I will be sitting with my \$40 general-admission ticket somewhere in the 2,000-seat Bill Heard Theatre, and Mr. Blanchard will be on stage with one of the world's greatest bandleaders and percussionists of all time, Poncho Sanchez, and his Latin Band.

These are two of the biggest names on the jazz scene today, and it is rare that we get top-notch, high-art shows like this in our community. I say that, but just the other night, the Brooklyn-Denton project band, [Snarky Puppy](#), set up a last-minute gig at 1048 Jazz and Blues in Montgomery--not the cultural giant Sanchez, but nonetheless a fantastic opportunity for us to expand our artistic palette.

Blanchard with Sanchez and his band are closing out the International Trumpet Guild 2012 conference next week at Columbus State University's Schwob School of Music. I mentioned the conference's rich schedule and attendance fees in a [previous post](#). They are touring a recent CD, *Chano y Dizzy!*, where they pay tribute to two legendary greats, bebop trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and composer and percussionist Chano Pozo. There's more about the project on the website, Best of Atlanta Concerts, promoting an April 28 event up there ([link](#)). The video I embedded above is a promo from the album's label, [Concord Music Group](#).

Two Free Lunchtime Concerts This Week at the Museum

Bringing it back home, on Thursday (5/17) at noon, the museum will present its second-to-last lunchtime concert for the spring season. Sarah Schrader is a violinist and AU education graduate who teaches music at George Washington Carver Elementary in Tuskegee. She will both perform for the free concert and also lead two audition-only music groups of third graders from the school, The Advanced Violin Class and the Third-Grade Chorus. It should be fun. Sarah will play with pianist Julia Tucker. More on all these performers is on the [Lunch Music Schedule](#) page on this website.

Then on Friday (5/18), I will be playing jazz with bassist Sidney Simmons from noon-1 at the museum for the recently-added final free concert of the series. It was added along with other events there to celebrate [International Museum Day](#). There's more information about what's going on Friday at our museum on its website ([event page](#)). You may have seen in the paper or elsewhere that The Woodfield Trio will be performing Friday, but it will be the jazz duo instead.

A Few More Local Things

My favorite local teen band with what I think is tremendous potential, [Shutup 'n' Clap!](#), will be at Fishizzles Fish and Skrimps on 830 Opelika Rd. in Auburn tonight (Wednesday, 5/16) starting at 6:00.

The big band [The Auburn Knights Orchestra](#) will play for Auburn's May Concert Series ([news release](#)) at Town Creek Park, weather permitting, Thursday night (5/17) from 6-7:30 PM.

Friday-Saturday (5/18-5/19) jazz at [Piccolo](#) is not yet announced on its website, but Thursday (5/17) will be vocalist [Jane Drake](#)'s regular appearance, usually with her trio. The hotel's restaurant, [Ariccia](#), will do it's weekly Sunday (5/20) brunch from 11-2.

UPDATE: Headliners are Atlanta saxophonist Taylor Kennedy on Friday and Montgomery saxophonist Coleman Woodson on Saturday.

Locally based and nationally exposed indie duo [Martha's Trouble](#) will be at Opelika's [Noon Tunes](#) next Wednesday (5/23).

Posted by Patrick at 4:15 PM 0 comments 

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Labels: [Auburn Knights](#), [big band](#), [Classical Music](#), [Columbus-GA](#), [events](#), [jazz](#), [Jule Collins Smith Museum](#), [Lunch Music](#), [Montgomery](#), [My Stuff](#), [New Orleans](#), [pop music](#), [Tuskegee](#), [video](#)

2011 Fall Lunch Music Archive with Slideshow

For the archive, here is the Fall 2011 schedule for A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art. Embedded at right is a Flickr slide show of pictures from this season. At the time of this post, I haven't quite gotten all of fall's pictures up.

Among other things, this was the season that we introduced performance sponsors and were visited by international concert saxophone pioneer James Houlik.

Here's an interview of me by Kyle Gassiott for [Troy Public Radio's Community Focus](#) from fall 2011.

Fall 2011 Schedule

September 1: pianist Dr. Joshua Pifer

–Sponsored by Haygood, Cleveland, Pierce, Mattson and Thompson

September 8: The Woodfield Trio

–Sponsored by Ursula's Catering and the Museum Café

September 15: clarinetist Gary Smith with pianist Nicole Agostino

–Sponsored by Haygood, Cleveland, Pierce, Mattson and Thompson

September 22: saxophonist James Houlik with pianist Vahan Sargsyan

–Sponsored by Eugene and Phyllis Staland

September 29: Student mixed recital featuring pianists Tzu-yi Chen and Julia Tucker and the AU Chamber Choir

–Sponsored by Charles and Melanie Wright

October 6: pianist Tzu-yi Chen

–Sponsored by an anonymous friend

October 13: AU piano students perform Franz Liszt

–Sponsored by Ardistry Hair Studio

October 20: four-hand pianists Helene Burkart and Bill Summerville

October 27: The Fountain City Ensemble

–Sponsored by Nicholas and Carolyn Davis

November 3: The Woodfield Trio

November 10: cellist Laura Usiskin with violinist Peter Povey

–Sponsored by Bill and Josie Walsh

November 17: Recorder-Flute Duets: Mary Olson and Patrick McCurry

November 24: Thanksgiving holiday (no performance)

December 1: pianist Nicole Agostino and flute-cello duo Patrick McCurry and Charles Wright

~Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Wick Watkins

December 8: Cellist Dr. Lisa Caravan and pianist Dr. Jeremy Samolesky

~Sponsored by Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. - Mr. Grant Haygood

December 15: pianist Mary Slaton

~Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Wick Watkins

Performance Details

Thursday, September 1, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by the law firm of Haygood, Cleveland, Pierce, Mattson and Thompson, LLC ([website](#))

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by pianist Dr. Joshua Pifer. Dr. Pifer recently became the Lecturer in Piano at Auburn University. He has served at Florida State University, Wittenberg University and Miami University. Having performed as a soloist in four continents, he is a founding member of the Oto Trio, including internationally acclaimed artist Chikuen Kato and the music of Japanese composers. He commissions and premieres works and is an advocate for the piano music of Alexander Tcherepnin.

Dr. Pifer is involved as teacher and performer with numerous groups including the Orfeo Music Festival in the Italian Alps, The National Conservatory of San Salvador, University of California Santa Barbara and many others. He was president of the Santa Clara Valley branch of the Music Teachers Association of California and adjudicator at various festivals and competitions. He also helps pianists who have suffered injuries from excessive tension in their playing.

Born and raised in Tokyo, Japan, Dr. Pifer completed his bachelors degree in pre-medicine, piano, and organ from Wittenberg University. He earned his Masters degree from Miami University, and in 2009 graduated from the University of Southern California with honors and a Doctorate of Musical Arts.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, September 8, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by the Museum Café and Ursula's Catering ([website](#))

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by The Woodfield Trio (www.woodfieldtrio.com). Made up of Patrick McCurry on woodwinds, Charles Wright on cello and Barbara Acker-Mills on piano, The Woodfield Trio will perform works by composers such as Bruch, Bolling, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Clementi, Haydn, Beethoven and others. The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, September 15, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by the law firm of Haygood, Cleveland, Pierce, Mattson and Thompson, LLC ([website](#))

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by Montgomery Symphony clarinetist Gary Smith and pianist Nicole Agostino. In addition to his symphonic duties, Mr. Smith sits in on saxophone with big bands like the Auburn Knights and the Montgomery Recreators. He loves chamber music. In real life, he manages the Prattville office and the e-commerce operations of American Klassic Designs. He lives in Prattville with his wife Diane and two sons. The older son, George, is starting on alto sax this year, and his younger son, Nathan, plays

the guitar, so there is very little quiet time at his house.

Nicole Agostino is a doctoral candidate in piano performance at Florida State University. She holds a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music both in performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. An active soloist and chamber musician, Nicole has performed several recitals across the northeastern, midwestern, and southern states. In the spring of 2011 she toured as a guest artist giving recitals and lectures across the southeast on J. S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and has recently recorded the work. In addition to performing, Nicole also maintains a busy teaching schedule. As a graduate assistant at both FSU and IU, she taught applied lessons, class piano, and several music theory lectures. During the summer of 2008, she held a piano faculty position at the renowned Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. Nicole's primary teachers include Read Gainsford, Karen Shaw, and Galina Gertsenzon.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, September 22, 12-1 PM

Key Performance Sponsored by Eugene and Phyllis Stanaland

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by internationally acclaimed concert tenor saxophonist James Houlik with pianist Vahan Sargsyan.

James Houlik has been critically acclaimed around the world as the preeminent saxophonist. He has introduced the unexpected beauty of his instrument wherever open ears seek a refreshing new voice. He performs with many of the world's great orchestras, most often performing music that has been composed for him by such composers as Morton Gould, Robert Ward, Russell Peck, Eric Ewazen, and many more. His concerto recordings have helped to set a new standard of saxophone performance, prompting *The London Daily Mail* to recognize him as "The World's Great Saxophone Virtuoso." He has appeared in the major music capitals of the world, including orchestral performances in Brazil, The Netherlands, Germany, Taiwan, Portugal, Italy, South Africa, Turkey, and many more. With a combination of engaging repertoire and compelling artistry on an already popular instrument, James Houlik serves up dependably exciting performances. ([website](#))

"His playing is technically secure, his tone is big and cello-like, and musicianship is never in doubt. Houlik is as good a classical saxophonist as one is likely to encounter." - American Record Guide

Armenian pianist Vahan Sargsyan holds graduate and post degrees from Yerevan Komitas State Conservatoire where he studied with Elza Tandilyan and his father, renowned pianist Villi Sargsyan. He was awarded Second Prize in the International Competition in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and he was also winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Auditions as a soloist and in two chamber music categories. Mr. Sargsyan has performed as soloist with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and is regularly seen at the orchestra's keyboards. He is staff pianist and chamber music coach at Carnegie Mellon University.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10. To make a lunch reservation or to place an order for a to-go lunch off of the regular [menu](#) beforehand, call Chef Ursula anytime at 821-9921 or the Café at 844-7016, Tuesday - Friday, 11 AM - 2 PM.

The fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, September 29, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by Charles and Melanie Wright

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert featuring students from Auburn University and Columbus State University.

Dr. William Powell will lead the Auburn University Chamber Choir in a partial preview of its concert on October 3 at 7:30 PM at Auburn First Baptist Church. Also performing will be student pianists Julia Tucker from AU and Columbus State University's Tzu-yi Chen.

Tzu-yi Chen earned a Master's degree at Karlsruhe Music University in Germany and also studied at the National Superior Conservatory of Paris for Music and Dance. She has performed recitals throughout Taiwan and has appeared in radio and television broadcasts in Hong Kong and Germany. She has performed with groups such as the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, the National Taiwan Symphony, the Saint Petersburg Symphony Orchestra and the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Among her awards are first prize at the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Piano Competition (2007), first prize at the International Piano Competition of Mauro Paolo Monopoli in Italy (2001), and fourth prize at IX Darmstadt International Chopin Piano Competition in Germany (2009). Tzu-yi is currently working on her Artist Diploma at Columbus State University where she studies with Alexander Kobrin.

The Chamber Choir was established in fall 2008 as the premiere choral ensemble at Auburn University. Under the direction of William Powell, the group has represented the university at New York's Carnegie Hall, in northern Italy, and as an invited ensemble for the prestigious Alabama Music Educators Conference. The 40-plus member group consists of students from throughout the university who represent a variety of majors and disciplines. They perform advanced choral literature including Renaissance madrigals, multi-movement masterworks, spirituals, jazz, and works by current composers.

Julia Tucker is an Auburn native and a junior majoring in economics and piano performance under the study of Dr. Jeremy Samolesky. She is assistant organist and scholarship singer at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Auburn and choir accompanist at Trinity Lutheran Church. She also sings renaissance polyphony.

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Thursday, October 6, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by an anonymous friend

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert featuring pianist Tzu-yi Chen from Columbus State University.

Tzu-yi Chen earned a Master's degree at Karlsruhe Music University in Germany and also studied at the National Superior Conservatory of Paris for Music and Dance. She has performed recitals throughout Taiwan and has appeared in radio and television broadcasts in Hong Kong and Germany. She has performed with groups such as the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, the National Taiwan Symphony, the Saint Petersburg Symphony Orchestra and the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Among her awards are first prize at the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Piano Competition (2007), first prize at the International Piano Competition of Mauro Paolo Monopoli in Italy (2001), and fourth prize at IX Darmstadt International Chopin Piano Competition in Germany (2009). Tzu-yi is currently working on her Artist Diploma at Columbus State University where she studies with Alexander Kobrin.

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Thursday, October 13, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by Ardistry Hair Studio

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert featuring Auburn University student pianists from the studio of Dr. Jeremy Samolesky. This will be a preview of their upcoming recital on October 25 commemorating the 200th birthday of Franz Liszt. Performers will be Hunter Hayes, Julia Tucker, Alex Luk, Angelyn Traylor, Christina Kettering, Christina Fallows, Nicki Mazaheri and Rachel Robinett.

Hunter Hayes is a sophomore at Auburn currently pursuing his degrees in Piano Performance and Finance. Originally from Northeast Florida, Hunter began piano at the age of three under Alba Abrahamson. At eleven, he began taking lessons with Tugce Tari, a renowned Turkish pianist who has appeared in concerts throughout the country. Hunter has competed in various piano competitions in the southeast, earning his highest distinction at the age of 16 when he received the Steinway Scholarship from the Jacksonville Steinway Society. Hunter is also a member of Auburn track and several other campus groups.

Julia Tucker is an Auburn native and a junior majoring in economics and piano performance under the study of Dr. Samolesky. She is assistant organist and scholarship singer at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Auburn and choir accompanist at Trinity Lutheran Church. She sings renaissance polyphony and enjoys drinking coffee and solving puzzles.

Alex Luk from New Rochelle, New York, currently studies piano performance at Auburn with Dr. Samolesky. He has studied with Dr. Robin McCabe and Craig Sheppard at the University of Washington Piano Summer Festival. He started playing piano at age ten, studying with Roslyn Tobey and Anna Mi Lee. From eighth to twelfth grade he attended an all-boys military boarding school in New Bloomfield, Pennsylvania, and is currently enrolled as a cadet in Auburn's Army ROTC.

Angelyn Traylor is a junior at Auburn working toward a combined degree in vocal and instrumental music education with piano as her primary instrument. She is a member of the Honors College and has been inducted into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi and Mortar Board Society. Angelyn serves as a Music Department Ambassador and is the pianist for the Symphonic Winds. In addition to playing the piano, Angelyn enjoys singing with the AU Chamber Choir and serving as a piccolo section leader in the Marching Band.

A sophomore at Auburn University and a Florida native, Christina Danielle Kettering divides her time between English and piano performance majors. She is heavily involved in outreach to international students who are far from home, in a very rigorous academic program and under a lot of stress. She helps them with English and hosts events that make them feel welcome and wanted. She describes herself as having more ideals than ambition, though without specific career goals, she is confident that God has a purpose for her passion.

Christina Fallows is currently a sophomore in piano performance at Auburn. She is from Belton, Texas, and has played since 1998. She has won the Central Texas Music Teacher's Association (TMTA) Sonata Festival and placed at the district level in the TMTA Student Affiliate Performance Contest. Last year, she was one of two to receive Auburn's John Williams Tamblin Endowment Scholarship in music through audition. When not practicing, Christina is involved with Reformed University Fellowship, a campus ministry, and the college ministry of First Baptist Church in Opelika.

An Auburn native, Nicki Mazaheri began studying piano at age eight. Her teachers were Karen Hickok and Virginia Barry. Now a junior at Auburn University majoring in piano performance, she studies with Dr. Samolesky. She has received the school's Kay Reynolds Beaty Endowment Scholarship in music for the past three years. She loves practicing piano, painting, reading, and being outside. She feels that if she could practice the piano outside, she would be the happiest person.

Originally from Jacksonville, Florida, Rachel Robinett is a senior in Piano Performance at Auburn with a minor in English. Including the John Williams Tamblin Endowment Scholarship, she has been awarded three Music Department scholarships, as well as an academic scholarship from National Merit. She enjoys performing, learning new things, and spending time with friends.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, October 20, 12-1 PM

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by pianists Dr. Bill Summerville and Mrs. Helene Burkart. The duo will be presenting a program that will include piano pieces for four hands, and Dr. Summerville will perform some solo works.

While earning his Doctorate in Piano at the University of Michigan, Dr. Summerville studied with internationally renowned pianist György Sándor, student of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. In 1980, he came from Peabody Conservatory to teach at Auburn University until 1995. Dr. Summerville also holds degrees from Indiana University and the University of Alabama. In his early years, he was a winner of the Birmingham Symphony Audition. Now retired, Dr. Summerville performs occasionally in the local and extended community.

Having studied piano as a child in Germany, Mrs. Burkart began playing later in life after moving to the United States. In recent years her concentration on four-hand performance has led her to playing at the Alabama Shakespeare Theatre, for the Auburn and the Montgomery Music Clubs and elsewhere locally.

Thursday, October 27, 12-1 PM**Sponsored by Nicholas and Carolyn Davis**

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by the Fountain City Ensemble. The group, founded by Andrée Martin, Lisa Oberlander, Amy Griffiths, and Paul Vaillancourt, came together as a result of several collaborations which revealed an uncommon compatibility and singularity of purpose among these four individuals. In 2004, the Fountain City Ensemble began commissioning original works and creating arrangements for their unusual and versatile quartet comprised of flute, clarinet, saxophone, and percussion. Considering the variety of options afforded by each player, the group encompasses a remarkably diverse palate of timbral possibilities while maintaining the flexibility and nuance of a chamber ensemble.

The FCE has performed throughout the United States and Japan, including the premiere of J.M. David's *Found Objects* in Tokyo and a concert at the American Musicological Society's annual conference in Indianapolis. The group's 2011-2012 concert season will include a performance at the International Clarinet Association conference in Los Angeles, a residency at the Aries Composers Festival at Colorado State University, and the premiere of a new work written for the FCE by composer Galen Brown. In 2013 the FCE will be joined by soprano Michelle DeBruyn for the premiere of a chamber opera composed by Pulitzer Prize nominee Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, November 3, 12-1 PM

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by The Woodfield Trio (www.woodfieldtrio.com). Made up of Patrick McCurry on woodwinds, Charles Wright on cello and Barbara Acker-Mills on piano, The Woodfield Trio currently performs works by composers such as Bruch, Bolling, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Clementi, Haydn, Beethoven and others. The trio was formed as fixture for the series, but also performs in the community at large. The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, November 10, 12-1 PM**Sponsored by Bill and Josie Walsh**

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by cellist Laura Usiskin and violinist Peter Povey.

Laura Usiskin holds the cello fellowship with the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra and is the founder of the Montgomery Music Project which sends highly trained teachers to

elementary schools throughout Montgomery to give instruction in stringed instrument performance. She has premiered dozens of works and performed with new music ensembles including Ensemble Pamplemousse, the Bang-On-A-Can All Stars, and the Axiom Ensemble. In addition, she has participated in many early music ensembles, performing regularly with the American Baroque Orchestra, Yale's Schola Cantorum, and the gamba consort *Temperaments*. Laura has performed in international venues such as the Kennedy Center; the Palazzo Chigi Saracini in Siena, Italy; Boston's Symphony Hall; New York's Alice Tully Hall and many others. Her leadership and orchestral abilities have been recognized throughout her career, most notably as sitting principal cellist on Juilliard's USA orchestra tour in 2006. Laura was also a member of the New Haven Symphony from 2008-2010. Read more online at lorausiskin.com.

Peter Povey is currently on the faculty of the Montgomery Music Project. He received his Bachelor of Music with honors from the Royal College of Music in London, where he studied with Dona Lee Croft and Bela Katona. During his studies in London, Peter performed in orchestras such as the City of Birmingham Symphony and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He also played on soundtracks such as *Lord of the Rings*, *Wondrous Oblivion*, and *Peter Rabbit* for the BBC. Peter has also performed on Nickledeon, BBC television, BBC radio, LBC radio, and WVIA public radio, as well as performing solo recitals all over Europe and the United States. In 2006, Peter entered Yale University where he graduated with a Masters of Music in 2009 in the violin studio of Ani Kavafian. During his time at Yale, Peter created a program for New Haven Public Schools to help with the the Connecticut Master Tests. In 2006 Peter founded the McAlester Institute of Music, a two-week music program for students age 6-18, designed to effect social change amongst young people, develop leadership, and improve music schools through contemporary teaching. In 2009 Peter started on a doctorate in music program at Northwestern University studying violin with Professor Gerardo Ribeiro.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, November 17, 12-1 PM

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by recorder player Dr. Mary Olson and flutist Patrick McCurry.

Dr. Mary Olson is Associate Professor of English at Tuskegee University. She holds a Ph.D. in medieval languages and literature from Purdue University. She studied recorder with the late George Olson of the American Conservatory of Music and is a former member of the Oak Park-River Forest Recorder Society. Dr. Olson sings with the St. Cecelia Schola Cantorum in Auburn. She lives in the country with her husband and two dogs

Patrick McCurry performs with Auburn-based chamber group The Woodfield Trio. He holds a Masters degree in Chamber Music Performance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. There, his instructor and mentor was James Houlik, international concert saxophone maestro. He studied jazz improvisation, composition and arranging while earning his undergraduate degree from Loyola University in New Orleans. Besides performing jazz and chamber music, Mr. McCurry composes in jazz and classical idioms, writes songs and teaches. He performs in sacred and secular venues, specializing in saxophone and flute.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, December 1, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Wick Watkins

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by pianist Nicole Agostino and flute-cello duo Patrick McCurry and Charles Wright.

Nicole Agostino is a doctoral candidate in piano performance at Florida State University. She holds a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music both in performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. An active soloist and chamber musician, Nicole has performed several recitals across the northeastern, midwestern, and southern states. In the spring of 2011 she toured as a guest artist giving recitals and lectures across the southeast on the Goldberg Variations and has recently recorded the work. In addition to performing, Nicole also maintains a busy teaching schedule. As a graduate assistant at both Florida State and Indiana, she has taught applied lessons, class piano, and several music theory lectures. During the summer of 2008, she held a piano faculty position at the renowned Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. Nicole's primary teachers include Read Gainsford, Karen Shaw, and Galina Gertsenzon.

Patrick McCurry performs with Auburn-based chamber group The Woodfield Trio. He holds a Masters degree in Chamber Music Performance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. There, his instructor and mentor was James Houlik, international concert saxophone maestro. He studied jazz improvisation, composition and arranging while earning his undergraduate degree from Loyola University in New Orleans. Besides performing jazz and chamber music, Mr. McCurry composes in jazz and classical idioms, writes songs and teaches. He performs in sacred and secular venues, specializing in saxophone and flute.

Charles Wright is cellist and leader of the Auburn Quartet, a string quartet in the East Alabama and West Georgia area. Having been a member of the Auburn Community Orchestra since 1985, he now plays principal cello for the group and is president of its board. He performs in the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra and is involved with the Auburn Chamber Music Society in which capacity he founded this chamber music series. He is also a member of Auburn-based chamber group The Woodfield Trio. Mr. Wright is passionate about classical music and plays a significant role in cultivating its growth and influence in the Auburn community. The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, December 8, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. - Mr. Grant Haygood

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert by cellist Lisa Caravan and pianist Dr. Jeremy Samolesky.

LISA CARAVAN recently joined the Auburn music faculty. She has appeared as orchestral soloist, as assistant principal cellist with the Binghamton Philharmonic, and as principal with three other groups. An experienced recitalist, she has premiered new music by major composers and has performed in Heidelberg College's New Music Festival. She received her Master's degree and an Orchestral Studies Diploma from the Eastman School of Music and is currently a doctoral candidate there. Her Bachelor's degree is from Temple University. She is the first recipient of the Donald Shelter Music Education Prize and recently received Eastman's Teaching Assistant Prize for Excellence in Teaching. [Click here](#) for an extended bio.

DR. JEREMY SAMOLESKY joined the Auburn faculty in 2007. He is a worldwide concerto and recital performer whose credits include a nationally broadcast solo performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. He has achieved the rare distinction of holding two doctoral degrees from the Eastman School of Music as well as multiple honors, awards and scholarships from that school. Among his festival appearances are Canada's Banff Centre, the Adriatic Chamber Music Festival and the Chigiana Music Academy in Siena. He has premiered works by David Plylar and David Maslanka and was featured in a documentary on the music of Prokofiev. [Click here](#) for an extended bio.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Thursday, December 15, 12-1 PM

Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Wick Watkins

A Little Lunch Music at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art presents an informal, free concert of Christmas music by Mary Slaton, pianist. Ms. Slaton is known throughout the southeast as one of the region's premier soloists in the piano-lounge style. Her extensive knowledge of popular music from every era has impressed and entertained for years. Mary has performed in the Memphis area at the Hilton and the Hyatt Regency. In Atlanta, she has performed at the Omni Hotel, the Hilton, the Atlanta Country Club, the Marietta Country Club, the Atlanta Athletic Club and the 1848 Restaurant where she had a standing gig with her trio every New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day for ten years. She has played the Terra Cotta in Auburn, Alabama; the Saugahatchee Country Club; and Opelika's Marriott Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National. Mary holds a master's degree in piano performance from Memphis State University and a bachelor's degree from the University of Montevallo. She is currently based in Opelika, Alabama, where she teaches privately and at Southern Union Community College.

The Museum Café will be open as usual serving gourmet food for less than \$10, and the fine art exhibitions at the museum are free. Contact Colleen Bourdeau at cbourdeau@auburn.edu or Patrick McCurry at patrick@luncharm.net for more info. Address is 901 S. College St., Auburn.

Posted by Patrick at 7:37 AM 0 comments 

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MONDAY, MAY 14, 2012

Final Cello Fellowship Recital (5/15) for MSO's Resident Torchbearer

Laura Usiskin, who holds the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra's cello fellowship, will give her final recital starting at 7:30 Tuesday night (5/15) in the Wilson Auditorium at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. I will be coaching my son's final soccer game, or else this is one for which I would have made the trip. Below is a recording made at a recent lunch-music performance with pianist Jeremy Samolesky at the museum.



[III. Allegro - Brahms Cello Sonata No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 38](#)

For me, Laura is the first of I hope many MSO fellows that I will hear and get to know. She has made the trip over to our community several times to perform and instruct, and we are better for it. She has a spirit that infects those around her, me at least, to dig in and make some real music. And she founded the [Montgomery Music Project](#) which has the potential to carry this spinning intention forward indefinitely after she's moved on.

She also happens to play the cello richly well, approaching the instrument both with what seems sometimes to be the fierceness of a jealous love while making music like the perfect skip of a rock across a pond. There's truth in there somewhere for me even if it sounds a little silly.

I love the diversity of the recital program for Tuesday. Cello music will include a Britten sonata and a piece called *Elfentanz* by David Popper (1843-1913). She'll open with a viola da gamba sonata by Bach, for whose period she has a particular penchant--it will be authentically Baroque--and will world-premier a new work by Matthew Scott Phillips (b.

1977). Filling in the spaces will be two of three Robert Schumann *Oboe Romances* and a song by Strauss that will feature her newly fiancéed trombonist Jason Robins playing a French horn part.

I am grateful to Maestro Hinds and the staff and board of the Montgomery Symphony for doing the endless fundraising and administration it takes to keep all of its far-reaching outreach programs up and running ([give them some money](#)). Specifically at this moment I am grateful to them for choosing Laura and for giving her a place to hang her lamp. Godspeed, Laura.

Posted by Patrick at 11:47 PM 0 comments 

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2012

A Little French Music, Trumpets in Columbus, More

Tomorrow at noon at the museum, Barbara Acker-Mills will split a recital with The Woodfield Trio, of which she is a member with me and cellist Charles Wright. The first half of the program, she'll do Claude Debussy's *Reverie* and Gabriel Fauré's *Dolly Suite*, Op. 56. The two composers were contemporaries, technically, though Debussy was a young composer twenty years after Fauré was a young composer. Fauré's music was prescient of the impressionism with which Debussy is identified. If my general knowledge of music history is correct, this is the point where texture and sonorities in music begin to become as important as melody and harmony. What I mean by that is you will hear things in the music that are there as much (or more) because of the noise they make as because of the way they fit into the way melody and harmony were conventionally built at the time.

The link from Debussy's impressionism to Claude Bolling's (born in 1930) *Suite for Flute and Piano*, the piece that Barbara will play with our trio, is less clear--though still evident--than between Fauré and Debussy. Bolling is a French jazz pianist and bandleader who has written several romantic sounding pieces heavily influenced by jazz. We have played movements of this piece here and there over the last couple of years. But this time we'll present six of the seven movements at one time. This is a free concert, as usual, and there's more about the series and its performers on my [Lunch Music Schedule](#) page.

I'll try to do another post about this weekend's jazz events at Piccolo and Ariccia (see below) in Auburn and at The Loft and the Liberty Theatre in Columbus. And hopefully I'll have time to say some about Montgomery Symphony's cello fellow Laura Usiskin's final recital in Montgomery Tuesday, May 15 ([fellowship series page](#)).

I mentioned in [a recent post](#) about some trumpet activity happening in Columbus at the end of May. I said that Woody Shaw would be performing. He died in 1989, so he won't be performing. His son, Woody Shaw, III, will be lecturing on the legacy of the legendary jazz trumpeter. If you want to go to this or any number of other International Trumpet Guild ([website](#)) events during the week of May 22-26, you'll have to register for the conference. Rates are on the website. They range from \$210 to \$405 for the week and \$95 to \$135 for a particular day. The schedule is jam-packed and looks great, even if you don't play trumpet.

But you don't have to register for the conference to attend the May 26 concert, Poncho Sanchez and his Latin Big Band featuring Terence Blanchard in the Bill Heard Theater at the RiverCenter in Columbus. You can get \$40 tickets at the [website for the RiverCenter](#). Don't miss this one.

UPDATES

I forgot to mention that [Martha's Trouble](#), a duo whose audio I embedded in my [last post](#), will be playing Thursday (5/10) at Town Creek Park in Auburn as part of the city's May Concert Series ([series' news release](#)). The immortal [Auburn Knights](#) will perform for the series next Thursday (5/17). Shows are from 6-7:30 PM weather permitting.

Headlining at [Piccolo](#) this week will be [Jane Drake](#) on Thursday (5/10), Jimmy Johnson on Friday (5/11) and William Hollifield on Saturday (5/12), all shows 8-11 PM. I'm very happy to see Jimmy on the bill. He's a local saxophonist and member of the Auburn Knights who plays mostly alto these days, though he's a very good tenor player as well. I have not seen Hollifield on the schedule before. He's an Atlanta-area native and saxophonist with a good online presence (williamhollifield.com - a bit slow loading pages at the moment). [Ariccia](#) will do a Mother's Day jazz brunch Sunday with seatings at 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM and 2:00 PM. Call 344-844-5140 to make a reservation. The [Tim Chambliss](#) Jazz Trio will provide the music, so it will be good. **UPDATE:** Brunch trio will be Columbus's Paul Vaillancourt on drums with Patrick Bruce on guitar and Montgomery pianist Coleman Woodson, III. You sometimes see Tim's name on the bill (as in this case) because he's the go-to guy for great players even if he's not playing.

Posted by Patrick at 10:42 PM 0 comments 

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