

Live Music

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March 7

On tap

In the mid-1980s, Stanley Jordan took the jazz guitar world by storm with his two-handed tapping technique, now a standard part of the fingering repertoire of uber-cool guitarists everywhere. The difference between Jordan and a lot of other such stylists is he doesn't use it just to show off — which would be entertaining enough — he uses it to genuinely enhance the color and texture of his music. The versatile four-time Grammy nominee has had three No. 1 jazz albums, and has explored the worlds of pop, rock and classical music, earning the respect of his instrumental peers as well as a devoted following among us lesser mortals. Oh, yeah, he's also devoted himself to promote healing folks through music by serving as a spokesman for the American Music Therapy Association; so, yes, he is a better person than you AND more talented.

Stanley Jordan, 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Thursday, March 7, Jimmy Mak's, 221 N.W. 10th Ave. \$18 reserved seating, \$15 general admission. Info: 503-295-6542, www.jimmymaks.com.

March 9

Gifted with a no-apparent-weaknesses alto voice, Karen Lovely is among the strongest female blues vocalists on the circuit today. Heck, maybe she's the strongest, period. So it's a shock to learn she only began singing professionally five years ago. Her records "Lucky Girl," released in 2008, and 2010's "Still the Rain" have both topped the blues and roots charts and went to No. 1 on XM Radio's B.B. King's Bluesville's "Pick to Click" list. She's also been nominated for, and/or won, a slew of awards, and her band placed second in the 2010 International Blues Challenge. If you miss Etta James or Koko Taylor, you'll be thoroughly consoled by this lady's show.

Karen Lovely, 9 p.m. Saturday, March 9, Duff's Garage, 1635 S.E. Seventh Ave. \$15. Info: 503-234-2337, www.duffsgarage.com.

Depeche mode of being

Electro-pop-dance-rockers Splintered in Her Head are marking the release of their debut Japanese-titled EP (a word for "girls"). The Portland based outfit consists of Michael Pacheco on vocals and guitar, Steve Mallory on bass and keyboards, Ephraim Bano on guitar, and keys, and Matt Koski on drums. A former member of Portland's Chinatown dance rockers The Slants, who headline the show, Pacheco got the idea for Splintered in Her Head after going to school in Tokyo, where he was a deejay and apparently dated several women who either broke his heart and/or stole his sanity. You can hear Duran Duran, Depeche Mode, MGMT and any of a host of techno-meets-soulful-melancholy acts in this outfit, and their best cut is "Madonna," a nice Cure-like ballad that showcases Pacheco's easy-on-the-ears tenor.

The Slants, Splintered in the Head, Johnny Hi-fi, 9 p.m. Saturday, March 9, Star Theater, 13 N.W. Sixth Ave. \$6. Info: 503-248-4700, www.startheaterportland.com.

by: COURTESY OF MICHAEL WEINTROB/GREENSKY BLUEGRASS - Michigan's Greensky Bluegrass has played lots of festivals in climbing into the Americana consciousness, and they play at the Wonder Ballroom on March 9.

Where the grass dances like Smurfs

Hailing from Kalamazoo, Mich., Greensky Bluegrass is Anders Beck on dobro, Michael Arlen Bont on banjo, Dave Bruzza on guitar, Mike Devol on upright bass and Paul Hoffman on mandolin. They won the Telluride Bluegrass Festival's Band



Competition in 2006 and have gone on to play numerous festivals, from the Northwest String Summit to Bonnaroo. Trading solos and layering harmonies with the casual approach that can only come from years of jamming together, these boys have spent a half decade slowly climbing to the top of the Americana world and are now one of the most popular acoustic acts around, adding touches of rock and jazz to their grass. They recorded their latest album “Handguns” — now there’s a timely title — on the same console that gave us Skynrd’s “Free Bird,” and their warm sound would

appeal to fans of Pure Prairie League, Deer Tick and the Jerry Garcia Band, or for that matter any halfway decent folk-country band.

Greensky Bluegrass, Ryan Montbleau, 8 p.m. Saturday, March 9, Wonder Ballroom, 128 N.E. Russell St. \$18 in advance, \$22 at the door. Info: www.wonderballroom.com.

‘Round town

For five decades, South Africa’s Ladysmith Black Mambazo has combined native African music with Christian gospel to create some of the most compelling sounds on the planet. You can hear what made Paul Simon produce them when the a capella group performs at 8 p.m. Friday, March 8, in the Aladdin Theater, 3017 S.E. Milwaukie Ave. \$32.50 in advance, \$35 day of show. Parents must accompany minors. Info: aladdin-theater.com.

Our new fave Portland garage-surf duo is Mister Tang, and they’re playing their ultra-cool fuzzy rock ‘n’ roll, along with Banh Mi, Toim and Tyrants, for an all-ages show at 8 p.m. Sunday, March 10, in Slabtown, 1033 N.W. 16th Ave. \$3. Info: 971-229-1455, www.slabtownbar.net.



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