

# Grupo Falso Baiano | biographies

## Brian Moran | 7-string guitar

7-string guitarist Brian Moran hails from New Jersey, where he grew up playing piano and clarinet before deciding to focus on guitar. As a graduate of the Berklee College of Music, Brian worked as a jazz guitarist and composer before discovering the rich tradition of the Brazilian 7-string guitar. Since then, he travels often to São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, expanding his studies of the 7-string guitar, Brazilian mandolin and cavaquinho, a type of ukulele with Portuguese origins used in many styles of Brazilian music.

In addition to playing with Brazilian quartet *Grupo Falso Baiano*, Brian has performed with Bruce Forman, Mundell Lowe, and Harvey Wainapel, amongst others, and was the bandleader, arranger and composer for jazz sextet *Blowout*, whose 2003 CD *The Supporting Theory* was released to critical acclaim.



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## Zack Pitt-Smith | reeds



Woodwinds player Zack Pitt-Smith began his musical journey by playing a drum set at age 6. By age 11 the New York native was performing on the saxophone and studying woodwind technique and music theory at Eastman School of Music and later at Berklee College of Music. He went on to earn a degree in Ethnomusicology from Brown University. Zack has found his richest inspiration in several of Brazil's traditional music styles.

He has shared the stage with Jovino Santos, Harvey Wainapel, and Marcos Silva, Gene Harris, Slide Hampton and James Williams.

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## Jesse Appelman | mandolin (bandolim)

A Bay Area native, Jesse Appelman continues to split his time and his passion between Brazilian music and bluegrass. Originally a bluegrass mandolinist and guitarist, Jesse first heard a recording of the great Brazilian mandolinist Jacob do Bandolim during a lesson and "fell into the deep well of Brazilian music." Jesse is a graduate of Wesleyan University and spent six months studying Afro-Brazilian cultural history at the Universidade Catolica de Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. Jesse spent the first half of 2008 living in Rio de Janeiro, studying at Brazil's best-known choro institute (the Escola Portátil de Música) with some of the country's greatest musicians, including Pedro Amorim, Maurício Carrilho and Luciana Rabello.



In addition to playing mandolin for *Grupo Falso Baiano*, Jesse is a founding member of local bluegrass outfit Five Dollar Suit, which opened the 2007 San Francisco Bluegrass and Old-Time Festival. Jesse has shared the stage with Mike Marshall, Harvey Wainapel, Danilo Brito and Dudu Maia.

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## Ami Molinelli | percussion



Based in both Los Angeles and San Francisco, Ami Molinelli is currently a freelance musician, artist-in-residence for the Los Angeles Music Center, and currently plays percussion for *Grupo Falso Baiano* where her lyrical less-is-more approach, coupled with extensive research of traditional rhythms and styles both in Brazil and abroad, has earned her audience admiration and the respect of colleagues. She has studied Pandeiro and percussion with artists Guello, Marcos Suzano, Claudio Bebbiano, Randy Gloss, Michael Spiro and Durval Poeira to name a few.

Ami earned a Master of Fine Arts in World Music from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) and has studied Brazilian percussion and dance at the Universidade Federal da Bahia in Salvador. Ami endorses Rhythm Tech percussion.