



# Grupo Falso Baiano

*new album out now* depois



# Grupo Falso Baiano | fact sheet

**BAND NAME** | Grupo Falso Baiano

**MUSICAL STYLE / GENRE** | Choro – a traditional form of popular Brazilian music, similar to jazz, blending Latin American rhythms with melodies and forms derived from classical music. It is generally an instrumental genre, closely linked to samba.

**ORIGIN** | San Francisco Bay Area

**BAND MEMBERS & INSTRUMENTS** |

**Zack Pitt-Smith:** woodwinds

**Brian Moran:** seven-string guitar

**Jesse Appelman:** mandolin

**Ami Molinelli:** percussion

**WEB** | [www.grupofalsobaiano.com](http://www.grupofalsobaiano.com)  
| [www.facebook.com/grupofalsobaiano](https://www.facebook.com/grupofalsobaiano)



**KEY POINTS OF INTEREST** | The *San Francisco Bay Guardian* writes of Grupo Falso Baiano, “The young musicians ... will make you dance, cry, laugh and marvel at their instrumental skill and love for a music that is centuries old but sounds as fresh as ever.”

Grupo Falso Baiano performs a blend of traditional Brazilian *choro* music with modern influences of jazz, flamenco and samba. Choro is Brazil's first national music, born in the cafés of Rio in the late 1800's, and reflects the melding of Latin American and African rhythms with a melodic and harmonic structure most closely resembling Baroque Classical music. GFB's unique exploration of choro spans nearly 100 years, including everything from traditional to contemporary classics, as well as original arrangements and jazz-influenced reinterpretations.

Grupo Falso Baiano began as a trio in 2003 with members Brian Moran (seven-string guitar), Zack Pitt-Smith (reeds) and Ami Molinelli (percussion). GFB later evolved into a quartet when Jesse Appelman (mandolin) joined the lineup in 2006. Currently, they can be heard performing as a quartet and with special guest singers and instrumentalists in clubs, concert halls and festivals including SFJazz, San Jose Jazz Festival, Oakland's SoundRoom, Healdsburg Jazz Festival, The Freight and Salvage, L.A.C.M.A.'s “Latin Sounds”, Santa Monica's “Jazz On The Lawn”, and Yoshi's Oakland among others. GFB has also been featured in multiple interviews on NPR (*Latino USA*, *The California Report*, *West Coast Live*), KCSM, KPFK and KUSP. Their 2009 Yoshi's Oakland concert and interview was produced and broadcast online by Pandora Live.

In addition to performing and touring, the members of Grupo Falso Baiano are strongly committed to music education. They have collaborated with the Pasadena Pops Orchestra, Young Audiences of Northern California, Youth in Arts, Around the World Music Program, The Jazzschool, California Brazil Camp and Jazz Camp West, bringing choro music to students throughout California.

Falso Baiano albums include *Viajando: Choro e Jazz* (2008), *Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's* (2011), and *Depois* (2017) and feature special guests Moyseis Marques, Ana Carbatti, Ilya Portnov, Jeff Cressman, Jovino Santos Neto, Jorge Alabê, Mike Marshall, Michael Spiro and others. Their releases have been highly praised by critics and fans and are available everywhere.

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**FOR INFORMATION, BOOKING OR MEDIA INQUIRES** |

**NAME** | Brian Moran or Ami Molinelli

**PHONE** | 415.722.9042 or 510.579.0211

**EMAIL** | [info@grupofalsobaiano.com](mailto:info@grupofalsobaiano.com)



# 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 Jorge Alabê, 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 jazz and bluegrass. At the age of 11 he began studying his interest of bluegrass music by teaching himself the style's requisite instruments – guitar and mandolin. Jesse first heard Brazilian master mandolin player Jacob do Bandolim in a formal lesson and “fell into the deep well that is Brazilian music.” Jesse is a graduate of Wesleyan University and spent six months studying Afro-Brazilian cultural history at the Universidade Catolica de Salvador and mandolin at the Universidade Federal da Bahia in Brazil.

Jesse plays mandolin for *Grupo Falso Baiano*; and 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 San Francisco, Ami Molinelli is currently a freelance musician, curriculum director for SFJazz and M.U.S.T., 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.

# Grupo Falso Baiano | Praise for Depois



*"Charming as it sounds, choro is actually the hardest and most complex Brazilian music to master, much less to compose. Remarkably, Grupo Falso Baiano have not only done both on Depois, their third outing on disc but they have done so exceedingly well. Everything sounds just perfect; freshly minted, so achingly supple and seductive, and ravishingly free of bar-lines and pyrotechnical display." - Raul da Gama, for World Music Report, Sept 2017*

*"Depois is the third album by Grupo Falso Baiano, an American ensemble specialized in choro, an early form of instrumental music in Brazil that brought together European melodies and African rhythms.*

*On Depois, Grupo Falso Baiano delivers a set of choro classics as well as original pieces composed by the band's multi-instrumentalist Brian Moran. However, there is more than choro on Depois. You'll also find sambas, frevo and baião, American jazz and they even sneak in a little flamenco."*

*- Angel Romero, for World Music Central, Sept 2017*

*"Every track on this new album is a gem, instrumentally and vocally - a very tough act to follow. Even on light jazz albums, artists have a hard time combining the two different forces into a cohesive, workable whole. Moran and his Falso Baiano crew rise above by both reflecting and immersing themselves into the entire choro experience. Theirs is the next, best thing to the original source. Theirs is an original stand-alone expression of love and art, with crispy tight arrangements and loose, loopy variations pleasing to both indigenous musicians and general audiences merely looking for an uncomplicated good time.*

*- Carol Banks Weber, for Festival Peak, Aug 2017*



*"GFB have a big instrumental sound, augmented by guest vocals on five tracks here. This recording also introduces Moran as a composer, providing five new pieces in a modern choro style which also extend to flamenco and other genres but still fit snugly between the older numbers here. Smooth flute, punchy sax, attacking mandolin and toe-tapping rhythms combine to make this music extremely attractive: it's fun, touching at times, high-energy at others, and very danceable.- Alex Monaghan, for Folk World, Nov 2017*

## Grupo Falso Baiano | Depois (2017, Massaroca Records, 48:27)

1 Pônei Pra Cleo 2 Alçapão de Al Capone 3 Depois da Festa 4 Bicho do Mato  
5 Bole Bole 6 Serpente Na Grana 7 Mágoas 8 Além da Razão 9 Falsa Baiana  
10 Feitiço na Vila 11 Vignette do Pandeiro 12 Frevo no Morrozinho

with Zack Pitt-Smith (reeds, vocals), Jesse Appelman (mandolin, vocals), Brian Moran (6 & 7 string guitars, cavaco, vocals), and Ami Molinelli (percussion, vocals).

Featuring special guests Moyseis Marques (vocals), Ana Carbatti (vocals), Ilya Portnov (Harmonica), Jeff Cressman (trombone), Henry Hung (trumpet), Kasey

Knudsen (sax), and Teresa Tam (background vocals). Produced by Brian Moran and Ami Molinelli.





# Grupo Falso Baiano | Praise for Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's



*"The quartet...can sound, at times, like a freewheeling and exotic form of bluegrass and elsewhere like a wistful lament."*

*"[GFB] takes the traditional choro sound, stretches it out, and adds an American accent" - Dan McClenaghan, Aug 2011*



*"luminescent melodies"*

*"...combines an irresistible backbone of complex rhythms nestled in swaying rhythms that speak of sunshine and lightness."*

*"Choro, brought to joyous light by GFB on this recording gem, is the perfect way to send one dancing" - Nelson Brill, Oct 2011*



*"Grupo Falso Baiano teams up with Brazilian master Jovino Santos Neto on this delightful Live in concert release"*

*"They have carved themselves a niche in an increasingly competitive musical environment with extraordinary results." - Danilo Navas, Oct 2011*



*"...loaded with chops, charm, skill, sterling musicianship and that special something extra."*

*"A young crew of players that has Brazilian music in the blood, with no traces of vacation gift shops anywhere in the mix." - Chris Spector, July 2011*



*"The music is rougher around the edges than bossa, but the elements that make it Brazilian are evident, from the Iberian tonalities to the mandolin and guitar instrumentation."*

*"If jazz fans want to hear a style of Brazilian music seldom heard outside that country, this band is tops." - Kyle O'Brien, Sept 2011*



*"The contrasting styles, the many flash solos, and the fiesta feel make this CD a must for fans of Brazilian music and a fascinating detour for anyone with eclectic musical tastes." - Alex Monaghan, Nov 2011*

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## Grupo Falso Baiano | Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's (2011, Massaroca Records, 54:20)

1 Caminhando 2 Simplicidade 3 Cheguei 4 Feira Livre 5 Kenny É Você  
6 Rosa Cigana 7 Bem Brasil 8 Deixa o Breque 9 Doce de Côco 10 Forró na Penha

with Zack Pitt-Smith (reeds), Jesse Appelman (mandolin), Brian Moran (7 string guitar), and Ami Molinelli (percussion).  
Featuring special guests Jovino Santos Neto (piano, flute and accordion), and Brian Rice (percussion). Produced by Grupo Falso Baiano.



# Grupo Falso Baiano | Praise for Viajando: Choro e Jazz



*"The young musicians of Trio Falso Baiano will make you dance, cry, laugh and marvel at their instrumental skill and love for a music that is centuries old but sounds as fresh as ever" - Joe DeFrancheschi, March 2007*



*"Luckily, there's Grupo Falso Baiano..who specialize in a treat heard far less often. [GFB] carries the tradition forward with aplomb."*

*"As Grupo's gorgeous new cd 'Viajando: Choro e Jazz' proves, it's intricate melodies move your heart and your hips."- Ezra Gale, Feb 2009*



*"[GFB] conveys considerable passion and vested research in the music, as heard at SOhO and on the sizzling recent album Viajando: Choro e Jazz."*

*"Seductive and sophisticated, a head-meets-heart phenom, this band's choro proved to be a winning sound at SOhO, whetting our appetites for more"*

*- Josef Woodard, June 2009*

*Musica Brasiliensis*

*"Viajando: Choro e Jazz is an auspicious debut release for Grupo Falso Baiano."*

*"a well-selected, executed, and produced album of choro tunes."*

*"The tune that gave the album its title comes from Hermeto Pascoal's 'Viajando pelo Brasil'. Falso Baiano's 6-minute version actually sounds more Brazilian than Hermeto's." - Daniella Thompson Oct 2008*



*"...the performing of this style is anything but casual. Stylistically the music seems casual, but musically it requires playing ability at the virtuoso level"*

*"outstanding musicians" - Bill Peters, Sept 2008*



*"The group's soloists are all versed in the melodies of Brazilian music, and they demonstrate a highly refined ability to spontaneously create in that language"*

*"[GFB] sends a powerful message with their performance on Viajando: Choro e Jazz, showing us the massive possibilities inherent in Brazilian music when we dig a little deeper - something that this group has done with truly inspiring results" - Chip Boaz, May 2009*

## Grupo Falso Baiano | Viajando: Choro e Jazz (2008, Massaroca Records, 56:16)

1 De Bem Com a Vida 2 Carioquinha 3 Beliscando 4 Irmãos Super Mario  
5 Samba da Lua 6 Biruta 7 De Coração a Coração 8 Aquarela Na Quixaba  
9 Alzira 10 Viajando Pelo Brasil 11 Conversa da Baina 12 Canto de Ossanha  
11 Arrasta-Pé

with Zack Pitt-Smith (reeds), Jesse Appelman (mandolin), Brian Moran (7 string guitar), and Ami Molinelli (percussion). Featuring special guests Jovino Santos Neto (accordion, melodica), Mike Marshall (mandolin), Eva Scow (mandolin), Jorge Alabê (percussion) and Brian Rice (percussion). Produced by Michael Spiro.





## Jazz CD Reviews

### Grupo Falso Baiano – Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's – Massaroca Records

*Choro—you might even think of it as a sort of Brazilian folk jazz.*

Published on October 29, 2011



**Grupo Falso Baiano – Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's – Massaroca Records MR20111, 54.2 min. \*\*\*\*\*;**

Choro or chorinho was the first urban pop music to come out of Brazil, originating in the 19th century in Rio. It is a mostly instrumental style characterized by improvisation, syncopation, counterpoint, virtuosity, subtle modulations and happy rhythms. You might even think of it as a sort of Brazilian folk jazz. Originally it was played by a trio of flute, acoustic guitar, and cavaquinho (a little four-string instrument). Large groupings could have mandolin, clarinet, sax, trumpet and trombone, often backed with a rhythm section of guitars and light percussion. Choro compositions usually have three parts played in rondo form: AABBA, each one usually in a different key. The choro also incorporated other musical styles from Europe and Africa, just as ragtime in the U.S. and tango in Argentina did. Villa-Lobos defined choro as the true incarnation of Brazilian soul, and Gnattali said it was the most sophisticated instrumental pop music in the world.

Grupo Falso Baiano is basically a quartet with one performer on reeds, one on mandolin, one on 7-string guitars, and another on percussion. But for this live appearance at the leading jazz club in the San Francisco area—Yoshi's in Oakland—the quartet was rounded out with leading performer Jovino Santos Neto on a half dozen of the tracks, playing piano, accordion or flute. And also percussionist Brian Rice sitting in on four of the ten tracks. Neto is the composer of four of the tracks, and the famous choros composer of the '50s and '60s—Jacob do Bandolim—is represented by two tracks. The great late Brazilian accordionist and guitarist Sivuca has two pieces on the CD, and the third track is from the earlier choros pioneer Pixinguinha, with a ragtime feeling to it.

The quartet offers various perspectives on this folk form which is becoming better known in modern Brazilian jazz interpretations. One is the more historical style, with slower tempi and a more stately mien, another is the jazz samba mode, and the third is a faster-paced modern choro with flute, mandolin and accordion solos. Great fun! If this resonates with you, you might want to try some of the choros-based releases on the Adventure Music label—many featuring U.S. mandolinist Mike Marshall.

#### TrackList:

Caminhando, Simplicidade, Cheguei, Feira Livre, Kenny e Voce, Rosa Digana, Bem Brasil, Deixa O Breque, Doce de Coco, Forro na Penha.

—John Henry



## Grupo Falso Baiano - Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's - All About Jazz CD Review

Grupo Falso Baiano (Self Produced)

By Dan McClenaghan

In the early 1960s, a series of albums by Stan Getz, including *Jazz Samba* (Verve Records, 1962), with guitarist Charlie Byrd, and *Getz/Gilberto* (Verve Records, 1963), with Joao Gilberto and Antonio Carlos Jobim, helped propel the Brazilian bossa nova to an unusually high level of popularity. But in Brazil, before there was bossa nova there was choro, an earlier instrumental music that has escaped popular attention outside its home country. On *Simplicidade*, San Francisco Bay area's Grupo Falso Baiano takes the traditional choro sound, stretches it out, and adds an American accent.

Where bossa nova possesses a cool, sensuous, smooth-flowing feel, Grupo Falso Baiano's music has a happy, lively sound--danceable and ebullient. The quartet, featuring saxophone/flute, guitar, mandolin and percussion including pandeiro and zabumba, can sound, at times, like an freewheeling and exotic form of bluegrass ("Caminhando") and, elsewhere, like a wistful lament ("Rosa Cigana").

The set opens with three tunes by some of choro's most influential twentieth century composers: the joyous "Caminhando," penned by Nelson Cavaquinho and Norival Bahia; the lilting title track, written by Jacob do Bandolim; and Pixinguinha's bouncy "Cheguei," that showcases the group's seamless interplay--here, as a sextet, with the addition of pianist Jovino Santos Neto and percussionist Brian Rice. "Feira Livre" lifts the energy level higher, the sextet locked in tight over the intricacies of tinkling percussion, with Zak Pitt-Smith's sax weaving a sweet melody around the strings. Pitt-Smith then switches to flute and the group shifts into a stop-time groove, with the percussionists filling the spaces.

Choro, in the hands of Grupo Falso Baiano, is a happy and engaging music, full of tempo shifts and moods swings. A real bonus on the set is its closing tune, "Forro Na Penha," featuring Neta on accordion, giving the sound a signing, ecstatic, African Zulu jive atmosphere counterpointed by Pitt-Smith's cool flute incursions.

Track Listing: Caminhando; Simplicidade; Cheguei; Feira Livre; Kenny E Voce; Rosa Cigana; Bem Brasil; Deixa O Breque; Doce De Coco; Forro Na Penha.

Personnel: Zack Pitt-Smith: saxophone, flute; Jesse Appelman: mandolin; Brian Moran: 7-string guitar; Ami Molineli: percussion; Jovino Santos Neto: piano (3-6, 9), accordion: (10), flute (5); Brian Rice: percussion (3-5, 10).

Posted August 1, 2011

## The Mercury News

By Jim Harrington

08/01/2011

### DON'T MISS:

Grupo Falso Baiano: The local Brazilian music group, said to be the only working choro ensemble in the U.S., celebrates the release of its latest CD, "Simplicidade: Live at Yoshi's," with a return trip to the famed jazz venue; 8 p.m. Wednesday, Yoshi's at Oakland, 510 Embarcadero West; \$16; 510-238-9200, [www.yoshis.com](http://www.yoshis.com). Grupo Falso Baiano also performs 4 p.m. Aug. 13 at the San Jose Jazz Festival (\$20, [www.sanjosejazz.org](http://www.sanjosejazz.org)).





Santa Barbara News-Press

# Scene Setting

JUNE 5-11, 2009



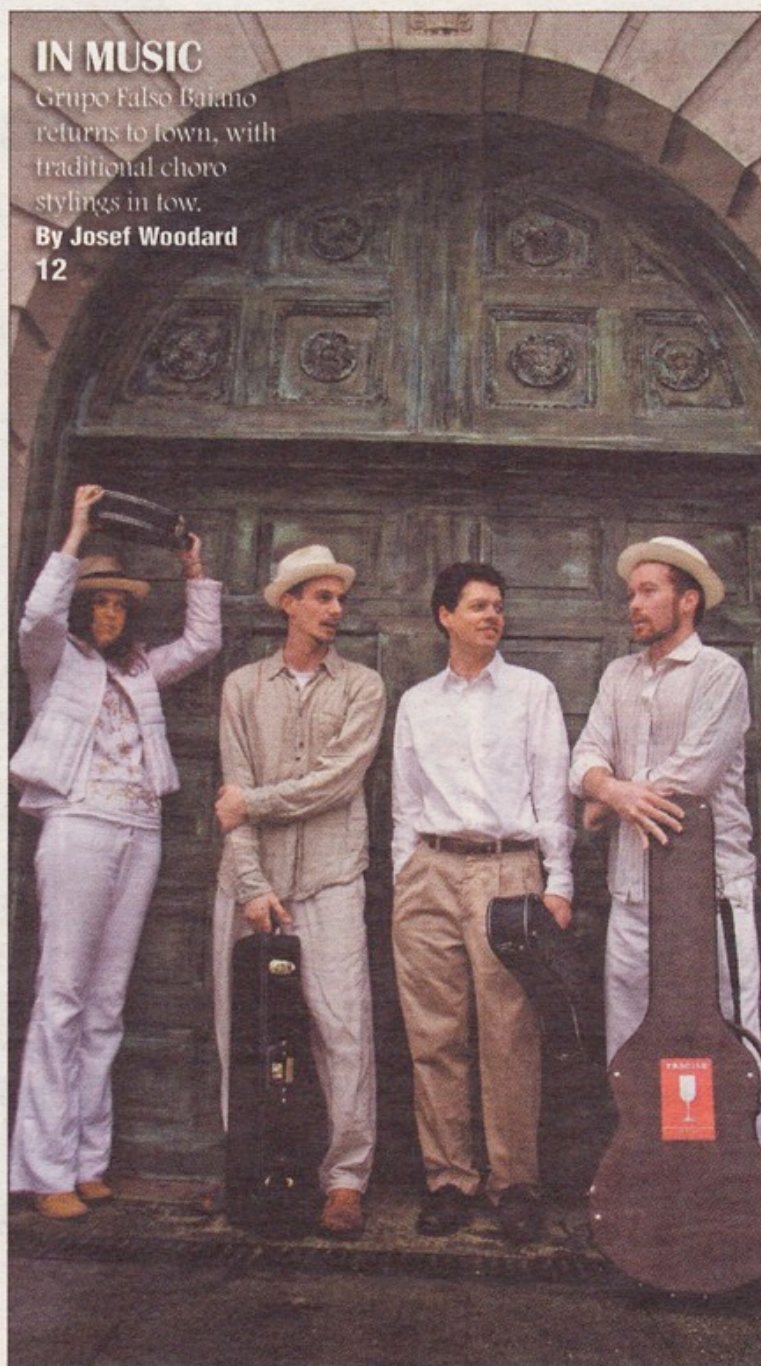
## NEXT WEEK

**King Sunny Ade** has been called the "African Bob Marley," exporting Afro pop and juju music the world over. Up next the Lobero Theatre, on June 18.

## IN MUSIC

Grupo Falso Baiano returns to town, with traditional choro stylings in tow.

**By Josef Woodard**  
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## ARTS

From 'Annie' to the 'Lion King,' no Broadway hit is safe in 'Forbidden Broadway's' eyes.

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# Falso positive tradition

Bay Area champions of choro,  
Grupo Falso Baiano, return

By Josef Woodard

NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

**Tongue was in cheek** when it came time to name the Bay Area-based band known as Grupo Falso Baiano, which returns to Santa Barbara on Sunday night. The name

loosely translates to, as guitarist Brian Moran says, "fake Bahians," alluding to Brazil's popular and culturally influential state of Bahia.

## IN CONCERT

### GRUPO FALSO BAIANO

**When:** 8 p.m. Sunday

**Where:** SOHO Restaurant and Music Club, 1221 State St. (upstairs)

**Cost:** \$10, all ages

**Information:** 962-7776, [www.sohosb.com](http://www.sohosb.com)

But there's nothing fake or dispassionate about the musical talents or commitment of this group. It takes the vintage style of Brazilian choro music very seriously, while also bringing its own distinctive spin to the music.

As Moran explained, on the phone from home in San Francisco, the group's name is "basically an acknowledgment of the fact that we're Americans playing this music. Us being Americans, our age and familiarity with jazz reflects our approach. We're going to play the music with love and respect and musicality, but not try to be traditionalists.

"Down there," he adds, "they live and breathe it 24/7, and it's going to be better, in the traditional-musical sense. It's really about finding your voice."

An ensemble voice is decidedly in cheek here, as heard on the group's engaging album "Viajando: Choro e Jazz." On the album, the band digs into the traditional roots of the music, which predated the more globally popular Brazilian styles of samba and bossa nova, but they do it with their own personalized touch. The song list includes works by choro legend and mandolinist/composer Jacob do Bandolim.





In fact, while choro music may be a taste gradually being acquired beyond Brazil's borders, we've been privy to the music here in Santa Barbara — which has, like other spots in California, long had a strong strain of interest in and representation from Brazilian culture. Almost a year ago, ace mandolinist Mike Marshall brought his respected project Choro Famoso, with a couple of notable mandolin-riffing visitors from Brazil, to the Live Oak Festival, by Lake Cachuma.

Grupo Falso Baiano has played in Santa Barbara several times, at SOHO Restaurant and Music Club and the Unitarian Universalist Church. Sunday's show features the core, founding trio of Moran, on seven-string guitar, reed player Zack Pitt-Smith and percussionist Ami Molinelli, abetted by mandolinist Eva Scow and one of Santa Barbara's own, flautist Rebecca Kleinmann.

While Grupo Falso Baiano now stands out as one of the more dedicated and regularly active choro bands stateside, they understand where they fit into the larger picture of the music. As Moran points out, "there is a huge contingent of people, especially in Rio, who are really traditionalists. There's a guy who is like the Wynton Marsalis for choro down there. There is a lot of interest amongst the youths in choro, and a lot of people see it as their responsibility for getting these kids started off with the roots of the stuff.

"But there is a whole contingent of people around our age, late 20s and into the 30s, who are playing in a more jazz-oriented way. That's our point of connectivity."

In fact, Moran himself was a jazz diehard for many years, studying at the Mecca of Berklee School of Music in Boston and pursuing the jazz life, before choro became one of his obsessions, thanks to the advocacy of his musical partner Pitt-Smith.

Was there a point where Moran became certifiably obsessed with choro? "Yeah," Moran says, with a laugh, "but that has nothing to do with choro. That's more to do with me. Right now, as much as I love choro, my obsession for the past bit of time has been flamenco. I've been in a flamenco obsession phase. But I'm equally obsessed

with choro."

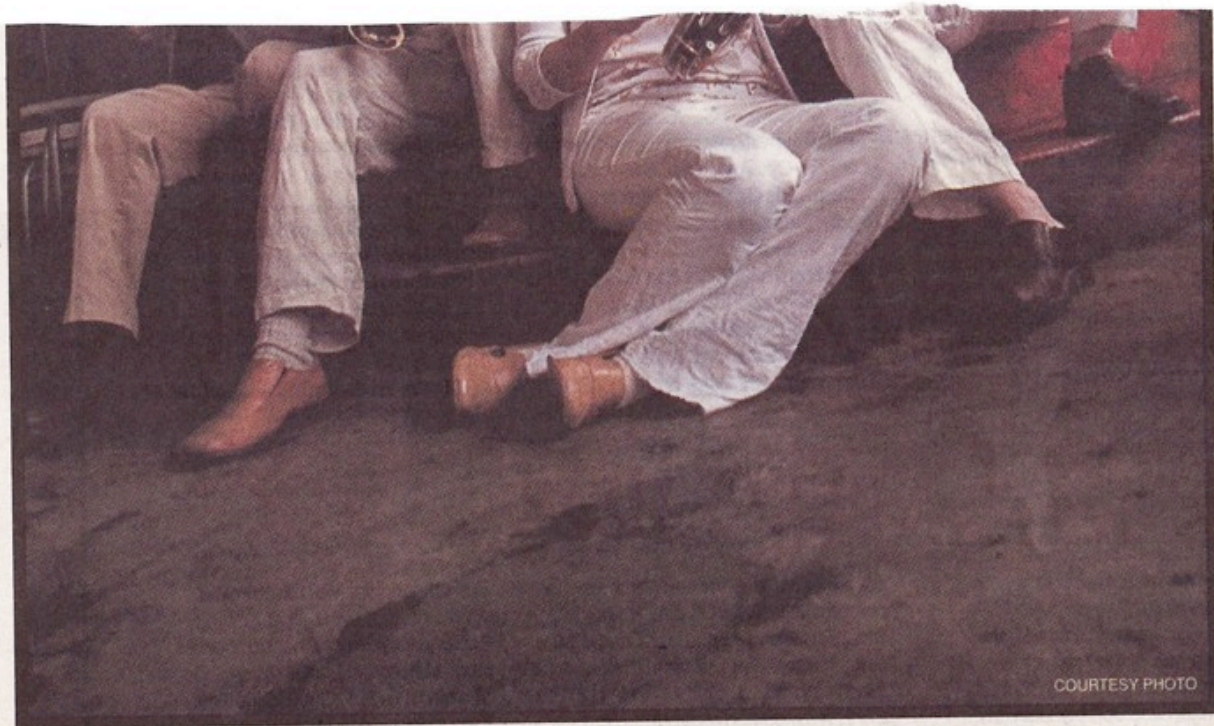
Before he caught on to the unique, rustic and sophisticated beauty of choro music, jazz was his world. "Frankly," he recalls, "my obsession with jazz was so hardcore and very East Coast/Coltrane/Miles and so forth that Brazilian music was to some extent an obligatory diversifier that you had to throw into your sets on jazz gigs. You had to play a Jobim tune to offer up something different."

He was in a jazz group called Blowout with Pitt-Smith, who had seen the Brazilian light. "Zack said, 'hey, if you're into the seven-string guitar thing, you should check out choro, which has a huge seven-string guitar tradition.'

I bought this album, by Raphael Rabello (a legendary Brazilian guitarist who died at age 32, in 1995) and Dino 7 Cordas. When I heard that, I was like 'whoa.' And that was it. That was five or six years ago. That was what got that obsession going."

Moran and Pitt-Smith joined forces with versatile percussionist Molinelli to form the core group back in 2003, and have been gradually building momentum and musical intrigue ever since.

Choro has enjoyed a steady presence in the Bay Area, and Grupo Falso Baiano is enjoying a status as one of the steadiest torch-bearers for the music. ■



COURTESY PHOTO



# Nightlife

## Grupo Falso Baiano featuring Ana Carbatti:

Zapped on its maiden voyage by a sci-fi soap opera, band takes off again, powered by Brazilian inspiration

Ana Carbatti didn't set out to become the most enticing new Brazilian singer in the Bay Area. After more than 15 years toiling as an actor in Rio de Janeiro, performing in soap operas, films, musicals and plays, she decided she needed to try something new. She had met her American husband at a Manu Chao concert in Rio, and when he landed a Stanford University gig they made the move to the Bay Area in 2004. Her passion for music moved to the foreground when Carbatti connected with Grupo Falso Baiano, a budding ensemble of American musicians besotted with Brazilian samba and choro.

"I always sang in Rio when I wasn't acting," says Carbatti, who performs with Grupo Falso Baiano on Friday at La Peña and Saturday at Ashkenaz. "I'd work with friends singing MPB, música popular Brasileira, which is really all kinds of music. I treated acting as my profession and music as my relief."

Falso Baiano came together about six years ago when reed player Zack Pitt-Smith introduced seven-string guitarist Brian Moran to choro, a virtuosic instrumental style often compared to bluegrass. They were playing in a jazz sextet, but the challenge of mastering choro's intricacies seized their imagination, and with the addition of percussionist Ami Molinelli they launched Trio Falso Baiano (which performs tonight at Sausalito's Caffè Divino). The band expanded to a quartet when they met mandolin player Jesse Appelman at California Brazil Camp in Cazadero. The group's adventurous spirit and expansive repertoire proved irresistible to Carbatti, who possesses a sumptuous, burnished contralto. Rather than focusing on the choro canon of Jacob do Bandolim and Pixinguinha, Grupo Falso Baiano explores everything from classic sambas by Cartola to jazz-inflected tunes by Hermeto Pascoal and Guinga.

"They're great musicians, and we have the same passion," Carbatti says. "Every time we have a re-

8 p.m. Fri. \$14. All ages. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. (510) 849-2568. [www.lapena.org](http://www.lapena.org). 9:30 p.m. Sat. \$13. All ages. Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. (510) 525-5054. [www.ashkenaz.com](http://www.ashkenaz.com).



Glênio Dettmar

Ana Carbatti is singing again with Grupo Falso Baiano, after starring in a Brazilian soap opera.

hearsal someone brings a new tune. I feel like I'm playing with my buddies in Rio."

But just as the band was preparing to make its first album, Carbatti landed a yearlong contract for the Brazilian sci-fi soap opera "Caminhos do Coração." Grupo Falso Baiano recorded "Viajando: Choro e Jazz" as an instrumental session featuring a glowing cast of guest artists. When Carbatti returned to the Bay Area last year, the band immediately reached out and they've been performing together ever since.

"Ana has tremendous knowledge and love of the repertoire, and brings her own sensibility to the band," says guitarist Brian Moran. "It's a perfect fit."

— Andrew Gilbert, [96hours@sfgate.com](mailto:96hours@sfgate.com)



SALSA, LATIN JAZZ, LATIN POP, AFRO-WORLD AND MORE

# LATIN BEAT

M A G A Z I N E

GRUPO FALSO BAIANO

Simplicidades~~X~~-Live At Yoshi's  
(Massaroca Records)



DEAD  
SEPT-2011

En su debut discográfico, "Viajando: Choro é Jazz" (2009), el cuarteto Falso Baiano hizo hincapié en la fusión (no siempre satisfactoria) del choro brasileño y el jazz estadounidense. Reforzado en esta segunda oferta con un par de notables invitados (el multiinstrumentalista Jovino Santos Neto y el percusionista Brian Rice), el grupo californiano se extiende también estilísticamente al incorporar ciertas formas nordestinas a su predominante repertorio de choros (o estándares brasileños influenciados por el choro). De hecho, el nuevo disco incluye tres temas originales de Santos Neto (el baião "Feira Livre", el forró "Kenny é <sup>Você</sup> ~~Você #7874~~" y la balada "Rosa Cigana"), dos composiciones del maravilloso albino apodado Sivuca ("Deixa o Breque" y "Forró na Penha") y un par de "clásicos" del choro atribuidos al venerable Jacob do Bandolim ("Simplicidade" y "Doce de Côco"), entre otras cosas.

Aunque cada uno de ellos descubrió el choro a través de una ruta diferente, tal parece que el amor al jazz constituye el factor común denominador entre los "falsos baianos" que integran este cuarteto ubicado en otra renombrada bahía, la bahía de San Francisco: Zack Pitt-Smith (saxofones y flauta), Brian Morán (guitarra de 7 cuerdas), Jesse Appelman (mandolina) y Ami Molinelli (percusión brasileña). Y que yo sepa, se trata del único grupo radicado al norte de Brasil que se ha dedicado, con funcionamiento activo y permanente, a la difusión del choro. —

Luis Tamargo



MARINA DEL REY • WESTCHESTER • SANTA MONICA • PLAYA DEL REY • PLAYA VISTA • MAR VISTA • DEL REY • VENICE

# The Argonaut

Your best source of local information

## Jazz on the Lawn



Grupo Falso Baiano will perform on the front lawn of Santa Monica City Hall Sunday, August 16th as part of a series of free concerts this month – See Page 13

(Photo by Jared Gruenwald)

### Los Angeles

City Council passes emergency ban on billboards and supergraphics – page 3

### Venice

Supporters of overnight parking districts sue Coastal Commission – page 4

### Venice

Boardwalk artists protest enforcement of vending law – page 6

### Santa Monica

Harman, Waxman weigh in on lack of runway safety – page 7



# BrasilBest

BRAZILIAN CULTURE MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2008

Culture

## Falso Baiano PLAYING CHORO AND JAZZ

Grupo Falso Baiano has released its debut studio CD, produced by legendary percussionist Michael Spiro. The album features a number of special guest appearances, including Jovino Santos Neto, Mike Marshall and Michael Spiro.

**G**FB started out as a trio in 2003 with members Brian Moran (seven-string guitar), Zack Pitt-Smith (flute, clarinet and saxophone) and Ami Molinelli (pandeiro and other percussion), and evolved into a quartet when Jesse Appelman (mandolin) joined the lineup in 2006. These four Americans' backgrounds range from jazz to bluegrass, but they have studied, played and recorded with master musicians in Brazil and the U.S. to develop unique instrumental voices in this genre. The band will promote the CD with a kick-off tour through Southern California, leading up to a CD release party with special guests at Anna's Jazz Island in Berkeley, CA on October 3 (see below for full listing of dates).

Viajando: Choro e Jazz showcases Grupo Falso Baiano's blend of traditional Brazilian choro music with modern influences such as jazz, flamenco and samba. Choro is Brazil's first national music, often compared to ragtime, Dixieland and klezmer for its melodic, playful sound. The repertoire on the CD spans over 100 years, with creative, jazz-influenced arrangements of both classic material and works by modern masters (Hermeto Pascoal, Hamilton de Holanda).

"Os instrumentalistas novos...lhe-fariam dançar, chorar, e dá risada pelo amor que eles tem por ambos uma música de centenários mas tanto como um som novo."

-The San Francisco Bay Guardian.

"The young musicians ... will make you dance, cry, laugh and marvel at their instrumental skill and love for a music that is centuries old but sounds as fresh as ever." -San Francisco Bay Guardian

After delighting audiences for several years with their energetic mixture of Brazilian choro, samba and jazz, Grupo Falso Baiano has released its debut studio CD, produced by legendary percussionist Michael Spiro. The album features a number of special guest appearances, including Jovino Santos Neto, Mike Marshall and Michael Spiro.



### Schedule:

Wed, Sept 10

Phone interview on KCSB 91.9FM  
with Stanley Naftaly of Straight Ahead Jazz  
11:30am

Wed, Sept 17

In studio interview on KCSB 91.9FM  
with Stanley Naftaly of Straight Ahead Jazz  
12 Noon

Wed, Sept 17

SoHo  
with special guest flutist Rebecca Kleinmann  
1221 State St., Santa Barbara, CA  
8:00, \$10 Cover  
CD Release Event

Sun, Sept 21

Red White & Bluezz  
70 S. Raymond, Ave, Old Pasadena, CA  
Sun brunch show  
10:30am-1:30pm

Sun, Sept 21

The Coffee Gallery Backstage  
2029 Lake St, Altadena, CA  
3:00pm - matinee show  
\$15 Cover  
CD Release event

Fri, Oct 3rd

Anna's Jazz Island  
2120 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA  
2 Shows: 8:00pm and 10:00pm  
Cover \$10  
CD Release event

### Contato de Imprensa:

Brian Moran (Northern California): (415) 722-9042 • [brian@brianmoranmusic.com](mailto:brian@brianmoranmusic.com)

Ami Molinelli (Southern California): (510) 579-0211 • [molinelli@rocketmail.com](mailto:molinelli@rocketmail.com)

[www.grupofalsobaiano.com](http://www.grupofalsobaiano.com)



SATURDAY 21

## grupo falso baiano

Being American-born and bred has not stopped Grupo Falso Baiano's Zack Pitt-Smith, Brian Moran, Jesse Appelman and Ami Molinelli from self-identifying as a united melodic window into the culture of Brazil. Having mastered the reeds, seven-string guitar, mandolin and percussion, the quartet captivates audiences around the world with a modern twist on the traditional musical genre known as choro; one notable illustration is a lively interpretation of the widely known Super Mario video game theme. Cayuga Vault; call for price; 8pm. (Jaime Nabrynski)

## Getting a Brazilian

[HEAR THIS]



Since most of the Bay Area's Brazilian music is of the samba or bossa nova variety, it's easy to miss out on the staggering breadth of styles exported by that musical hot spot. Luckily there's **Grupo Falso Baiano** (The Fake Bahians), who specialize in a Brazilian treat heard far less often — choro, an ancestor of samba widely credited as the South American country's first national music. Grupo Falso Baiano carries the tradition forward with aplomb. The group's instrumentation — mandolin, saxophone, guitar, and percussion — may seem sedate compared to samba's deafening drum blocs, but don't let that fool you into thinking you'll sit still at a performance. As Grupo's gorgeous new CD, *Viajando: Choro e Jazz*, proves, its intricate melodies move your heart and your hips. Grupo Falso Baiano performs on Friday, Feb. 20, at Anna's Jazz Island in Berkeley. 8 p.m., \$14; 510-841-5299 or [www.annasjazzisland.com](http://www.annasjazzisland.com). **EZRA GALE**

FEBRUARY 18-24, 2009 | VOLUME 28 | NUMBER 4

NEWS: WHAT'S IN DAVID CHIU'S



# Metro SantaCruz WEEKLY

FEBRUARY 18-25, 2009 VOL. 15, NO. 43 • FREE

# GOOD TIMES

GTWEEKLY.COM

2.19.09

## ► GRUPO FALSO BAIANO

The roots of urban samba, Brazilian choro music is already infectious by nature, and for those who can't shake off that itch for a good dance, this Bay Area foursome infuses its translation of *choro* classics with enough vibrant and contemporary twists to keep it fresh and fun. On *Viajando: Choro e Jazz*, the band even busts out its own version of the Super Mario Brothers' theme song as a mischievous surprise. All in all, Zack Pitt-Smith's jazz prowess shines through on his clarinet and sax work, while Jesse Appelman's crisp mandolin often steals the show—which is no easy task amongst the racing percussion and flamenco sway. | **LK**

► **INFO:** 8 p.m. Cayuga Vault, 1100 Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz. \$14/adv, \$17/door. 421-9471.



# SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS



33RD YEAR

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2008

50¢

12 | MUSIC SCENE | SEPT. 12-18, 2008

## Q&A: GRUPO FALSO BAIANO

### Choro-playing quartet celebrates release of new album at SOhO

By Stanley Naftaly

NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

If Choro music sounds like something you might hear an off-beat Dixieland jazz combo playing, it's no accident. The traditional Brazilian music that began in the second half of the 19th century has, in fact, many touching points with American jazz traditions.

Grupo Falso Baiano is a quartet of American musicians who have all lived and studied in Brazil, have a background in jazz and world music, and have adopted Choro as their own. In advance of the band's upcoming appearance at SOhO Restaurant and Music Club on Wednesday, Brian Moran, the group's seven-string guitarist, spoke over the phone about what it is to be in a Choro band in the 21st century.

**How would you describe the roots of Choro?**

When coffee became king, a lot of Brazil's cultural center moved from

Bahia, in the North, to Rio de Janeiro in the South, where people from Italy, Portugal, Scotland and Poland were part of the population. Combining those influences with European rhythms, for example, the Polka or Waltz, resulted in early Choro forms reminiscent of European classical music. Later, Choro began to sound like Ragtime, blending African rhythms with a melodic and harmonic structure that resembled Baroque classical music."

**I was surprised to learn that Choro seems to have pre-dated American jazz.**

Actually, the two developed separately, somewhat in parallel. Choro, from the mid 1800s through the early 1900s, Ragtime in about 1890 and jazz in the early 20th century. In both cases, a blending of African rhythms and European melodies and harmonies took place. While about 4 million slaves were brought to the U.S., more than 18 million came to Brazil. So, the African influence was much stronger there.

**Both Choro and Jazz use flatted fifth intervals. Where did that start?**

Although Pixinguinha, the most famous Choro composer — who is referred to as the Duke Ellington or Charlie Parker of Choro — started using flatted fifths 15 years be-



fore bebop bands did, those intervals didn't come here from Brazil. Rather, that idea and many others that Jazz and Choro share was conceived independently in both cultures at almost the same time. This is one example of great minds, occupied with the same sort of task, coming up with similar ideas. Accenting and squeezing certain notes to make the music swing is another, and the fact that improvisation is integral to both Choro and jazz, yet another.

**What is the traditional Choro instrumentation and how does Grupo Falso Baiano differ?**

The original instrumentation was flute for melody, cavaquinho, a Portuguese ukulele with steel strings, for 'the center,' and six-string gui-

### IN CONCERT

#### GRUPO FALSO BAIANO

**When:** 8 p.m. Wednesday

**Where:** SOhO Restaurant and Music Club, 1221 State St. (upstairs)

**Cost:** \$10

**Information:** 962-7776,

[www.sohosb.com](http://www.sohosb.com)

tar for the bass and harmonic bottom. We use a soprano sax for the flute's role, a mandolin for the cavaquinho, a seven-string guitar and have added percussion. This gives us more breadth.

**What does the band's name mean? — and tell us about your SOhO gig.**

Grupo Falso Baiano actually means, 'Group of fake Bahians.' We wanted to show our respect for the music and culture and not come on as if we were Brazilian. We play Choro with our American roots showing and, hopefully, our name makes that clear. If you like jazz and/or world music, Choro will sound familiar. The most common comparisons we get are with Django Reinhardt's fast-paced gypsy jazz, Dixieland and Klezmer music — all of it driven by world music rhythms. We're excited about playing at SOhO; we just released our new CD, 'Viajando: Choro e Jazz,' and we'll be celebrating that. I'd also like to mention that the band is composed of Zack Pitt-Smith on woodwinds, Jesse Appelman on mandolin, Ami Molinelli on percussion and me, Brian Moran, on guitar. ■

### OUT THIS WEEK



**"Gift of Screws"**

Lindsey Buckingham

**"George Clinton and Some Gangsters of Love"**

George Clinton

**"Live and Lawless"**

Unwritten Law

**"Midnight"**

Brass Bed

**"Year of the Gentleman"**

Ne-Yo

**"Brass Knuckles"**

Nelly

**"Doll Domination"**

Pussycat Dolls

**"Live"**

Keller Williams

### WHAT'S HOT

Billboard magazine's Top 10

1. **"The Recession"**

Young Jeezy

2. **"The Block"**

New Kids On The Block

3. **"LAX"**

The Game

4. **"Rock N Roll Jesus"**





Arctic Monkeys (see Wed/31)

PHOTO BY ANDY BROWN

FILM 68



From left: Varla Jean Merman (see Thurs/1); Year Future (see Tues/6); David Rhodes (see Fri/2); image from Joe Goode Performance Project's *Deeply There* (see intro); Trio Falso Baiano (top; see Sun/4); Danielson (bottom; see Fri/2)

YEAR FUTURE PHOTO BY CHRIS WOOD; DEEPLY THERE PHOTO BY AJ MUNA; DANIELSON PHOTO BY STEPHANIE BLACK

PICKS CONT>>

SUNDAY  
JUNE 4

MUSIC

Trio Falso Baiano

Brazilian instrumental choro music sounds old, hip, jazzy, danceable, and mellow at the same time. Jacob Do Bandolim (literally "mandolin Jacob") pioneered the style in Rio circa 1930, a sound strikingly similar to Django Reinhardt's fast, virtuosic jazz of the same era. Trio Falso Baiano continues the tradition of upbeat Brazilian music with seven-string classical guitar, percussion, saxophone, flute, and clarinet, all traditional choro instruments. Before bossa nova, before samba, before tropicalia, and before Brazil became globally known for its lively sound, choro made Brazilian partyers dance in the streets. The young musicians of Trio Falso Baiano will make you dance, cry, laugh, and marvel at their instrumental skill and love for a music that is centuries old but sounds as fresh as ever. (DeFranchescl)

8 p.m.

Anna's Jazz Island  
2120 Allston Way, Berk.  
\$5  
(510) 841-JAZZ  
[www.annasjazzisland.com](http://www.annasjazzisland.com)

TUESDAY  
JUNE 6

MUSIC

Year Future

Year Future is the wall-buckling mixture of politically tinged scuzzcore, grating turbulence, and punk crusties floating in a mason jar of swill that your parents hope you never drink. Still thirsty for more? If the thought of East Bay Ray's surfy guitar licks laminated over Troubleman Unlimited's late-'90s hardcore roster has you doing shots of this shit already, then you'll be standing in the bathroom line all night. Add to that a potent dose of proggy outbursts with a gothic twist and you'll be lucky if the Los Angeles quartet's blistering sound collage doesn't have you wetting your pants while waiting. Touring in support of its debut full-length, *First World Fever*

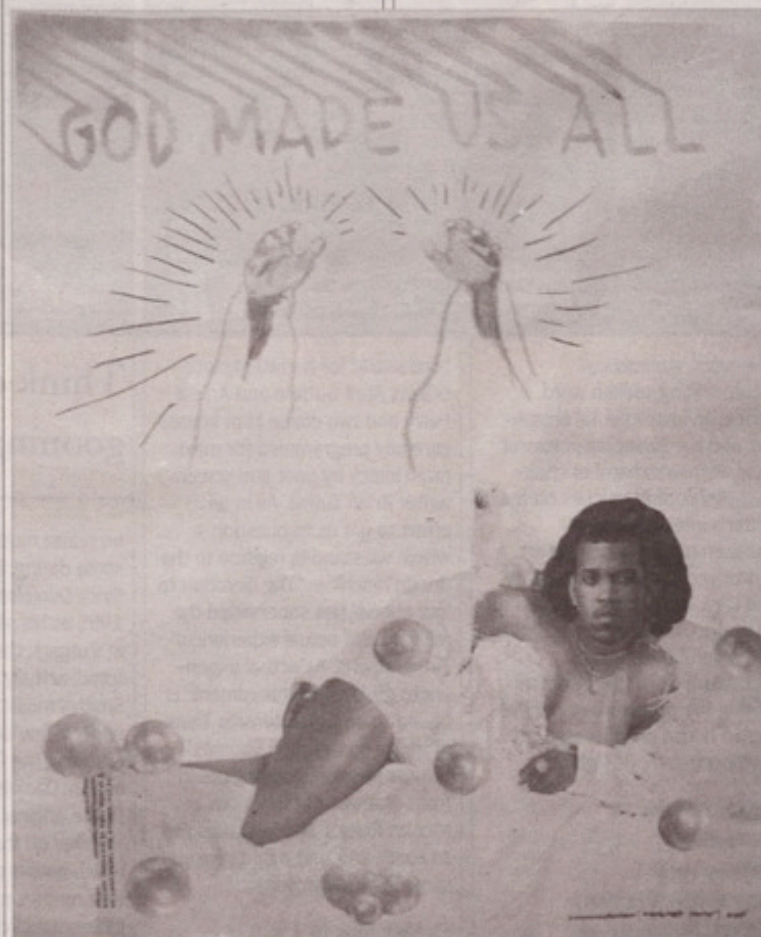


(GSL), YF promises to be a bitter-tasting remedy for good times, bruised bones, and punk heartache. (Chris Sabbath)

With City Speak, Triclops  
9 p.m.

Bottom of the Hill  
1233 17th St., SF  
\$8  
(415) 621-4455  
[www.bottomofthehill.com](http://www.bottomofthehill.com)

The Guardian listings deadline is two weeks prior to our Wednesday publication date. To submit an item for consideration, please include the title of the event, a brief description of the event, date and time, venue name, street address (listing cross streets only isn't sufficient), city, telephone number readers can call for more information, telephone number for media, and admission costs. Send information to Listings, the Guardian Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 487-2506; or e-mail (paste press release into e-mail body — no text attachments, please) to [lists@sfbg.com](mailto:lists@sfbg.com). We cannot guarantee the return of photos, but enclosing an SASE helps. Digital photos may be submitted in jpeg format; the image must be at least 240 dpi and four inches by six inches in size. We regret we cannot accept listings over the phone.



LOCAL ARTIST: Cliff Hengst

TITLE OF THE PIECE: *God Made Us All*

THE STORY: "I am currently working on two types of work simultaneously. The collages come from the work I do in books on a daily basis. They incorporate graphics and everyday jargon and are more playful. The ink drawings are quiet and anonymous. They are more about trying to solidify air and presence."

BACKGROUND: Hengst received a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute, has shown solo at Jack Hanley Gallery and New Langton Arts, and has been exhibited as part of group shows at Blackbird Space, the Lab, and Four Walls. His work also appeared in "Bay Area Now" in 1997 at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

BAND: Troll

EXHIBIT: "Liquid Paper" group show, June 30, Ratio 3, 903 Guerrero, SF.  
(415) 821-3371

WEB SITE: [www.ratio3.org](http://www.ratio3.org)