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Free concert series in Boca Raton

By BEN CRANDELL

When the free Summer in the City concerts return to downtown Boca Raton on Friday, the series known for its parade of comforting, tribute-act familiarity will open with a different idea: A Battle of the Bands between local musicians, some quite young, who have fresh material of their own creation.

The bands will compete in two categories, one for teens and one for 20-and-older performers, and they may be in a particularly enthusiastic mood, with \$1,500 cash on the table for the winner in each category.

The Summer in the City series takes place at Mizner Park Amphitheater each Friday through Aug. 9. Doors open at 6 p.m., with music beginning at 7 p.m. Admission is free. Chair rental is \$5.

The 2019 concert schedule includes the Jimmy Buffet tribute Caribbean Chillers on June 14; yoga and art for Summer Solstice June 21; Game Night, with board games and a DJ on July 12; Peace of Woodstock on July 19; a sing-along screening of “Bohemian Rhapsody” on July 26; the Symphonia Boca Raton on Aug. 2; and Chicago tribute band Chicago Rewired on Aug. 9.

Friday’s Battle of the Bands competition will be judged by a panel that includes City of Boca Raton officials and music-industry reps from Live Nation and AEG. The competitors are:

Teens

Audio Crisis: Four buddies from Boca Raton High School deliver a forceful, polished brand of punk-pop, wearing their affection for Green Day and Blink-182 on their sleeves. Visit Facebook.com/AudioCrisis.

PEAR: An alt-rock band with members from high schools in Miami, Tavernier and Coral Springs, they will follow the single “Demons,” released in October,

with a debut EP this summer. Visit Twitter.com/TheBandPEAR.

Expressway to the Stars: Five precociously talented singers and musicians from Palm Beach and Broward counties, all between the ages of 11 and 16, who make me wonder why I wasn’t able to do more with my life. Visit Facebook.com/ExpresswayToTheStars

20 and older

Big City: You like to party. You like to rock. Led by singer Jamie Wood and guitarist Frank Axtell, Big City prides itself on being “South Florida’s premiere party rock band.” Visit Facebook.com/BigCityBand.

Coral Canyons: The jammy, psych-rock four-piece from Palm Beach County, primarily Boca Raton and West Palm Beach, can go heavy or meander off into elliptical funk, winning over audiences at Voltaire in West Palm Beach and Miami’s Las Rosas. Visit Facebook.com/CoralCanyons.

The Cytokines: Founded in 2018, the Cytokines are a group of medical students and faculty from Florida Atlantic University’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, with nearly 20 members that rotate in and out on a regular basis. Don’t let the white coats fool you. They rock.

Del Pelson: The Boca Raton-based indie-punk quartet has a little Chili Peppers-Sublime thing going, with the engaging wise-guy personality to match. Visit Facebook.com/DelPelson.

SpiderCherry: It’s easy to run out of hyphens in writing about London-born singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Nathan Mercado, a prolific and popular performer on the South Florida music scene. Visit SpiderCherry.com.

CELEBRITIES

Tribune news services



REBECCA CABAGE/INVISION

Bernie Taupin at Galerie Michael in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Elton John’s songwriter unveils another talent

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Bernie Taupin is known for his longtime musical work with Elton John, but the British songwriter’s visual artistry is stepping into the spotlight through an art exhibit.

“Bernie Taupin: The Artist, The Raconteur & His Blowtorch” will run through June 30 at the Galerie Michael. The exhibit will feature 20 unseen, life-size sculptures and artwork made from barbed wire, shattered guitars and various American flags.

“This is inspired by things that inspire me,” said Taupin, who is credited for co-writing an array of songs with John including “Rocket Man,” “Bennie and The Jets,” “Tiny Dancer” and “Candle in the Wind.” He is portrayed in John’s new biopic “Rocketman.” He’s also written for Alice Cooper and Willie Nelson, and released three solo albums and two others with a band called With Farm Dogs.

Taupin has been creating visual art since the age of 17, and he says his work has appeared in museums and exhibits throughout the U.S. The 69-year-old said his visual artwork is an extension of what he spent his life creating through words.

“This is a comprehensive overview of my work,” he said. “It’s certainly one of the largest that I’ve ever presented. This is very much me in the moment.”

Taupin said veterans and family members of veterans who were killed in action donated the flags to him. The flags include images of Captain America and Johnny Cash along with chicken wire.

The British-born songwriter said he is fascinated with the American flag because it is a “thrilling representation of the drama that this country is built upon. The good and the bad.”

— Associated Press

Roast: Comedy Central has revealed that Alec Baldwin will be this year’s



roasting victim on “The Comedy Central Roast.” Known for his Donald Trump

impressions on “Saturday Night Live,” Baldwin joins Trump, Justin Bieber, Bruce Willis, James Franco and many other celebrities as roastees.

Benefit: The Russian protest band Pussy Riot is planning a concert in Alabama to benefit Planned Parenthood after the state passed the nation’s toughest anti-abortion law. Al.com reports that the feminist band is set to perform July 11 in Birmingham.

Broadway bound: “Modern Family” star Jesse Tyler Ferguson is returning to Broadway for a revival of Richard Greenberg’s “Take Me Out.” Ferguson will star as Mason Marzac, a money manager with a surprising love for America’s favorite pastime. Ferguson previously appeared on Broadway in “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.”

Producers: Barack and Michelle Obama’s production company is teaming with Spotify to produce exclusive podcasts. In a statement, the former president said podcasts offer an opportunity to “foster productive dialogue, make people smile and make people think.”

June 7 birthdays: Singer Tom Jones is 79. Actor Liam Neeson is 67. Record producer L.A. Reid is 63. Guitarist Dave Navarro is 52. TV personality Bear Grylls is 45. Actor Bill Hader is 41. Actress Larisa Oleynik is 38. Actor Michael Cera is 31. Rapper Iggy Azalea is 29.

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