

LOCALLY GROWN OJAI



The **Locally Grown** concert series kicked off in a big way in 2005 with superstar headliner Jack Johnson performing a benefit for the non-profit community organization **Food for Thought**. This event sold out in a matter of minutes with fans sleeping on the sidewalk to buy advance tickets at the Ojai farmer's market. In 2007, we went REAL local and featured not only Ojai's own Perla Batalla, (who we are thrilled is returning this year), but a "battle of the bands" and kids selected from the Ojai Unified School district singing together as the "carrot chorus."

Locally Grown 2007 was also our first official "green" event where we focused on minimizing our ecological footprint by utilizing clean energy sources, minimizing solid waste, promoting walking, biking or carpooling to the event, featuring locally grown foods and organic cotton merchandise, providing free water refills and purchasing carbon credits to offset the greenhouse gas that we could not help producing. We will continue this commitment to environmental stewardship in 2009 and with future events.

Food for Thought is very excited to be in the vanguard of the growing movement to reintroduce fresh, wholesome, sustainably-produced food throughout our country. As never before, people from all walks of life are reconnecting to the natural cycles of the earth and to their local agricultural producers by seeking out seasonal, locally grown produce. This year **Locally Grown** celebrates seasonal abundance and the diversity of our community with a summer solstice under the stars featuring an eclectic and multicultural mix of American Roots rock, Mexican-American rhythms, Jamaican Reggae grooves and Afro-Cuban beats from our amazing 2009 line-up.

Mason Jennings

Singer/songwriter Mason Jennings is one of the best-kept secrets in pop music. In his adopted home of Minneapolis his shows draw 3,000 fans. He was hand-picked by music supervisor Randall Poster to perform two Dylan songs, “The Times They Are a-Changin’” and “The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll,” in Todd Haynes’ acclaimed *I’m Not There*, both on the soundtrack album, and lip-synched by Christian Bale in the movie.



And now, his sixth full-length album, *In the Ever*, is being released on Jack Johnson’s Brushfire Records, after the chart-topping performer personally recruited him for the

label. “Every time I hear a Mason Jennings album it changes the way I see the world around me,” says Jack.

“I’ve known Jack for a long time,” says the affable Jennings, who was born in Honolulu, moved with his family to Pittsburgh when he was two, then dropped out of high school at 16 to relocate to his current Twin Cities home. “We did an outdoor show together at a tiny college in Minnesota about six years ago. We toured for about two months and became good friends. He told me, if I ever wanted to record for his label, he’d love to have me. It seemed to make sense that this would be a good time to do it.”

Coming off his 2006 major-label bow, *Boneclouds*, for Modest Mouse leader Isaac Brock’s Epic-distributed Glacial Pace label, Jennings retreated to a studio in the woods, where he set himself up with a laptop and two microphones. The title comes from his son talking about where he came from before he was born, “Ya know dad, when I was in the Ever?”

“It was pretty raw, but fun, because that’s how I grew up working,” says Jennings about the recording process for *In the Ever*. “I wanted to do it quickly in a childlike way. I’d write songs in the morning, record them in the afternoon and finish them up by night.”

In the Ever continues Jennings’ spiritual journey, informed by his love of influences like Leadbelly, Mississippi John Hurt, Hank Williams, Johnny Cash’s American recordings and Led Zeppelin, his favorite band of all time. “I just wanted to make sure it’s not re-enacted music,” he says. “I have no use for being a retro artist. I want to understand my past and come from something, but move forward at the same time.”

Perla Batalla

Grammy nominated vocalist, composer, and arranger Perla Batalla was born in Los Angeles, CA. Her father was a musician and owned a popular Spanish language record store. She first gained international attention as a backup singer for Leonard Cohen who later encouraged Perla to embark on a solo career.



Perla released her debut “Perla Batalla ” on the Warner/Discovery label in 1994. The critics loved it, calling her singing “sublime” and her talent “stunning”. Like many original artists today, Perla opted to go independent early on, releasing her second album, “Mestiza” in 1998 on her own Mechuda Music label. “Heaven and

Earth” followed in 2000, along with a nod to Perla as Amazon’s Emerging Artist of the Year.

Recorded in 2002 as an homage to her parents record shop of the same name, “Discoteca Batalla” is a compilation of new compositions interspersed with pristine treatments of traditional Spanish language classics arranged to reflect Perla’s rich bi-cultural personal and musical heritage. Perla has taken the timeless songs heard growing up and molded their rhythmic and melodic forms to create a stunning cross-pollination of trend and tradition. In 2004 Perla was invited by The Kennedy Center to perform songs from the album as artist in residence.

Perla’s 2007 tribute to Leonard Cohen entitled “Bird on the Wire” (also nominated for a Grammy) features a Who’s Who list of celebrated and world class musicians, including DavidHidalgo (of Los Lobos), Bill Gable, Vinnie Coliauta and Greg Leisz, to name a few. The album has been embraced with open arms by the Cohen loving public at large and critics alike. In celebration of its release, Perla produced a sold-out concert at UCLA’s Royce Hall with special guests Michael Mc Donald, Jackson Browne, Bill Frisell, Don Was, Marta Gonzalez of Quetzal, Howard Tate and Javier Colis. As a well respected interpreter of Leonard Cohen’s music, Batalla has found herself co-starring in Cohen inspired concert series throughout North America, Australia and Europe.

Perla Batalla’s mission of honoring her roots and exposing young audiences to the beauty of music and the Spanish language is ongoing in her outreach endeavors throughout some of the poorest communities in the United States. Last year Perla was the recipient of the Earth Charter Award for extraordinary devotion to social and economic justice.

Quetzal

In the early nineties, in a tiny cafe on the outskirts of Little Tokyo Los Angeles, Quetzal Flores, a son of two community organizers, formed Quetzal-A new experience in Chicano Music. His goal was to push the boundaries of Chicano Music as we knew it.



Proclaimed by no less an authority than Los Lobos as ready to carry the torch for Los Angeles's Chicano community, Quetzal embody the soul and the struggle at the heart of the Mexican-American legacy. Their mix of Mexican and Afro-Cuban rhythms, Jazz, R&B, and Rock is supercharged by the dynamic vocals of Martha Gonzalez. Their commitment to using art as a tool for social change is informed and inspired by global grassroots movements. Aside from touring, the band frequently engages in organizing and participating in opening spaces for transnational dialogue. For the past five years they have been instrumental in developing Fandango Sin Fronteras, a dialogue between Chicanos from California and Jarochos(musicians from Veracruz, Mexico).

Culver City Dub Collective

Dos, the debut full-length album from the Culver City Dub Collective, unites an all-star cast in a captivating blend of Jamaican roots reggae, Afro-Cuban rhythms and West Coast bossa beats.

Released by Los Angeles-based Everloving Records(Cornelius, Metric, Inara George), *Dos* represents a truly "collective" approach to music making. The album features stunning appearances from such luminaries as Ben Harper, Jack Johnson, Money Mark, Studio One vocalist Winston Jarret, and Bedouin Soundclash singer Jay Malinowski. Despite the group's amorphous nature, the Culver City Dub Collective is ultimately assembled, produced and creatively grounded by two individuals: drummer/songwriter Adam Topol and guitarist/engineer Franchot Tone.



Various members of the CCDC family are also committed to incorporating environmentally responsible practices into their daily lives. This includes avid recycling, eating local and organically grown foods and using only green/organic household products



We are a diverse group of community members collaborating with Ojai's public schools to nurture an awareness of food and its relationship to health, society and the environment. Our volunteers and staff coordinate experiential learning opportunities in schools and participate in outreach, advocacy and coalition-building in the greater community. Our vision is to reconnect families to the earth through food, education and community.

Food for Thought's elementary school curriculum is a comprehensive program that consists of separate but integrated elements: garden-based learning, nutrition education, farm field trips for agricultural literacy, and the "5Rs" (reduce, reuse, recycle, rot and rethink!). K and 1st graders get oriented to the school garden and learn plant parts using carrots, peas, broccoli, pumpkins and sunflowers. 2nd graders learn how to make a trashless lunch, separate trash for recycling, and maintain worm bins to generate topsoil for the garden. 3rd & 6th graders receive three nutrition education lessons throughout the school year that empower kids to make their own healthy food choices. 4th graders take field trips to local farms to learn directly from the farmer about the joys and work involved in growing food. 5th graders learn about the scientific method through hands-on study in the garden. 6th graders conduct "waste audits" by sorting lunch waste, compiling data, and presenting their findings and solutions for minimizing waste in school-wide assemblies.

Through our "Green and Healthy Schools" initiative, we promote waste reduction, recycling, and the use of environmentally friendly cleaning and curriculum supplies in our schools.

We continue to work with Ojai Unified School District Food Service to support the inclusion of seasonal, fresh and locally grown produce in all school meals and to eliminate highly processed foods.

We reach out to the community through programs like "Films for Thought," an annual free film series featuring thought-provoking shorts and documentaries related to food, farming and sustainability. We also partner with like-minded community organizations and participate in events such as Rotary's Youth Fest, National Turn Off Your Television Week, and the Ojai Farmer's Market.

Food for Thought is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Our programs are entirely supported by grants, donations, and benefit events like **Locally Grown**.

Visit our website at www.foodforthoughtojai.org for more info.