2017 Blues Stroll Performers
Most acts will play two or three sets.

The *Phenomenal* Ruthie Foster
@ The Media Theatre Main Stage (8:15–10)

- Grammy Award Best Blues Album – Nominee three times in a row
- Blues Music Award Winner
- Austin Music Awards Winner – Thrice
- Living Blues Critics Award – Best Female Artist
- Grand Prix du Disque Award [Premier Music Award of France]

“Pure magic to watch and hear... There’s something overwhelmingly pure and powerful about watching Ruthie Foster play her guitar and belt it out – Blues, Folk, R&B and all musics in between.” – Rolling Stone Magazine

Ruthie is an extraordinary singer/songwriter who blends a wide palette of American song forms. In her close-knit musical community of Austin, Texas, it’s not possible to get away with posturing; you either bring it or you don’t. On her just released 2017 album *Joy Comes Back* Ruthie has clearly brought it all – just as she did on every one her previous releases, all on Blue Corn Music. She embraces these songs of renewal with a sense of profound happiness. Ruthie sounds better than ever – her rich, powerful mezzo bursts with emotion on every track. She includes songs by diverse songwriters such as Mississippi John Hurt, Chris Stapleton, Black Sabbath and Stevie Wonder. Ruthie boldly engages the song “War Pigs” and reimagines it as a jam with Son House. But that essential sound and meaning is all there – a little Blues, a little Folk, a little Gospel, a little Rock – and it sounds like something all her own, “Ruthie Foster Music”. It is with great pleasure that we present to you our headline act for the 17th Annual State Street Blues Stroll – the incomparable Ruthie Foster.

Discography:
*Runaway Soul* (2002); *Phenomenal Ruthie Foster* (2007);
*Truth According to Ruthie Foster* (2009); *Let it Burn* (2012);
*Promise of a Brand New Day* (2014)

www.ruthiefoster.com
Blues Stroll Performers

Lonnie Shields Band
@ Azie (10–1)

1994 Living Blues Critics Award:
Best Blues CD – Self-Portrait

Media’s Official Bluesman-in-Residence
First Inductee into America’s Music Festival Series Hall of Fame

With: Mitch Hunter (guitar), Mark Whren (bass), Neil Simpkins (drums), Jesse Lowey (guitar), Steve Hoke (keys)

An extraordinary live performer who feeds off the energy of his audience. For inspiration, Lonnie cites season-to-season survival techniques learned growing up in the heart of the Delta in West Helena, Arkansas. Cut his teeth playing in Sam Carr’s groups – Unforgettable Blues Band and Jelly Roll Kings, featuring late harpist Frank Frost and late guitarist Big Jack in juke joints across the South. Lonnie’s appearance at the King Biscuit Blues Festival in 1986 brought him national attention. The first Delta artist that Rooster Blues picked up after moving to Clarksdale in 1987. Lonnie’s latest release Keeper of the Blues is another jewel in his string of impressive CD’s; it showcases original songs deeply rooted in Gospel, Soul and R&B, but firmly planted in the heart of the Delta Electric Blues tradition. With tonight’s performance, he will have performed at All 17 Blues Strolls.

www.lonnieshields.com

Steve Guyger & The Excellos
@ Ariano (10–1:15)

Nominee Blue Music Awards: Best Harmonica – 2009
Inducted into America’s Music Festival Series Hall of Fame – 2012

With: Steve Guyger (vocals/harp), Rich McPherson (vocals/guitar), Gary Phillips (bass), John F. Kennedy (drums)

One of the best kept secrets in Blues: Philly is home to one of the very best harp players on the face of the earth. Steve toured with the late Jimmy Rogers and has played with many of the great Chicago bluesmen and contemporary players. The late William Clarke said of Steve: “The best harp player I ever heard.” He has shared the stage with fellow harmonica masters such as the late Carey Bell, Rod Piazza, Kim Wilson and Charlie Musselwhite.

www.steveguyger.com

Philly Gumbo
@ Shere-E-Punjab (9:30–1:15)

With: India Rex (vocals), Tim Hayes (drums), Pete Eshelman (guitarist), Bert Harris (bass), Randall Glass (keys), Richard Orr (sax/flute/trumpet)
Blues Stroll Performers

Possibly Philly’s longest-living current band, which has been bringing a unique mix of black musical styles – New Orleans R & B, Blues, Soul, Reggae and Afrobeat to their audiences for more than 35 years. They almost singlehandedly instigated the annual Mardi Gras celebrations in their city. Quite a history – they’ve performed at just about every Philly venue, opened for Buddy Guy, Jr. Wells, Dr. John, Danko and Levon, and have had Rundgren, David Lindley, and the late Byard Lancaster join them onstage. Gumbo remains the area’s best groove band, and has appeared at Media’s Ball Drop for New Year’s Eve for several years running. Tim deserves mention for having played with Johnny Shines, Little Milton and The Wicked Pickett. The diverse backgrounds of the band members make for extraordinary versatility and an ever-shifting stew of music. Call it a Gumbo.

Papa Sez
(formerly The All Stars)
@ Sligo
(9:30–1:15)

With: Rick Valenti (lead vocals/harp), Fred Berman (drums), John Gilson (guitar), Jay Davidson (keys), Rick Prince (bass)

Only their name is new. For more than 35 years, these men have been laying down Chicago Blues with a big fat Philly swagger. And collectively and individually, they have lent their immense talents to live shows by Taj Mahal, Whitney Houston, Amos Lee, Funk Brothers, Bon Jovi, Steve Winwood, Cinderella and countless other luminaries. Papa Sez is the real deal. Deep In the pocket, their irresistible groove to Blues and Early R&B classics will show you why. Check out this band. What a treat, no other act plays what they do – and no other does it so perfectly well.

Deb Callahan Band
@ FMFCU/Coffee Beanery
(7:30–10:30) All-Ages Family Show

“The nearly flawless debut signals to the rest of the world what those in her home area know well. Deb Callahan is a major talent.” – Blues Revue Magazine

Inducted into America’s Music Festival Series Hall of Fame – 2013

With: Allen James (guitar), Gary Lee (bass), Tim Walling (drums)

Philly’s Blues and Soul drenched vocalist/songwriter Callahan has been a fixture on the Mid-Atlantic scene since the late 90’s. She is known for her powerful, emotionally expressive voice, and engaging stage presence. She released her 4th CD Tell It Like It Is in 2010, with nine original songs and a cover of “Funkier than a Mosquita’s Tweeter” by Tina Turner. She has performed several memorable shows at the Stroll. Tonight’s will be in a little different setting, a “listening room” where the audience – all ages are welcome – can sit and relax awhile – and be serenaded by Deb and her super-talented band.

www.debcallahanband.com

“Simple music is the hardest to play and the Blues is simple.”

– Albert Collins
Blues Stroll Performers

Blues Brothers & A Sister
@ John's Grille (8–12:15)

With: George St. John, Sr. (bass), Miss Donna (vocals), Joseph St. John, Jr. (drums/vocals), Ricky Johnson (guitar/vocals), Buddy Gerst (guitar)

Out of Southern Jersey, this Chicago-style style band has been on the scene for about four decades. Veterans of the regional music scene, they have performed Penn’s Landing, late River Blues Fest and old Zanzibar Blue on Broad Street. Now a mainstay of the Stroll, and one of our most popular – and most requested – acts. If that stripped down West Side sound works magic on you, you need to experience the Brothers & A Sister in the classic setting of John’s Grille, Media’s oldest restaurant. Just be there.

Don Evans Band
@ Joclyn’s (9:30–1:15)

With: Larry Hinkel (drums), Steve Nelson (bass), CC Crabtree (sax)

Another best-kept secret in Blues and R&B: Jersey and the Philly-area is the home of one phenomenal guitarist and vocalist.

Judy Sings the Blues
@ Stephen's On State (9–1)

With: Judy Mangini (vocals/percussion), James Sudimak (drums), Carl “Smiley” Thompson (bass/ vocals), Lin Doughten (lead guitar)

A first time Stroll appearance by this Delaware-based outfit, fronted by powerhouse vocalist Judy Mangini who engages their audiences with her wide range of vocal mastery. Her back-up players are all veterans of the Delmarva club circuit. Come on up here – North of Mason & Dixon line – and Welcome to State Street!

“Nothing can ever be wrong about music.”
- Duane Allman
Blues Stroll Performers

Andrea Carlson w/Larry McKenna & Kevin MacConnell @ Margaret Kuo's
(8:30–11:30)

Make sure you stop here tonight... Music is all she wants to do. A former Chicagoan, the highly talented Andrea played with several bands in the Windy City. She earned a degree in Classical Guitar from the prestigious American Conservatory of Music. In 2009 Andrea was one of the winners of the Philadelphia Songwriters Project. Her recent CD Drivin' Myself Wild for You is just phenomenal. Tonight she entertains at Margaret Kuo’s, well known for their fine dining, now becoming their most recent incarnation as Media's Best Listening Room; stop in after 8:30pm, relax and take in this beautiful music. And Mr. McKenna on sax and Mr. MacConnell on bass? This is amazing. We can’t think of a two better accompanists in the whole wide world. And we mean the whole wide one.

www.myspace.com/andreacarlsonguitar

With: Mark Furman (guitar), Tom Donovan (bass), Mike Beeson (drums)

When not fronting this driving band, Philly native Sister Blue performs in the acoustic duo with Mark – playing traditional Blues and Ragtime; including renditions of her favorite Bessie Smith songs mixed in among strong original tunes. She has had the honor to grace the stage with Blues legends Koko Taylor, Albert Collins, Johnny Copeland, Joe Louis Walker, John Hammond, Taj Mahal, Roomful of Blues, Pinetop Perkins and Ruth Brown. She is one of the most highly regarded mainstays on the Philly Blues Scene.

www.sisterblueband.com

Sister Blue Band @ Rafferty Subaru/Veterans’ Square Stage (duo)
(7:15–8)

@ Quotations (full band)
(9:30–1:15)

Lisa Chavous @ Sterling Pig Brewery
(10–12)

Welcome Lisa Chavous to her first appearance in America’s Music Festival Series. We are very pleased to present her in a duo tonight at Sterling Pig Brewery. She is an extraordinary vocalist who has performed with many of this region’s very best musicians, including The Philadelphia Blues Messengers.

“It’s a long old road, but I know I’m gonna find the end.”
- Bessie Smith
Blues Stroll Performers

Stevie & The Bluescasters
@ Spasso (10–12)
With: Stevie Nolan (vocals/guitar), Paul Nolan (vocals/National Steel Guitar/mandolin), Seth Holzman, aka “Zep Harpo” (harp)
This acoustic band plays all types of Blues – pre-war Blues and Gospel, Chicago, Country Blues, Delta Blues, with a half pint of R&B. Their music is evocative of a wide range of images, myths, and auras – juke joint, soulful, rocking, mourning, spooky Delta, lament and joy. They play an old acoustic flat and National Steel guitar, mandolin and harmonica behind Stevie’s mesmerizing vocals – of a woman in love with the Blues. The music rouses your soul, moves your feet and melts your heart. Be transported through a wide range of settings – from swinging shuffles to simple, plaintive moans at midnight. Let’s all get lost.

www.facebook.com/stevieandthebluescasters

Norman Taylor
@ Diego’s Cantina (9:30–1:15) &
@ Desert Rose (6:15–9) Dinner Seating Only
Norman is a singer/songwriter/acoustic guitar player who performs on a variety of traditional instruments. Inspired by Skip James and Robert Johnson, Norman’s style has been influenced by various Bluesmen in both the Delta and Piedmont/Country traditions. He has opened for Guy Davis, Chris Smither and Marcia Ball. Norman has performed previously at both a Strolls and Americana Roots Rambles.

www.myspace.com/normantaylormusic

“...are first class, his slide work is excellent.” – Dirty Linen Mag

AKA Bulldawg. Dennis is a Philly Guy who lives on the South Jersey Shore. His traditional Delta-influenced slide work is next to magnificent. An accomplished songwriter, he never shys from confronting our society’s most pressing issues in a resolute, head-on matter. The Bulldawg.
Performed at the first Stroll in 2001 and now tonight, with a least three appearances in between.

www.dennisdonnelly.com

“I come with an open mind and try to make it work. I’m here to play the Blues – not to get them.”
– Dennis Donnelly
Blues Stroll Performers

Brian Kors
@ 320 Market Café (8–11) Dinner Seating Only – New Venue!
Vocalist and guitarist Brian has been performing music in the Northeast for more than a decade. He is one-half of the duo The Midnighters who will play everything from Cocktail Jazz to Country & Western to Blues. Brian lives in Media and is involved in the local arts & music scene, producing music acts at the Media Arts Gallery Center. A stand-up guy – and someone who has actually played shows with our good friend Sleepy LaBeef. Brian can always be relied upon to pull out the rarest and most wonderful cover tunes ever. A big shout out to the owners of 320 Market Café for joining in on the Blues Stroll! Many thanks.

midnightersband.com

Frank Velardo
@ Table 11 (7:30–10:15) Dinner Seating Only – New Venue!
With: Josh Machiz (bass)
Ardvark Felon (clever anagram for Frank) is a local brew of a band. They’re original and unexpectedly – heady, highly trained musicians. Their music is purely shaped by personal experience and taste. Frank has notes of Blues and Funk with a smoky Jazz finish, and enough bite to be called Rock n’ Roll. Another first time Blues Stroll performer.

www.gigmasters.com/rock-band/frank-velardo

Matt’s Blues
@ La Belle Epoque (10–12) Dinner Seating Only
“I play a strawberry-painted [upright] piano that I take with me in my minivan,” says Matt.
Forever the late-bloomer, Matt began to study the keys in earnest in college as an escape from the pandemic of alcoholism. He played organ in the Dennis McClung Blues Outfit. Out on his own, he fell in love with Mr. Rebennack and New Orleans piano. Now a student of Tom Roberts and a fav of the guys & gals of WVU Swing Dance. Another first-time Blues Stroll appearance.
Randy Lippincott Duo
@ Pairings Cigar Bar (8–11:40)
With: Joey ‘Hot Box’ Simon (harp)

He a workin’ man...Vocalist/guitarist/bassist Randy is a genuine Bluesman. One of the region’s most experienced performers, he has toured the world, playing in 17 nations and on four continents with Luther “Guitar Junior” Johnson, Johnny “Clyde” Copeland, Shemekia, Lonnie Shields, Big Bill Morganfield, Ola Dixon and Steve Guyger. Randy appeared on Johnson’s Grammy-nominated CD Got to Find a Why. He also recorded extensively with Johnny Copeland. Hot Box is a master harp player and an exciting showman. Joey has played in the Randy Lippincott Band for many years.

www.randylippincott.com

Johnny Never
@ Lotus (6–9) Dinner Seating Only

This veteran Blues singer/guitarist has been on the regional Blues Scene for about a decade.

Johnny has honed his chops and paid his dues in most of the Blues joints around – doin’ what a “Blues Man” is supposed to do.

Ben Tinsley & Dimitri Papadopoulos
@ Double Decker Pizza (8–11)

Philadelphia-based guitarist/singer/songwriter Ben Tinsley recently released an EP of his original tunes – Here With You. Dimitri & Ben appeared at Jazz By Night in November and the Roots Ramble this past April. A return appearance to the Blues Stroll.

Randy Barnett
@ Temaki (7–10) Dinner Seating Only

Randy Barnett (vocals/harp/guitar) performs Finger-Style Blues, Ragtime, Slide and Classic R&B. In addition to regular club performances, Randy and his Second Chance Blues Band have played First Night Wilmington Celebrations, River Front Blues Fest and Annual State of Delaware Summer Concerts. His second Blues Stroll appearance.

His repertoire is well-balanced with songs from all the masters – who we should know – and originals that are pretty darn good tunes. John delivers Delta, Piedmont and East Texas Blues with unquestioned passion in a quest for authenticity. He’ll take you on a good journey. One well worth the ride.

www.johnnynever.com
Blues Stroll Performers

Mississippi Ted Jordan
@ House (6–9)
Dinner Seating Only
Ted’s first appearance at the Stroll.
A native of Jackson, Mississippi, he has been performing since the late 1950’s in clubs, concerts and festivals in New Mexico, Northeast USA, Canada, Caribbean and throughout South. His guitar style has been acutely influenced by Merle Travis and Josh White. Ted has opened for Mance Lipscomb and Leon Redbone. He has played with Tommy Johnson’s brother Ledell, Jerry Jeff Walker, Walter Hyatt, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Freddie King and Willie’s harmonica main man Mickey Raphael. Ted has a vast repertoire, probably well more than 300 songs.

Rodney Bradley & Friends Choir
@ Rafferty Subaru/Veterans' Square Stage (7–11)
Dr. Rodney Bradley & Friends Choir is a Delaware County-based Gospel Choral group, who have performed extensively in the Tri-State area. Backed by a powerful rhythm section consisting of percussion, guitars, bass, and keyboards, the Friends Choir touch the hearts and souls of their audiences by infusing traditional and contemporary gospel music through their musicality and stage presence. As Rodney Bradley explains, “As the power of God speaks, (the choir) listens to what God is saying and orchestrates it in an anointed sound that shakes the atmosphere.” This powerful choir will knock the clouds out of the sky, radiate love onto all those who listen, and inspire your inner blues spirit.

www.rodneybradleyandfriends.com

Fred Miller Band,
Blue Pharaohs,
Mack & the Hooligans
@ 7 Stones Café/Plum Street Mall Stage (6–11)

Fred Miller Band

With: Fred Miller (harp/vocals), Frank Luca (guitars), Steve Price (bass/vocals), Kenny Barycki (drums)

These guys are a group of talented Delco musicians who share a love of the Blues. They count Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters, Albert King, Slim Harpo and Paul Butterfield as their primary influences. This will be their fifth appearance at the State Street Blues Stroll.

www.reverbnation.com/thefredmillerband

“I couldn’t do no yodelin’, so I turned to howlin’. And it’s done me just fine.”

– Howlin’ Wolf
Blue Pharaohs

With: Mark Polito (vocals, harp) Chip Clofine (bass), Dan Fullerton (guitar), Chip Waddell (guitar), Kevin O’Kane (drums)

From South Philly, the Pharaohs play Americana, Chicago and Memphis Blues. Well-known buskers on East Passyunk and in Old City, they bring the legends of our musical heritage to life—Wolf, Muddy, Jimmie Reed, Sony Boy II, Chuckie, Cash and Hank. Their first time in Media, and we are happy to have them here with us.

Mack & The Hooligans

With: Mack Hooligan (vocals, guitar, mandolin, harmonica), John Short III (vocals, guitars, bass, drums), Jim Trauscher (bass), Andy Darby (drums)

Imagine what might happen if Uncle Tupelo and The Replacements got into a barroom brawl at a roadhouse... The Hooligans muse a lot over such what-if’s. Mack has been guitaring since the Proterozoic Era, first in Seattle now in Philly. Shorty has been playing, recording and teaching music for some time at Paoli Guitar Studio. One more first entertaining.  www.mackhooligan.com