

Fifteen-year-old guitarist **Marel Hidalgo** started his musical journey at the age of four, when he started taking lessons at a music school in his birthplace, Neptune, New Jersey. Soon after, at the age of five, he formed his first band, Marel Hidalgo and Friends, a multi-generational and multi-cultural formation that played extensively in local festivals and venues. As the lead guitarist of his own band, Marel started to gain recognition and call the attention of larger festivals and media that would land him multiple performances at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, The Denver Day of Rock in Denver, Colorado, appearances on Univision, Channel 12, Channel 9, and an appearance on National TV on the Harry Connick Jr. Show, along with multiple national press articles including the USA Today and the Scholastic magazine to name some. While his approach to music has been very eclectic from playing progressive rock, blues, flamenco, jazz fusion, reggae, and Latin rock, his main focus lately has been the jazz guitar, inspired by the likes of Joe Pass, Johnny Smith, Ernest Ranglin, and Tal Farlow.

