

ELI YAMIN

Eli Yamin Blues Band

New York, New York

From Brazil to the Balkans, from Lincoln Center to the White House, the Eli Yamin Blues Band has lifted the spirits of thousands with their unique interpretations of standards and emotionally captivating original songs. With piano, tuba, voice and drums, they share the healing power of the blues in an joyous and inclusive way that has audiences singing along.

THE ELI YAMIN BLUES BAND plays the blues to dispel the blues. Celebrating the release of their debut recording, **I Feel So Glad**, this ensemble welcomes audiences of all ages into the varied and rich world of America's primary musical art form—the blues. The band explores the range and healing power of the blues from spiritual to classical, from bebop to folk. In some instances, the music is folksy, fiery and brassy. In others, it is quiet and curing. Pianist Eli Yamin and his group explore the blues' unique capacity to bring people together of all different backgrounds. In "A Healing Song," by Eli Yamin and Clifford Carlson, they sing with audiences, *"It's not just a song for me/ Take a breath and you will see/ Why the blues has the power to be/ A healing song/ A healing song."*

In addition to being spirited performers, members of Eli Yamin Blues Band are also skilled educators. During their workshops, audiences gain insights into the cultural and spiritual origins of the blues and get involved with the music by singing, stomping and clapping along.

In 2010, the Eli Yamin Blues Band performed and taught as U.S. cultural ambassadors in Brazil and Chile, part of an Earthquake Relief Tour on the Rhythm Road, a program co-sponsored by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. Department of State. In 2009 on the Rhythm Road, the band visited the Balkans bringing the blues message through Romania, Montenegro, Greece and Albania. Performances ranged from the most highly watched TV shows to neighborhood schools and castle ruins. "It's amazing to hear 'A Healing Song' in all languages," says bandleader Yamin. "Seems like people know the blues wherever we go. What a joy and privilege to see people jumping in with hands and feet and relating their own personal experiences to this ancient and modern music." In the United States the band performs concerts, clubs and festivals and gives workshops at Jazz at Lincoln Center and many other venues. The band's debut CD, **I Feel So Glad**, released internationally in 2011, features the band's anthem "A Healing Song," as well as a startling new arrangement of "Hound Dog," originally made famous by Elvis Presley and Big Mama Thornton and the Billy Taylor classic, "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free," made famous by Nina Simone.

Eli Yamin is a jazz and blues pianist, producer, educator and Steinway artist who came up in the bands of Walter Perkins and Illinois Jacquet. His recent CD **I Feel So Glad** with The Eli Yamin Blues Band features classics like "Hound Dog" and "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free" and the first commercial release of Eli's anthem, "A Healing Song" about the healing power of the blues. Eli has performed and taught at the Obama White House and at top concert halls and festivals in Western Europe and the United States and in Brazil, Chile, Mali, India, China and the Balkans as a cultural ambassador touring on behalf of the U.S. Department of State. He co-founded The Jazz Drama Program, which produced the cast album of **Holding the Torch for Liberty**, the jazz musical about the women's suffrage movement, by

Eli Yamin and Clifford Carlson. Other recordings include [You Can't Buy Swing](#) with his jazz quartet and [Nora's Ark, the jazz musical](#) with his jazz quintet and the Grammy award winning Brooklyn Youth Chorus. The founding director of Jazz at Lincoln Center's Middle School Jazz Academy, Eli is constantly blown away by the power of jazz and blues music to uplift, inspire and unite people of all ages and backgrounds.

LaFrae Sci (drummer) performed with Eli at the Obama White House and several tours on behalf of the U.S. Department of State. She believes music can heal the world and is trying to do her part one day at a time. In addition to being a founding teaching member of the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls and a faculty member of the Middle School Jazz Academy at Jazz at Lincoln Center, LaFrae works with a myriad of Jazz, Blues, Pop, Rock, world music and Hip-hop artists and regularly performs with the Black Rock Coalition. She tours and hosts residencies in schools with her new band, [The 13th Amendment?](#) interpreting Negro Spirituals through the modern languages of Jazz, Blues, and World Fusion.

Bob Stewart (tuba) is a freelance concert artist, studio musician and educator. As a professional tuba player, he has recorded with groups led by Gil Evans, Frank Foster, Carla Bley, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, McCoy Tyner, Sam Rivers, Henry Threadgill, Arthur Blythe, Lester Bowie, Howard Johnson, Don Cherry, and Nicholas Payton. In addition, Stewart has taught in the public schools of Philadelphia and New York for over 25 years. For ten years, he was the Director of Jazz Studies at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Art and Performing Arts and is now teaches at the Juilliard School. Stewart received his Bachelor of Music Education from the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts and his Master in Education at Lehman College, City University of New York.

Charenee Wade (voice) grew up in Brooklyn, New York and began singing at a young age, inspired by Sarah Vaughan. In 2010, she released her debut CD, [Love Walked In](#), and won second place in the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocal Competition. In 2006, she completed a Master's Degree at Manhattan School of Music and the following year performed her original music at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. Charenee sings at various venues in New York City, including the Tribeca Performing Arts Center, the Jazz Gallery and Jazz at Lincoln Center's Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola. She has toured Europe, performing at The Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland and was featured in the Lionel Hampton International Jazz Festival in Idaho in 2011. Currently she teaches voice at Queens College and City College.