

MICHAEL HINTON

A self-taught master musician, guitarist Michael Hinton thrives on the spontaneous energy and musical exchanges derived as a performing artist and he embraces the improvisational opportunities song writing provides. He *"enjoys the musical journey"*.

After teaching himself to play the guitar, Hinton had his first professional performance at age 12 while performing with his first "real" band. In later years, John McFee, formerly with Van Morrison, Boz Scaggs and now with the Doobie Brothers, mentored Hinton and provided him invaluable musical knowledge and guitar technique.



A pivotal period for Hinton began in 1981 as he joined Merl Saunders, Mickey Hart, and Jim McPherson to form the "High Noon" band, which later showcased Joan Baez on lead vocals. His affiliation with High Noon led to many recording sessions with Merl Saunders, Paul Butterfield, Mickey Hart and Barry Melton. According to Hinton, "I was being welcomed into the Grateful Dead family".

Hinton has performed and toured with a wide range of impressive artists, including MERL SAUNDERS, GRATEFUL DEAD, SANTANA, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE/STARSHIP, NORTON BUFFALO and HUEY LEWIS. His tenure with Saunders included the recording of the soundtrack for the "Twilight Zone" television series. While performing and touring with Saunders' Rain Forest Band, Hinton accompanied Saunders to the Amazon River. Sharing their music and instruments with the native people of the Amazon region, they were received as "cultural emissaries".

"Merl stepped into all styles of music. He allowed us to develop our own musical voice. I developed a style - Merl's band was a place for musicians to grow. He was a great entertainer, an irresistible personality."



MICHAEL MINTON

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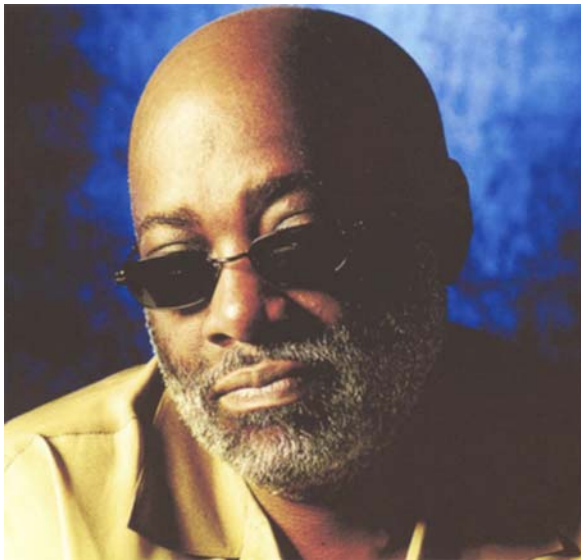
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LARRY VANN

Larry Vann has made an impressive mark on the Bay Area music scene over the years with his authentic, piercing, all-encompassing musical technique. One listen to his compelling, penetrating and intoxicating grooves clearly demonstrates why he has been in such huge demand for sessions & tours with the likes of Elvin Bishop and Merl Saunders. His top-notch drumming and percussion has garnered him popular and critical success throughout the United States and Europe, and Vann has also wowed critics and crowds alike with his sultry singing voice, buoyed by his melodic, inventive songwriting.



A professional performer since age 15, Vann draws from a deep well of musical influence, including gospel, blues, funk, jazz and soul. These various genres have collectively shared his unique sound, which is in full display on this CD.

Vann's resume' reads like a "Who's Who" list, having toured and recorded with those musicians listed above, as well as THE WHISPERS, MARTHA REEVES, THE MARVALETTES, CHARLES BROWN, BUFFY SAINT-MARIE, RANDY CRAWFORD and many more. His work with the popular San Francisco Bay Area blues group, RON THOMPSON & THE RESISTORS contributed to the band earning two Bay Area Music Awards (BAMMY).

His impressive career also includes a motion picture role as a nightclub band member in the Academy Award nominated "Peggy Sue Got Married" and being featured on the ABC Television San Francisco local affiliate, KGO for his work with "GRAMMY In The Schools" as a mentor and instructor. World tours with jazz pianist, BRIAN AUGER and blues harp legend CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE round out a phenomenal career in music making.

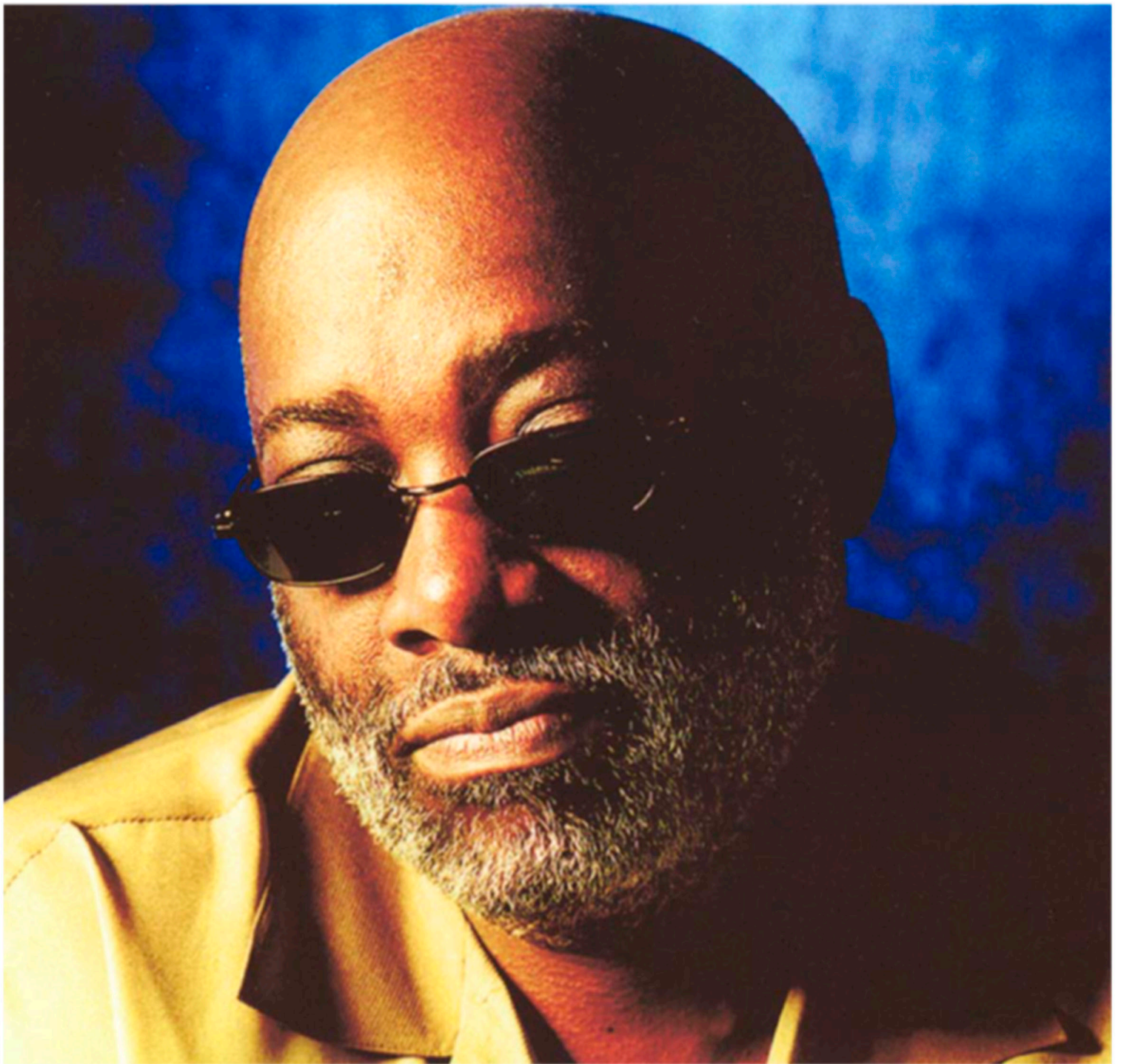
Vann's honors and awards include:

- The Blues Society's West Coast Hall of Fame, "*Blues Drummer of the Year*" award
- The Jazz Institute's "*Man of the Year*" award

He was also honored to serve as a Governor on the governing board of the San Francisco chapter of The Recording Academy® (GRAMMY).

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MICHAEL WARREN

Although Warren considered himself one of the black hippies of the 60s and 70s, his roots run deep into Jazz, Funk and Motown groove. He has performed and toured with a great spectrum of dynamic artists including MERL SAUNDERS, BB KING, RANDY CRAWFORD, MARIA MULDAUR, BUDDY MILES, THE CRUSADERS, THE DAVE MATTHEWS BAND and many others. The performance venues where he has displayed his talent range from The Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, The House of Blues in Chicago, The Fillmore in San Francisco to Carnegie Hall in New York City.

His musical beginnings started in Seattle, Washington. Born to a music, contracting and real estate family, Warren took the path of music, leaving real estate for a later time. Warren's father Eugene Warren, Sr. moonlighted as jazz pianist, organist and music contractor all over the Washington State and Canada while his mother and sisters sang in church. Warren recalls, "I now realize that some



of those people hanging out in our basement rehearsal room were Jimi Hendricks and Ray Charles", among others.

Warren was to be a pianist as was his older brother Eugene, Jr. and younger brother Walter. That changed when his father recruited his older brother Eugene, Jr. to play bass when his bassist couldn't make the gig. He was hooked when he watched them rehearse with the rest of the band in his dad's basement rehearsal room. By age 5 he was sitting on his brother's lap picking Motown tunes on a scaled down Dan

Electro bass. He was also sneaking down to the rehearsal room to try out every instrument left behind for the next rehearsal. By age 7, Warren was dabbling on guitar, piano, organ, and vibes, occasionally trying out saxophone and trombone. While he never really took formal lessons on any of them, by 9 years old, he gained enough knowledge and facility to show his friends how to get around the instruments and eventually started his first band at age 10. He taught his younger brother the bass so he could play piano. He recalls, "that was the first time I ever got paid to do what I truly loved. We made 10 bucks and came to 2 dollars each!" By 12 years old, he had formed his first 3-piece horn band with trumpet, sax and trombone. Needing to teach the trombone player how to play various riffs and phrases, he learned to play trombone by ear. Realizing how much he enjoyed the instrument Warren continued to play the trombone for the next 20 years.

Warren decided to leave Seattle for a short Navy career in San Diego, which did not include music study. He eventually moved to the Oakland bay area to pursue a music career. Landing at Laney College, Warren recalls, "Jazz Pianist professor Ed Kelly was the jazz band director. I remember walking into the music department and asking him if I could play bass. Looking over his glasses, he pointed over to the bass chair where there were at least 8 guys and one girl standing, handed me a bass trombone and said 'go home and practice this and you can play'. I played in the trombone section for the next 2 years. That was 1975. I eventually bought myself an electric bass and borrowed an upright and started playing mostly trombone gigs around the bay area with groups such as the Caribbean All Stars, the Ballads and Son & Daughters of Lite. For about 2 years, no one at Laney knew I was a bassist. They would always refer to me as the "that bad trombone player." Eventually, due to cracks in my front teeth, I retired the trombone and went back to playing bass".



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