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**TO**  
The Evelyn Rai



*Experience*  
EvelynRai.com

Commemorative Digital Book  
2026

24K Artisan Agency Presents... A Summer Musical Experience

*"Inspired by Jazz"*

The  
*Natalie Cole*  
Experience

*featuring*

Vocal Stylist

*Evelyn Rai*



Friday | 6:30 PM  
7/3/26



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**Thomas "Sparkle Soxx" Griffin**  
Special Guest Emcee



# About Evelyn Rai



## Evelyn Rai

Music has the power to transport us to another time and place, and Evelyn Rai has devoted her life to harnessing that power. With a voice that effortlessly weaves together jazz, gospel, soul, and timeless standards, she creates performances that resonate with devoted music lovers and fellow artists alike. From an early age, Evelyn discovered that music was more than a passion it was her calling and her gift in service to humanity.

A creative director, producer, singer, songwriter, and performer, Evelyn has built a distinguished career spanning music, television, ministry, and the performing arts. Her professional credits include appearances with internationally acclaimed artists such as Michael Bublé, CeCe Winans, and Ron Kenoly, as well as recording projects with Tyscot Records. She has also performed the National Anthem for the Indiana Pacers, appeared as a featured soloist with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and provided voiceover and vocal performances for national advertising campaigns.

Beyond the concert stage, Evelyn has served as a television host and personality, keynote speaker, worship leader, women's ministry leader, and community advocate. Her international performances include appearances on television and radio in Ghana, West Africa, where she performed with the renowned Frank Kissi Band at the celebrated +233 Jazz Bar & Grill.

As the visionary producer of The Natalie Cole Experience, Evelyn brings together extraordinary musicians and vocalists to honor one of America's most beloved entertainers. More than a tribute concert, this production is a celebration of musical excellence, timeless artistry, and the enduring legacy of Natalie Cole. It is a reflection of Evelyn's belief that great music has the power to inspire, unite, and leave every listener transformed.

Indy's own, Evelyn Rai.



# Thomas “Sparkle Soxx” Griffin



## ABOUT THOMAS “SPARKLE SOXX” GRIFFIN

Thomas J. Griffin, better known as “Sparkle Soxx,” has been a trailblazer in Indianapolis’ music and broadcasting industries. His career began in 1973 when he became one of the city’s first club DJs, playing a pivotal role in the rise of funk and soul music across various venues. His talent behind the turntables quickly set him apart, earning him recognition in the city’s vibrant nightlife.

Beyond the DJ booth, Griffin made a lasting impact in radio broadcasting. He became a key voice at WTLC, Indianapolis’ first all-Black FM radio station, where he not only announced but also shaped the station’s identity and connection with the community. He was also the original host of the “Saturday Night Basement Party” and contributed his voice to “The Reggie Miller Show,” further cementing his influence in the city’s media scene.

In 2002, Griffin co-founded what would later be known as “Ambience,” an organization focused on curating high-quality social events centered around Chicago-style steppin’. The group officially adopted the name in 2003 and became known for hosting gatherings at some of the city’s most exclusive venues, creating an upscale and sophisticated social experience for adults.

Throughout the years, Griffin has adapted to the ever-changing landscape of DJ culture and radio, consistently advocating for creative freedom in music. He has expressed concerns over the increasing corporate influence in radio and its effect on artistic expression but remains dedicated to keeping the essence of funk, soul, and steppin’ alive in the community. As of 2025, Griffin remains an influential figure in Indianapolis’ entertainment scene!!!

For a deeper look into his career and contributions, tune in to his interview on WFYI’s “Echoes of Indiana Avenue.”

Evelyn  
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# Carl Hines



Carl Hines, Jazz Legacy Guest

Born in Wilson, North Carolina, Carl Hines is an accomplished pianist, educator, and one of Indianapolis' most respected jazz musicians. Inspired by the greats, including Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk, he developed a distinctive style rooted in the rich traditions of American jazz.

Over the years, Carl balanced two passions as both a mathematics teacher and professional musician, believing the disciplines of music and mathematics shared a unique harmony. Since retiring from education, he has continued to perform throughout the region as a solo pianist and with The Carl Hines Band, delighting audiences with a repertoire spanning jazz, swing, blues, Latin, R&B, and timeless standards.

Tonight, The Natalie Cole Experience proudly honors Carl Hines for his enduring contributions to Indianapolis' vibrant jazz community and his lifelong commitment to preserving the art of jazz for future generations.

*Evelyn* R

# Sharon Rimmer



Sharon Rimmer is a gifted vocalist, worship leader, and recording artist whose rich voice and authentic artistry have made her a beloved presence in Indianapolis' music community. She has performed alongside acclaimed R&B artist Rodney Stepp, former keyboardist for the legendary The Spinners, and has contributed her talents to several recording projects. A devoted member of Eastern Star Church in Indianapolis, Sharon continues to inspire audiences through her passion for music, faith, and excellence in every performance.



*Evelyn* R

# Iiva Smith



Iiva “Evie” Smith is an Indianapolis-based vocalist, actress, commentator, and human resources and communications professional with more than 20 years of experience spanning music, theater, television, and live entertainment. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Communications and has pursued graduate studies toward a Master of Business Administration.

As a teenager, Iiva’s first professional vocal opportunity came as a background vocalist for actress and recording artist Cynda Williams, best known for her role in *Mo’ Better Blues*. She later toured nationally with acclaimed gospel artist Rodnie Bryant and has appeared in television, commercials, independent films, and numerous stage productions. A respected emcee and community commentator, Iiva is honored to celebrate the timeless music and enduring legacy of Natalie Cole as part of The Natalie Cole Experience.



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# Lynette Hiser



Lynette Hiser has been singing since the age of nine, when she joined her church choir and discovered a lifelong passion for music. She has performed with various gospel and secular groups and was honored to tour with the prestigious Indiana University African American Choral Ensemble and Sojourner, sharing in the celebration of African American musical traditions through spirituals, gospel, folk music, and classical works.

Today, Lynette continues to perform, bringing warmth, soul, and authenticity to every song. Her diverse musical background and years of experience have shaped her into a versatile vocalist who enjoys inspiring and connecting with audiences through music.

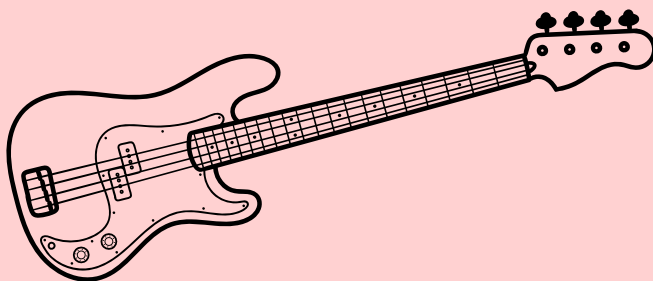


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# The Band



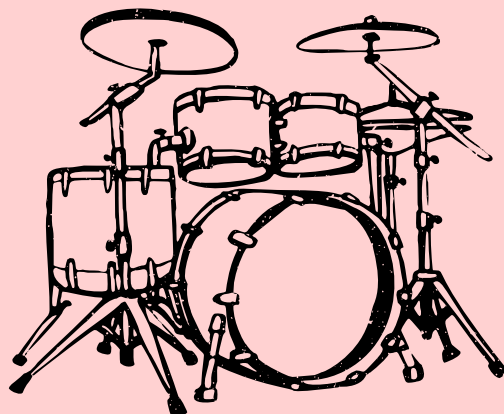
**Music Director and Bass - The Bassman, Earl Shovan**



**On Keys and Vocals - Mr. Herschelle McGuire**



**On Drums - Mr. Marco Vaughn**



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