

Brian Kramer Blues

A native of Brooklyn, Brian was barely out of his teens when he hung out with legendary blues men, picking up tips from masters, such as Buddy Guy and Junior Wells. Junior took a particular liking to Brian and showed him the right moves, how to play from the heart. By 1989, Brian had released his first album, *Brian Kramer & the Bluesmasters featuring Junior Wells, Win or Lose*, which featured many a respected sidemen as well as former Rolling Stone, Mick Taylor.



Award-winning guitarist & singer Brian Kramer has shared the stage, traded licks and recorded with Taj Mahal, Toumani Diabate, Bob Brozman, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Robben Ford, Geoff Muldaur, Bobby Rush, Bernard Allison, Eugene "Hideaway" Bridges, John Mayall, Sven Zetterberg, Michael Barretto, Otis Grand, Jimmy Dawkins and many others; and performed at international events such as the Cambridge Folk Festival, Bull Durham Blues Festival, Chicago World Music Festival, Notudden Blues Festival, Portugal Simply Blues Festival, etc.

Brian then became a fixture within the New York club scene in the 90s, performing regularly with great Blues men such as Larry Johnson, before moving to Europe in search of a broader range of opportunities. On relocating in Sweden, he then began collaborating with established artists such as Cyndee Peters and Derrick "Big" Walker, and produced a number of recordings with Sweden's most unique and talented blues artists. An active contributor to Scandinavia's club and festival scene, Brian began appearing at Club Fasching, the Stockholm Water Festival and Stockholm's International Jazz and Blues Festival.

In 1998, Brian joined internationally-acclaimed artist Eric Bibb on 4 coast-to-coast tours of the US and Canada, as well as England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Scandinavia and Japan. Eric featured Brian his *Home To Me* album. In appreciation of Brian's sound, Eric's father—60's icon & folk singer Leon Bibb—then released an album called *A Family Affair*, which also featured Brian's slide guitar playing. That same year, Brian began faithfully hosting the weekly Saturday Blues Jam at Stampen. The jam sessions proved to be fertile ground for nurturing Sweden's hottest new young blues talents, such as Emil Arvidsson, Daniel Kordelius, "Little" Chris Shorooi and Anna Christoffersson.

In 2000, Brian released an intimate, all-acoustic recording titled *Brian Kramer Trio and Friends, Live at the Folklore Center*, which caught the attention of renowned writer-producer Sam Charters, who called it "wonderful, spirited music." The following year saw the international release by Armadillo Records, UK, of *Larry Johnson featuring Brian Kramer & the Couch Lizards, Two Gun Green*. From 2001 to 2005, Brian toured throughout Sweden, the UK, US, Poland, Thailand and the Netherlands, and began releasing a series of albums in his own name: *No Regrets*, *Everybody's Story* and *I Want My Illusion*. Each was very well received and won critical acclaim in both the local and international press.

Brian has won several awards such the *Culture Prize* which the Tavla Foundation for the Arts granted him in recognition of his positive focus within the environment with his music. In 2007, the S. African Dept. of Culture invited Brian to perform and conduct workshops at the Aardklop Festival—one of the largest cultural festivals in S. Africa. With Brian in mind, they initiated the "*Empowerment through Music*" program where Brian met with young musicians in the local Township area to share his ideas on how to use music in a positive, value-creating way.

In 2008, Brian celebrated 10 years of performances at Stampen, his home-away-from-home, commemorating the anniversary with the release of *Brian Kramer & the Nights of Blu-topia, Live at Club Stampen*, capturing the vibe and essence of the magic that happens every week with the BK Band. Brian's contributions to the Swedish Blues scene earned him the recognition of the 2008 *Encyclopedia of the Blues*: "One important step in broadening the interest in blues music was the starting in the late 1990's of jam sessions at the club Stampen in Stockholm by the American singer and guitar player Brian Kramer."

When not on tour, Brian can be seen at the weekly Saturday Stampen Blues Jam. Brian Also teaches music part time at the International College.