

Jakubu Griffin
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With over two decades of professional musicianship already under his belt, highly versatile drummer and percussionist Jakubu Griffin continues to thrive at the forefront of the Las Vegas and NYC entertainment scenes. The roots of this incredible career trace back to his youth, when—as the son of jazz trombonist Dick Griffin—Jakubu was immersed in musical influence.

Jakubu developed an affinity for percussion early, with memories of first playing the drums at age 3 or 4. He began classical piano at age 5 and soon after added the trumpet, which he played in elementary school. There, Jakubu's love for the drums was serendipitously rekindled when his trumpet teacher announced that the jazz band was in need of a drummer. Inspired both by his close friend, drummer Nasheet Waits, and by Nasheet's father, world-renowned drummer Freddie Waits (himself a lifelong friend to Dick Griffin), Jakubu jumped at the opportunity—and unknowingly began carving his own future as one of music's great percussionists.

Jakubu focused on classical percussion while attending high school at the North Carolina School of the Arts before majoring in percussion performance at Indiana University (IU). There, he studied jazz percussion under the late Dr. David Baker, prolific composer and IU Distinguished Professor of Music, and was honored to be selected for Baker's elite band as only a freshman. While refining his jazz musicianship, Jakubu continued to progress in his classical endeavors, winning an IU concerto competition in 1992.

This dedication to developing mastery in both classical and jazz percussion led Jakubu to build the innovative, one-of-a-kind repertoire he has since shared through countless performances all over the world. In 2000, while living in Las Vegas, he was featured in David Cassidy and Sheena Easton's *At The Copa* at the Rio All-Suite Casino Resort and later went on to tour with David Cassidy. In 2002, he was the musical contractor and drummer for *Signed, Sealed, Delivered*, a tribute to Stevie Wonder at the Venetian Resort, performing alongside such greats as Chaka Khan, Peabo Bryson, and Melissa Manchester. Jakubu also served as musical director for Kings Productions as well as for Norwegian and Premier cruise lines.

Back home in NYC, Jakubu has performed and recorded with award-winning jazz trumpeter Dave Douglas, Ryko/Warner recording artist Matt White, and Broadway stars Tracie Thoms (*RENT, Case*) and Shoshana Bean (*Wicked*). He was the drummer for Cirque Du Soleil's *Zarkana*, which premiered at the world-famous Radio City Music Hall in June 2011 before touring to Madrid, Spain and completing its historic 2012 run at the Kremlin Theater in Moscow, Russia.

Currently playing with legendary Emmy Award-winning Las Vegas singer Clint Holmes, drummer and percussionist Jakubu Griffin never ceases to amaze fellow musicians and audiences alike with his powerful stage presence, technical expertise, intuitive skill set, and refreshingly genuine passion for the music that continues to shape his life.
