

Raoul and The Big Time “Down in the Delta”

Saturday, April 29, 2016, 2017 at 8:00 pm

This is the 721st concert in Koerner Hall

Raoul and The Big Time

Raoul Bhaneja, vocals, harmonica & guitar

Darren Gallen, guitar

Tom Bona, drums

Terry Wilkins, upright bass

Divine Brown, vocals

Super Chikan, guitar & vocals

Big Dave McLean, guitar & vocals

Anthony "Big A" Sherrod, guitar & vocals

The Big Time Horns

Pat Carey, saxophone

Alison Young, saxophone

Jake Wilkinson, trumpet

Graham Guest, piano

Jake Chisholm, guitar

Chris Banks, bass

Raoul and The Big Time

Formed in 1998, this Maple Blues Award-winning outfit has come a long way since their first gig in the back room of The Cameron on Queen Street West. They have released five recordings to date, *Big Time Blues*, *Cold Outside*, *You My People*, *Blue Midnight: A Live Tribute to Little Walter*, and *Hollywood Blvd.* Festival appearances range from Vancouver Folk, Salmon Arm Roots, and Blues to Wreckhouse in St. John's, and both Montreal and Toronto Jazz. They have performed or recorded with blues luminaries Bettye Lavette, Billy Boy Arnold, Billy Branch, Mark Hummel, Curtis Salgado, The Mavis Staples Band, Junior Watson, Larry Taylor of Canned Heat, Lee Oskar, Super Chikan, Big Dave McLean, and many more.

Co-founded with veteran Toronto blues guitar player, **Darren Gallen**, The Big Time is fronted by actor/musician **Raoul Bhaneja**, who has over 90 film and television credits, such as the recently released feature film, *Miss Sloane*, opposite Jessica Chastain. Bhaneja has performed on stages across Canada, including his Dora Award nominated musical, *Life, Death and The Blues*. Longtime member **Tom Bona** is a multiple Maple Blues Award winner for Drummer of the Year. Joining the band over 10 years ago on upright bass, after many years of co-producing, arranging, and songwriting for The Big Time, is the legendary **Terry Wilkins** of notable Canadian acts Big Sugar, Rough Trade, and David Wilcox.

The band's most recent release, *Hollywood Blvd.*, was nominated for Record/Producer of the Year as well as for Songwriter and Entertainer of the Year in the 2015 Maple Blues Awards, held right here in Koerner Hall.

Super Chikan is a Blues Music Award-winning American blues musician, artist, and instrument maker who has toured the world bringing his unique brand of blues from festival to concert hall to barroom and front porch. A multiple recipient of the Mississippi Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, he has received countless Blues Music Awards and nominations. At an early age, he got his first rudimentary musical instrument, a "diddle bow," which was simply a piece of wood with a piece of baling wire stretched from end to end. He is now a skilled builder of original instruments, owned by the likes of Morgan Freeman, Caroline Kennedy, Steven Segal. Raoul Bhaneja first

met Super Chikan in Clarksdale three years ago while researching his musical, *Life, Death and The Blues*, and they have since toured Ontario together with Big Dave McLean during Panamania as part of the Pan Am Games.

A multiple Juno Award nominee, **Big Dave McLean** has influenced more western Canadian blues musicians than anyone. Ever since getting his start with an impromptu guitar lesson from John Hammond at the 1969 Mariposa Folk Festival, he has been devoted to his craft, touring relentlessly through Canada's blues bars, folk clubs, and folk and blues festivals. Deeply influenced by the Mississippi blues, his many career highlights include earning two WCMA's, a Prairie Music Award, a Whisky Award, and countless Maple Blues honours, such as the Blues with Feeling (lifetime achievement) Award in 2007. His most recent release, *Better The Devil You Know*, is produced by Steve Dawson and available on Black Hen Records. He first toured with Raoul Bhaneja and The Big Time in 2000 and was a frequent guest legend in *Life, Death and The Blues*.

Only in his early 30s, **Anthony "Big A" Sherrod** is a bridge between the Mississippi blues of the past and the future. Part of the next generation of Clarksdale-based blues artists, "Big A" is taking the music forward into the new century. A skilled guitar player and passionate singer, he cut his teeth in the clubs and juke joints of Mississippi and is now starting to gain recognition outside of his home state. A must see artist when visiting Clarksdale, he can be found on various stages around town, including frequent shows at Red's, one of the last true juke joints in operation, as well as at Morgan Freeman's Ground Zero. Raoul Bhaneja first performed with "Big A" in Clarksdale a number of years ago and is thrilled to have him make his Canadian debut tonight.

A multi-talented Juno Award winner, **Divine Brown's** fans have been moved by both her soulfully expressive voice and her technically dazzling five-octave range. She has starred in several musical plays such as *Rent*, *Ain't Miss Behavin'*, *Obeah Opera*, and *Passing Strange*. Placing three top 10 singles on CHR, AC, and Hot AC radio in Canada (with her hit single "Sunglasses" reaching Top 15 on the U.S. *Billboard* Dance Chart in 2010), Brown also captured the heart of the public and her music garnered a Certified Gold Album for her debut self-titled project (2005 – Universal Music), a Juno Award for R&B Album of the Year (*The Love Chronicles*), as well as a SOCAN #1 Award. She has recently released her EP, *Crazy Love Amplified*, to great acclaim. She co-stars with Raoul Bhaneja, Jake Chisholm, Chris Banks, and Tom Bona in *Life, Death and The Blues*, which has been performed across Canada.

Raoul Bhaneja made his Koerner Hall debut on January 17, 2011, Pat Carey and Tom Bona on January 18, 2010, and Divine Brown on November 1, 2016. All of the other artists are making their Conservatory debuts tonight.

Please join us for a postlude performance in the Leslie & Anna Dan Galleria.