

# Michael Hill's Blues Mob

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## Original New York Style Blues



MICHAEL HILL



PETE CUMMINGS



BILL McCLELLAN

It's been said that Michael Hill's Blues Mob "MAY BE AN OUTFIT THAT'S TOO GOOD FOR IT'S OWN GOOD" (Goldmine, January 2002). With nary a Handy nor Grammy nomination to their name, they've established themselves as a great band the old fashioned way: by making album after excellent album of fiery, boundary-busting original music, then taking it to the stage with a vengeance. Writing and playing the blues that could only come from their hometown of New York City, they've created a body of work that vividly reflects the passion, energy, danger, romance, humor, heart and sophistication that make both New York City and Michael Hill's Blues Mob unique, inimitable and truly exciting.

With the release of their first Alligator album *Bloodlines* in 1994, Michael Hill's Blues Mob immediately established themselves as a cutting-edge, premier contemporary blues band with original music of uncommon power and conviction. "HILL AND COMPANY RETURN THE VOICE OF PROPHECY, AS WELL AS THE OUTRAGED HEART OF CONTEMPORARY URBAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, TO THE MODERN BLUES TRADITION", exclaimed Living Blues. *Bloodlines* went on to earn the Living Blues Critic's award for Debut Blues Album of the Year, as well a slew of other rave reviews. The next four years saw the

band release two more highly acclaimed albums on Alligator Records, with ***Have Mercy!*** (1996) and ***New York State Of Blues*** (1998) collecting their own choruses of excellent reviews. Always a dynamic, crowd-pleasing live act, Michael Hill's Blues Mob has since been tearing up the road, receiving much love from audiences and lighting up the stage at festivals and clubs across the States. Meanwhile, they've also been welcomed to stages all around the rest of the world, doing numerous tours playing festivals and clubs in England, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, France, Norway and the rest of Europe and Scandinavia as well as tours in Turkey, Russia and five trips each to Brazil and Australia.



The New Millennium saw Michael Hill's Blues Mob release their fourth album in 2001 on Singular Records in the U.S. and Dixiefrog in Europe, and many fans and critics alike agree that ***Suite: Larger Than Life*** is actually their best album yet. Blues Revue said, "*SUITE, HIS FIRST ALBUM SINCE 1998'S EXCELLENT NEW YORK STATE OF BLUES, SHOWS HILL EXPANDING ON HIS PREVIOUS WORK*", and "IF ONE IS LOOKING FOR AN ALBUM WITH UNCOMPROMISING MUSICAL AND LYRICAL INTEGRITY, *SUITE: LARGER THAN LIFE* IS IT", declares Goldmine.

While the band has always drawn acclaim for Hill's songwriting and guitar playing, it's the state-of -the-art musicians in the Blues Mob who have brought the music to soul-stirring reality. The vicissitudes of life and the music business have seen original Blues Mob members Kevin Hill, Tony Lewis and Fred McFarlane as well as E.J. "the Professor" Sharpe move on to Blues Mob alumni status. The band's tradition of great musicianship meanwhile continues: Pete Cummings has held the bass/vocals chair since 1995 and Bill McClellan has held down drums/vocals since 1999, both bringing bountiful chops, unrelenting groove and charismatic showmanship to the stage. Back to their roots as a trio, the Blues Mob is as powerful, adventurous and exciting as ever. And while cliché and imitation are acceptable to some, no doubt Michael Hill's Blues Mob and their unique New York-style blues will continue to be in the vanguard of keeping the blues alive and thriving in the 21st century with originality, real life conviction and full-throttle fun. To paraphrase, "DAMN THE CLICHES, FULL SPEED AHEAD!"

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