

# Joe Lastie Jr



From the moment he received his first drum set at age eight, Joe Lastie's destiny was clear -- although given his family history, the odds were always good that he would follow the drumming footsteps, of both grandfathers, Deacon Frank Lastie and Emil Desvignes and his uncles, Jessie Hill, Melvin, David, Walter Lastie, and cousin Herlin Riley, into a life devoted to music. Church played a critical role in Joe's personal and creative growth due to the influence of his aunt, BettyAnn Lastie. In 1969, he moved with his family to Long Island, New York, where he took lessons from Clyde Harris through the public schools, where he became the first drummer to play a set of drums in the Elementary School Band. In 1976 he returned to New Orleans, where he attended George Washington Carver High School and played in the Marching Band under the directions of Yvonne Bush. During that time he studied jazz with Willie Metcalf at the Dryades Street YMCA, where his classmates included the young Wynton and Branford Marsalis. That lead him to his first paying gig at Lou and Charlie's, earning him a grand five dollars. While walking on Bourbon Street, he picked up a steady gig with bassist Richard Payne's band, all the while still attending his weekly jam session at his aunt BettyAnn's house with his Uncle Jesse and Professor Longhair. He also played the drums with the Desire Community Choir, where he made his first recording and road trip.

Getting better all the time, he was often asked to play with his Uncle David's band, The Taste of New Orleans, where he accompanied the like of Irma Thomas, Ernie K-Doe, and Eddie Bo, all local royalty. He also played with the French Market Jazz Band. Later, he hooked up with the Creole Cooking Band featuring Antoine Domino, Jr. At times, Antoine's father, Fats Domino would come in and jam with them. He also began his own group, New Orleans Homegrown Jazz Band. He even went on the road with an off Broadway show called *One Mo' Time*. Upon returning to Bourbon Street, he went to the Maison Bourbon Jazz Club, and played and recorded with Wallace Davenport. On a tip from trumpeter Gregg Stafford, he was invited to substitute on drums at Preservation Hall. Then owner, Sandy Jaffe, hired him as a drummer for the Friday night band. Which lead to him record several CDs and DVDs with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. His supreme acknowledgment came when he was asked to play with The Humphrey Brothers, then he knew he had arrived.

Lastie's musical diversity has led him to play with many talented musical legends. Musical styles include Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Rock, Rap, Zydeco and Gospel. He has entertained Presidents, Kings and Queens, and International audiences worldwide. He has appeared in such notable places as the Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, The White House and various Symphony Halls.

All of this musical genius has led to the recording of his own CD, Joe Lastie's Family Gospel.

Today you can still find him playing at Preservation Hall and The Maison Bourbon on Bourbon Street, where he is one of the longest active musicians on the street. Be on the lookout for his new band, Joe Lastie's New Orleans Sounds.

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