



## PLAYING FOR CHANGE

*“As a human race we come together for birth, and we come together for death. What brings us together in between is up to us. Stop and listen to the universal language of music, and bring that positive energy with you everywhere you go.”*

Mark Johnson, Playing For Change founder



# PLAYING FOR CHANGE

CONNECTING THE WORLD THROUGH MUSIC



## THE JOURNEY

Playing For Change is a movement created to inspire, connect and bring peace to the world through music. In 2005, producer Mark Johnson created the concept of the *Songs Around The World* by uniting together musicians from many different countries and cultures performing on the same track. Mark and a small crew traveled across 5 continents with a mobile recording studio and cameras with the vision to build a global family through the power of Music. The first song released was a version of *Stand By Me* featuring over 35 musicians from 10 countries who had never met in person. Since then, this international version of *Stand By Me* has been viewed over 100 million times online.

The success of the *Songs Around The World* inspired us to unite together many of the greatest musicians we met throughout our journey to create the Playing For Change Band. These musicians come from many different countries and cultures, but through music they speak the same language. The true measure of this movement is in how it would give back to the musicians and their communities who had shared so much with us. We therefore created the Playing For Change Foundation, a separate nonprofit organization that develops music and art schools and programs for children around the world. Additionally, more than \$1.5 million has been paid to talented musicians through PFC, providing them with life-changing opportunities and support.

## WHAT WE DO

### Producing Records and Music Videos

Our first CD/DVD, "*Songs Around The World*", debuted on the Billboard Top 10 charts and has sold over 400,000 copies worldwide. PFC has since released several albums, music videos, and a feature documentary film, "*Peace Through Music*", which has won several awards at film festivals. We continue to produce new *Songs Around The World*, along with albums for both the PFC Band and musicians involved in the project. The family is growing everyday.

### Playing for Change Band Concerts

An original and emotional live music experience, these concerts unite musicians from different countries (The Congo, South Africa, Italy, Israel, Zimbabwe, USA, Cuba, Japan...) who have collaborated in the *Songs Around The World*. The PFC Band has performed over 150 concerts, including a recent tour in Brazil headlining for an audience of 35,000 and a tour in Australia at the Byron Bay Blues Festival as the opening act for Robert Plant. The group is led by Grandpa Elliott, who has been performing on the streets of New Orleans for over 60 years. This amazing blind performer is now traveling the world taking the message from the streets to the stage to the hearts of the people everywhere.

### Creating Positive Change through Music Education

The Playing For Change Foundation, created in 2007, works to provide music and arts education to communities in need. Through the Foundation, we have developed three schools and six music programs in the following countries: Ghana, Mali, Nepal, Rwanda, South Africa, and Thailand. Our music schools play a significant role in the transmission of cultural heritages, providing a social and economic activity for the communities in these developing countries.





# PLAYING FOR CHANGE

THE IMPACT

## A UNIQUE COMMUNITY OF MUSICIANS AND FANS



-360, 000 subscribers  
-Over 150, 000 000 views



-420, 000 fans



-550,000 units sold of PFC catalogue worldwide

-Over 150 performances of the PFC Band on 4 continents since formation in 2009

-200, 000 subscribers on [playingforchange.com](http://playingforchange.com) with 100, 000 visits per month from 193 countries

## MUSIC AS A TOOL FOR POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE



**PLAYING FOR CHANGE**  
**FOUNDATION**

-9 music schools and programs across 6 countries

-700 students attending free music, art and language classes every week

-Over 40 qualified teachers and staff on the ground



Contact Info:

Mark Johnson  
[mark@playingforchange.com](mailto:mark@playingforchange.com)

Raan Williams  
[raan@playingforchange.com](mailto:raan@playingforchange.com)



# PLAYING FOR CHANGE BAND

THE LIVE EXPERIENCE



The creation of the Playing For Change Band has helped us to realize a dream of uniting the musicians we met during our journey on one stage. The result is a unique fusion of influences and talents in constant evolution since the first concerts in 2008. Grandpa Elliott, legendary street musician from New Orleans, sings alongside Clarence Bekker (Netherlands), Titi Tsira (South Africa), Tal Ben Ari "Tula" (Israel), Jason Tamba (Congo) and Mermans Mosengo (Congo). The rhythm section features Louis Mhlanga (Zimbabwe) on lead guitar, Papa Orbe Ortiz (Cuba) on the bass, Peter Bunetta (USA) on drums, Roberto Luti (Italy) on guitar (Italy) and Keiko Komaki (Japan) on keyboards.

When audiences see and hear musicians who have traveled thousands of miles from their homes, united in purpose and chorus, everyone is touched by music's unifying power. The Playing For Change Band has collaborated with artists such as Toots & the Maytals, Ziggy Marley, Babaa Maal, and Tinariwen. The CD/DVD *Playing for Change Live* (2010) introduces the band in concert during a tour of the US and Europe. After extended world tours in 2011, 2012, and 2013 across Latin America, Australia, Brazil, Europe, Morocco, and the USA, the Playing For Change Band is back on stage in 2014.



# PLAYING FOR CHANGE BAND MEMBERS



**Grandpa Elliott (New Orleans, Louisiana) - vocals, harmonica**

Grandpa has been a New Orleans street icon for decades. His music and comforting presence have touched countless hearts throughout the years. When you think of the French Quarter you think of Grandpa. Many locals and frequent visitors to the Quarter consider Grandpa the saving grace and passionate force behind the revitalization of the city since Hurricane Katrina. His voice reminds us all that music can help the soul persevere through many hardships.



**Clarence Bekker (Amsterdam, Netherlands) - vocals, acoustic guitar**

Clarence comes from Suriname, and moved to Amsterdam at the age of 6. He started his singing career with legendary Dutch band Swing Soul Machine, where he was the youngest singer in 20 years. He grew into a dance music artist called CB Milton and made three albums under that name in the 1990s. Currently, Clarence is living in Barcelona, Spain, collaborating with bands and local DJs, such as 08001 and Taito Tikaro.



**Titi Tsira (Gugulethu, South Africa) - vocals**

Titi is a young woman who hails from Gugulethu, a black African township in the Western Cape. Raised by a mother who was an actress, and a father who was a singer, Titi began singing at a very early age. Since then, she has enjoyed a successful career both as a solo musician and as a member of various bands-- most recently, the Playing For Change Band. Her music is a mix of Soul and Pop fused with African influences, and she is excited to add her unique and powerful voice to the Playing For Change Movement.



**Tal Ben-Ari aka Tula (Tel Aviv, Israel) – vocals**

Tal Ben Ari a.k.a. "Tula" is a singer and songwriter from Tel Aviv, Israel, now based in Barcelona. She began her singing, piano and dance studies at the age of 7 and spent all of her free time during her childhood pursuing these activities, showing a special passion for music. During her education, she explored different areas of music, like jazz, soul and Mediterranean folk, while also singing in her hometown choir. Since arriving in Barcelona in 2005, Tula began working with different groups, emphasizing the formation "08001", joining musicians such as "Peret", "Gema 4", "Asikides" and Man Ex Maquina.



**Jason Tamba (Matadi, Congo) - vocals, guitar**

Born in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jason has been playing guitar since the age of seven, when he made his own instrument out of wood and four strings. Teaching himself guitar for a decade, he began to study classical guitar at 20, eventually earning a degree in classical guitar. After playing at churches, local venues and in Papa Wemba's traditional group Percussion Molokai, Jason decided to travel to South Africa in search of more opportunities. It was there that he became a guitarist for the group Afro Fiesta before PFC met him in 2006.



### **Mermans Mosengo (Kinshasa, Congo) - vocals**

Upon his arrival to South Africa from Congo in 1998, Mermans joined the Young Bakuba Band as a drummer and bass guitar player. After a year in the band, he found that his independence and musical style were being limited, so he branched out as a solo artist in 1999. He was soon in high demand, doing solo gigs at various Cape Town venues. However, he decided that he preferred being part of a band, and therefore assembled what is now a highly regarded multi-cultural band, Afro Fiesta.



### **Keiko Komaki (Japan) - keyboards**

Keiko Komaki personifies music. An accomplished pianist and B-3 player. Keiko Komaki hails from Kagoshima, Japan. She began playing the piano at just 5 years old. After graduating from Kunitachi College of Music, she quickly became more interested in the improvisation world, playing funk, blues, and jazz fusion rather than her classical roots. However, it was a few years later where she learned of New Orleans music. She later visited New Orleans for Jazz Fest and decided to take the bold step in 2006 to move to the city and make it as a musician, despite opposition from her family.



### **Peter Bunetta (Los Angeles, California) - drums**

Peter Bunetta is a drummer, producer and entrepreneur with three decades of success in the music business. He brings an impeccable reputation and a rich musical legacy to The Playing For Change Movement. With a hand in over 75 million records sold, Peter has collaborated with some of music's most talented and storied figures, including John Prine, Steve Goodman, Smokey Robinson, Patti LaBelle, The Temptations, Ringo Star, and Tina Turner. For the past five years, Peter has guided the career of his son, producer/songwriter Julian Bunetta and developed the award winning musical, City Kid, alongside multiplatinum songwriter Adrienne Anderson and Rick Chudacoff.



### **Louis Mhlanga (Zimbabwe) - flying guitar**

Louis Mhlanga is a highly accomplished musician from Zimbabwe. Although a guitar player by profession, he loves all instruments, from the traditional to the modern. "My music is just an expression of my experiences and the connection I have with day-to-day events," says Mhlanga. "It is also about the happiness I feel when I am able to reach other souls through music."



### **Orbe Ortiz (Santiago de Cuba, Cuba) - bass**

Orbe Ortiz, aka "Papa Orbe" was born in Santiago de Cuba in a family of musicians and learned to play Cuban tres and bass guitar at a very young age. At 15 years old he started to perform with Casa de la Trova and later with artists like Felix Chapottin, Albita Rodriguez, and Ignacio Piñeiro. Orbe left his native country at the end of the 80's and traveled to Colombia where he joined Toto La Momposina's band. Since then, he has travelled the world playing with musicians such as Papa Noel (Congo) and Radio Malanga (Spain), among many others.



### **Roberto Luti (Livorno, Italy) - electric and steel guitar**

Roberto Luti was born in Livorno, Italy, in 1977. He is one of the first musicians we met when he was playing on the streets of New Orleans at the time. Roberto grew up hearing and listening to the blues and rock & roll records that his father, a big time music lover, played around the house. Luti picked up the guitar around the age of eight, and his dad taught him the basics. Roberto has also been living in New Orleans for almost ten years, learning to play real roots blues.



# PLAYING FOR CHANGE FOUNDATION

CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH MUSIC EDUCATION

## DEVELOPING MUSIC SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD

The Playing For Change Foundation (PFCF) is a 501©3 organization established to create positive change through music and arts education. Close to 700 kids are attending free classes (in dance, instruments, drama, languages, musical theory, etc.) managed by qualified local teachers and administrators. By creating a space where kids can meet, learn to play an instrument and express themselves through music, PFCF offers to the young generations a creative alternative to the daily struggles they face, using music as a tool for education and social change.



## MUSIC PROGRAMS



NTONGA MUSIC SCHOOL  
Gugulethu, South Africa



BIZUNG SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE  
Tamale, Ghana



ÉCOLE DE MUSIQUE DE KIRINA  
Kirina, Mali



STAR SCHOOL MUSIC & SPORTS PROGRAM  
Kigali, Rwanda



TINTALE VILLAGE MOTHERS SOCIETY  
Tintale, Nepal



MITRATA NEPAL MUSIC PROGRAM  
Kathmandu, Nepal

HARI KUL MUSIC SCHOOL  
Patan, Lalitpur District, Nepal

UDAYAPUR NEPAL MUSIC PROGRAM  
Katari, Nepal

KHLONG TOEY MUSIC PROGRAM  
Bangkok, Thailand

## OUR COMMITMENT

Guiding principles include using music to transform lives and communities, connecting people globally, local leadership and economic empowerment. PFCF projects are established in places that are culturally rich but oftentimes economically poor. Studies show that music training improves verbal learning, spoken language processing, and memory; in academic settings, persons who participate in music education perform better on standardized tests than their peers and have higher graduation rates. Playing music has social and emotional benefits including positive feelings about self, reduced disruptive behaviors and stronger connections to others.



PFC Day was created in 2011 so that musicians, fans, and volunteers could get involved and become a part of the global Playing For Change community. In 2013, PFCF joined with 1Love, a global foundation started by the children of Bob Marley, to bring this event to the world on September 21st. Funds raised through the day support PFCF music programs that give children the opportunity to develop new skills and express themselves through music. The day hosted over 300 events in 56 countries on 6 continents, raising more than \$150,000 to provide instruments, music instruction, and inspiration.



316 EVENTS 56 COUNTRIES \$151,569 DONATED

[playingforchange.org](http://playingforchange.org)



# PLAYING FOR CHANGE FOUNDATION

2013 HIGHLIGHTS AND LATEST NEWS

## Bizung School of Music and Dance, Ghana

Our students had the great honor of performing for the King of Yendi (known as Ya Naa) and cultural leader in Ghana on PFC Day! We've just constructed a new open-air classroom and established a recording studio at the school. The studio and related new equipment will enable students to capture live and recorded sound, develop listening skills to tune their ears to learning all the frequencies of sound, and use the technology to mix sounds and produce songs.



## Tintale village, Nepal

We have finished construction of two new rooms at this program's location in Tintale Village, Nepal. One will be used to teach music, house instruments and provide program support, and the other will serve as a cyber café, connecting the children and community with the world. Recent program changes mean that kids who used to walk two hours each way to learn music will have the opportunity to do so in their own communities. We've increased enrollment and participation among girls in this program by 40%! And remember, when we started the program girls were not allowed to learn music. The village leaders agreed to our request that the music programs be accessible to all children, regardless of sex or caste or other considerations.

## Ecole de Musique de Kirina, Mali

At L'Ecole De Musique de Kirina in Mali we have 35 new female students who are learning instruments. This is an amazing development for the community, our program and everybody involved because many times in the past girls did not have access to learn instruments. The installation of solar panels in the village has brought light to the community and this thriving school which now serves more than 250 students.



## Klong Toey Music Program, Thailand

In Thailand, the Klong Toey Music Program is our newest and was inspired by a 2011 PFC Day event and officially launched in Spring of 2013. The Thai Public Broadcasting System is filming a documentary telling the stories of the amazing students and teachers in Klong Toey, and our students have also been involved in the UN campaign for the Millenium Developpement by recording a song and interviews about their daily challenges and their experience of using music as a tool for positive change.



## Star School Music & Sports Program, Masaka, Rwanda

On September 21st - Playing For Change Day 2013 - the Playing For Change Foundation launched a new music and sports program in Masaka, a village near Rwanda's capital city, Kigali. The program takes place at Star School, a primary and secondary school founded by Bishop Nathan Amooti that now provides education for more than 300 underprivileged children. This program continues our commitment to serving orphaned and vulnerable children in Rwanda, and provides access to regular music and dance instruction, in addition to a soccer program.





# PLAYING FOR CHANGE RECORDS

NEW RELEASES

## NEW ALBUMS ANNOUNCEMENT



**PFC3** CD/DVD is the newest collection of *Songs Around The World* from Playing For Change. During the past two years we have traveled to over 15 countries, recording and filming musicians live outside on city streets, in their villages, and beyond. The new album features performances from Keith Richards, Ernest Ranglin, Andres Calamaro, Toots Hibbert and over 150 more musicians who have never met in person. With these songs and videos we continue to connect the world through music.



## AFRO FIESTA NEW ALBUM

PFC band members Mermans Mosengo and Jason Tamba both left their native country of the Congo more than fifteen years ago in search of a better life. They met for the first time in South Africa, where they formed the band Afro Fiesta. Their music incorporates various influences such as roots reggae, makossa, and Congolese rumba. For their first album with Playing For Change, Afro Fiesta recorded an album in Los Angeles featuring Detroit Bass legend Reggie McBride as well as Courtney "Bam" Diedrick and Sean "Pow" Diedrick, Jamaican brothers from Damian Marley's band, on drums and keyboards. The result, *Fire Down Babylon*, is a reggae rumba roots album with music and messages from deep in the heart of Africa.



Since 2005, the PFC crew has recorded over 500 musicians in 40 countries and produced 3 CD/DVD sets of *Songs Around The World*, a Live DVD/album, a documentary on the PFC Band, and several original records for artists such as Grandpa Elliott, Clarence Bekker, and Afro Fiesta.

## AVAILABLE ALBUMS AND DVDS:

