

Wang Dang Group Bios

Billy Courtman grew up in Brooklyn. As a child, people were always asking him what he wanted to be when he grew up. But Billy never wondered. As far as he knew, he was already doing it; singing around the house, making up songs, and harmonizing with his twin brother, Bobby. Noticing every musical note that was in the air was all there was, or needed to be.

That was until he heard the blues. It was then that he asked the eternal question: "How can people play with such passion and emotion, bearing their very soul in such a magical way?"

That question began a journey that continues to this day, with every step in search of the answer.

On Billy's journey, one on which he's played guitar, saxophone and violin as well as singing, he's worked with Chuck Berry, The Brooklyn Blues Busters, James Cotton Blues Band, Edgar Winter and Cyndi Lauper.

He strongly feels that studying with jazz piano legend Lennie Tristano was one of his most profound experiences. It was Tristano who taught Billy that "if you don't mean it, don't play it." In truth, the words he spoke were "acupuncture and out." In other words, "make your point and split!"

Billy remains a highly respected and sought after player on the New York scene, leading groups of varying configurations. He has performed live for countless celebrities including 3 Presidents.

An avid songwriter, Billy keeps his skills fresh by working with young musicians, both teaching actively and producing recording artists in his studio.

To this day, other people may wonder what Billy wants to be when he grows up; fortunately, Billy never does!

Jeff Ganz

Every great musician has their own sound, and can be identified within just a few notes. Jeff Ganz is no exception. His signature style provides propulsive accompaniment on both bass and drums.

Driven by his love of music and the need to perform, he began a lifelong quest to lead the ultimate band when he began performing professionally as a guitarist/vocalist in the Hendrix/Clapton tradition at the age of fourteen. By 20, Jeff wanted a new musical challenge and made the decision to master the bass. Jeff's goal was simple: he wanted to be the first-call guy in every possible musical genre. He didn't stop with the traditional upright bass; he also mastered the fretted and fretless 4, 5, 8, and 12-string electric bass, as well as the piccolo bass guitar.

Since then, Jeff has toured and recorded with such legends as Johnny Winter, Roy Buchanan, John Lee Hooker, Gerry Mulligan, Tito Puente, Chuck Berry, and Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. And, because of his ability to provide the perfect accompaniment in any situation, his resume reads like a who's who of popular American music in the 20th century. Jeff has occupied the bass chair on television, in concert and on many CDs, building a thirty-plus year reputation as a first-call bassist.

To sample the music and find out more about the group, please visit their website: <http://www.wang-dang.com/>