



# SIN & REDEMPTION

## Lurrie Bell & The Campbell Brothers

### PROGRAM

*There will be an intermission.*

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**Friday, March 24 @ 8 PM**

Zellerbach Theatre

## AFRICAN ROOTS, AMERICAN VOICES

Part of the African Roots, American Voices series.

## PROGRAM NOTES

Illuminating the connection between the blues and gospel music, Sin & Redemption transports audiences from the rousing music of Saturday nights in the juke joints straight into the Sunday morning gospel sounds of the sacred steel guitar.

Chicago bluesman Lurrie Bell (son of famed blues harmonica player Carey Bell) carries the torch of Chicago's greatest blues legends. Coupled with the unparalleled sound and spirit of The Campbell Brothers, this powerhouse double bill is a passionate reminder of all that is great about American roots music.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### **Lurrie Bell**

Born in 1958, the son of famed blues harmonica player Carey Bell, Lurrie Bell picked up his father's guitar at age five and taught himself to play. Bell grew up surrounded by a number of Chicago's blues legends, including Eddie Taylor, Big Walter Horton, Eddie C. Campbell, Eddie Clearwater, Lovie Lee, Sunnyland Slim, Jimmy Dawkins and, most importantly, his father's long-time employer Muddy Waters.

Growing up, Bell played mostly in church immersing himself in the passionate expressiveness of the gospel tradition. By 17, he was playing on stage with Willie Dixon. In 1977, he founded The Sons of Blues with Freddie Dixon (son of Willie) and Billy Branch. The band recorded three standout tracks for Alligator Records' Grammy®-nominated *Living Chicago Blues* series. Bell joined Koko Taylor's band in 1978 honing his chops for several years and learning the ropes of being a traveling musician. He continued to work with his dad as well, recording the 1984 Rooster Blues album *Son Of a Gun* and several other titles for the UK's JSP Records. Not only was Bell recognized as an exceptionally talented guitarist and musician, but his knowledge of different blues styles, his soulfulness and his musical maturity merited write-ups in publications such as *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times*.

Since the onset of the new millennium, Bell's profile has been steadily rising. In 2004, he released an acoustic duet with his father for Alligator Records that was nominated for a WC Handy Award Acoustic Record of the Year by the Blues Foundation in Memphis. In 2007, Bell started his own label, Aria B.G. Records, and released *Let's Talk About Love*, which has been called his most accomplished, deeply-heartfelt album yet. On the strength of this record, he was voted Most Outstanding Guitar Player in the *Living Blues Magazine's* 2007 Critic's Poll. He was also named the magazine's Male Blues Artist of the Year in 2008 and 2012.

In 2009, Bell paired up with Billy Boy Arnold, John Primer and Billy Branch on the recording *Chicago Blues: A Living History* which garnered him his first official Grammy® nomination for Best Traditional Blues Recording. His second CD on Aria B.G. Records arrived in 2012, *The Devil Ain't Got No Music*, which contained a collection of acoustic blues and gospel songs that recollect the music he played with his dad and at church as a child. *The Devil Ain't Got No Music* was honored with the Prix du Blues award from the prestigious French L'Academie du Jazz for the Best Blues Recording of 2012.

In 2013, Bell re-signed with Delmark and enlisted famed Chicago producer Dick Shurman to make the record *Blues in My Soul*. For this project, he wanted to get back to the solid foundation of Chicago-styled traditional guitar blues. *Blues in My Soul* features three new Lurrie Bell originals as well as songs by Little Walter, T-Bone Walker, Jimmy Rogers and Big Bill Broonzy, among others. Bell returned to studio in 2016 to record his latest CD, *Can't Shake This Feeling*.

At last count, Lurrie Bell has appeared on 50+ recordings either as leader or featured sideman. Bell's elegant, intense guitar sounds and passionate vocals have made him a favorite at clubs and festivals around the world. He has earned a reputation as one of the leading lights in the future of the blues.

### **The Campbell Brothers**

The Campbell Brothers present a compelling, rich variety of material from the African-American Holiness Pentecostal repertoire with a new twist: the growling, wailing, shouting, singing and swinging voice of the steel guitar, played as you have never heard it played before.

Pedal steel guitarist Chuck Campbell and his lap steel-playing brother Darick are considered two of the finest musicians in the steel guitar tradition. Rounding out the band, which has been playing together for nearly two decades, is a high-energy rhythm section featuring Phil Campbell on electric guitar and his son Carlton on drums. Katie Jackson's classic, gutsy gospel vocals bring the ensemble to a level of energy and expression that defies description.

### **Chuck Campbell (Pedal Steel Guitar)**

Chuck Campbell began playing the lap steel guitar at the age of 12. At 17, he became one of the first players to utilize the pedal steel guitar in the House of God Church, Keith Dominion. Campbell is renowned for his innovative approach to the instrument both technically and musically. His use of effects such as distortion, wah pedal and picking techniques enable him to emulate the human voice in an uncanny fashion that evokes images of gospel moaning and field singing. He was recognized early in his career as the first steel player to succeed in the Sacred Steel styles of Calvin Cooke, Ted Beard and Henry Nelson, whereas most steel players can only play in one! Campbell's inventive blend of styles along with his groundbreaking use of complex chords and fast picking formed the musical style which is the most emulated among young Sacred Steel players today.

### **Darick Campbell (Lap Steel Guitar)**

Darick Campbell first made his mark in music as a drummer and was the premier drummer of the General Assembly at the National Convocation of the House Of God Church in Nashville, Tennessee for several years. His transition to the 8-string lap steel guitar reflects the blending of influence that has earned him the title of the most emotional player of The Campbell Brothers musical tour de force.

### **Phillip Campbell (Bass Guitar)**

Phillip Campbell began his musical life as a drummer but quickly proceeded to the instrument on which he is arguably the most accomplished, the bass guitar. Campbell's self-taught explorations of bass chord harmonics and figures allowed him to try out instruments that lent themselves to both his melodic tastes and would complement the Sacred Steel styles of his brothers. The bass guitar became his weapon of choice because of its ability to drive the music. Campbell now combines the rhythmic attributes of the guitar with MIDI guitar synthesis for a unique stylistic blend, which perfectly complements the steel guitars across all genres in which the group ventures. Campbell is also a songwriter; his song *Breakthrough* is to be published on an upcoming gospel compilation CD in Germany.

### **Carl Campbell (Drummer)**

Carl Campbell and his dad, Phillip, form the rhythmic foundation upon which The Campbell Brothers' soulful gospel is built. Formally trained in jazz and band percussion,

Carl Campbell has been able to assimilate the classic rudiments of drumming with his improvisational upbringing in the church to form a style always in the groove. Campbell continues to stretch his boundaries by studying the Sacred Steel tradition on his own double neck Fender Stringmaster.

