



Fernando Jones, a self taught musician, is one of the most complete Bluesmen and scholars of his generation worldwide. Mr. Jones started *fooling around* with his brother Greg's guitar and bass when he was four years old. When most kids his age were watching Sesame Street Fernando Jones (his nephew, Chip, and niece, Carolyn) was performing in his parents' living room and writing songs. Two years later, his uncle, Jackson, bought him his first guitar the day before his 6th birthday at Goldblatt's Department Store in Chicago at 47th & Ashland. It was an electric sunburst Fender Stratocaster look-a-like with a psychedelic strap, curly black guitar cable, and a shoe box sized amplifier. Fernando has been playing every since. Today, he plays Fender Telecasters exclusively.

From concerts to books to films to theatre his contributions to the Blues have been paramount, and his incomparable body of work speaks for itself. In his hometown of Chicago, he's the go-to-guy for all things Blues. For this young man the Blues is a piece of peace. He has taken great pride in lobbying for proper recognition of this indigenous African-American art form and its practitioners.

While refuting the many negative stereotypes that haunt this music, Mr. Jones is on a global mission to show people the joy and beauty of the Blues through academic implementations, and lectures as well as concert performances. As a result, his hands were photographed by National Geographic Magazine. His book, *I Was There When The Blues Was Red Hot*, has been used as a resource by the likes of Newsweek, Living Blues, the London Times, and Al Jazeera.

Like W. C. Handy, the "Father of the Blues," Fernando Jones is a college music teacher, too. At Columbia College Chicago, Jones is the director of what is believed to be the nation's first and only collegiate Blues ensemble. He's also holds Life Membership with Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

### FJ HIGHLIGHTS

- On February 7, 1964, the day the Beatles came to the USA for the first time, Jones was born.
- Founded Blues Kids, 1989.
- BMI writer and publisher 1991.
- Wrote "I Was There When The Blues Was Red Hot," 1990.
- Appointed Columbia College Chicago Chicago's Blues Ensemble Director, 2005.
- Featured on *Someone You Should Know*, 2005.
- Teacher of the year finalist, Columbia College Chicago, 2006.
- Rock & Roll Hall of Fame & Museum Guest Lecturer and Performer, 2007.
- Keeping The Blues Alive Award recipient, 2008.
- Wrote "Mr. Hobo" (song) and it inspired an animated film, 2008.
- Founded Blues Kids Foundation and Blues Camp in the USA, 2010.
- Founded Blues Camp London, England, 2014.



Picture of PCS Blues Kids in Chicago by Fernando Jones

### TEST YOUR MEMORY

1. Put these events in order. Label, what happened 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Columbia College Chicago established a Blues Ensemble.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ National Geographic photographed Jones' hands.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Uncle Jackson bought a guitar.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The Beatles came to America for the first time.
2. Mr. Jones' birthday is on what day? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Jones was born in this season? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The main idea of the last paragraph is: \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The homophones in the second paragraph are: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What type of music do you enjoy listening to? \_\_\_\_\_.
7. What brand if guitar does Jones play? \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Jones won this award in 2008: \_\_\_\_\_.
9. What is the name of Jones' fraternity? \_\_\_\_\_.

### PARENTS & TEACHERS

Blues Kids of America, Ltd. is an internationally recognized multicultural, interdisciplinary artist-in-residency music program founded by Fernando Jones (author of *I Was There When The Blues Was Red Hot*). This experience is designed to help improve literacy, while helping to close the achievement gap through the lens of the Blues—the root of American music.

***This program is perfect for 4th graders through adult education. When planning your budget and the expenditure of your Discretionary, Title I, Staff Development, Drug & Violence-free, Grants or private funds consider Blues Kids. A package can be tailored to your student and budgetary needs. E-mail us at [BluesNewz@aol.com](mailto:BluesNewz@aol.com).***