



The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Cairns Blues Festival is excited to announce the first artist line-up for its 2012 event on May 12. Renowned for its strong line-ups and fantastic atmosphere, the 2012 Cairns Blues Festival promises to be the best yet, with a line-up that includes headline acts Ray Beadle Band, Jimi Hocking and Eugene Hideaway Bridges (US) and local performers Flamin' Canetoads, Roz Pappalardo & The Wayward Gentlemen and The Tailgaters.

Cairns Blues Festival committee president Pauline Langley says this is by far the biggest and most exciting line-up yet. There are 16 different bands on the 2012 line-up. "Punters will not only get value for their money, but top quality entertainment as well," she says. "The headline performers alone have over 64 years of experience between them as professional touring and recording artists."

The festival committee accepted performance applications from bands and artists around Australia and had the hard task of narrowing down the number of applicants to those performing in 2012. "The calibre of artists and the number of applications received for the festival increases every year," Ms Langley says. "This makes choosing the program very difficult, we'd love to include so many more than we have the space for. We've received applications from bands in Indonesia, Spain, Russia and the US... and there are plenty of Australian blues bands who applied as well."

With a line-up featuring the likes of Ray Beadle Band, Jimi Hocking and Eugene Hideaway Bridges (US) it's going to be an exciting festival. "The program is a smorgasbord of some of Australia's most talented and accomplished blues musicians, as well as some genuine blues artists from the US," Ms Langley says. Ray Beadle Band features established blues musician Ray Beadle who has been cutting his teeth in the Australian scene since the 1990s. Originally from New Zealand, he has earned a solid reputation on Australian soil. In the early part of his career, he performed a three month residency with the house band at B.B King's Club in Memphis. His debut at Cairns Blues Festival is certain to earn him a whole new swag of fans.

Eugene Hideaway Bridges needs no introduction to blues fans. The son of blues guitarist Hideaway Slim, Eugene's mother was from the Bullock family (the same family as Anna Mae Bullock, also known as Tina Turner) and he claims he got his guitar skills from the Bridges side of the family and his vocals from the Bullock side. Based in the US, he has toured the world engaging audiences with his unique style. His music crosses between blues, soul, funk, gospel and rock. Jimi Hocking and his Blues Machine will bring audiences to their feet. A songwriter, singer and guitarist of the highest calibre, Jimi has earned a solid reputation in the blues scene for his live performances and acclaim for his 'high speed picking'. No stranger to touring, he has taken his Blues Machine around Australia and overseas. When he's not playing the blues, Jimi is the lead guitarist with Aussie rockers The Screaming Jets.

**Early bird tickets are on sale now through the Cairns Blues Festival website for \$55. 2<sup>nd</sup> release tickets go on sale from March 1 through Ticketlink – adults \$60, youth (14-17) \$30 and children 13 years and under are free. ID is required. Tickets will also be available at the gate on the day of the festival for \$70 (adults) and \$35 (youth). Visit [www.cairnsbluesfestival.com.au](http://www.cairnsbluesfestival.com.au) to purchase Early Bird tickets before March 1.**