

Grammy winner Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram brings the blues to TACAW

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For 24-year-old Grammy-winning blues guitarist and singer Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, growing up in the shadows of musical giants like Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, and Robert Johnson — who were born in or lived in his hometown Clarksdale, Mississippi — only fueled his passion for the blues.

"Some of my earliest memories of music were my dad showing me BB King on a "Sanford and Son" episode and a Muddy Waters documentary on PBS," Ingram said. "And on my mother's side of the family, playing instruments in the church, that's what I saw early on."

He first played drums around age 6 and eventually picked up bass at 8, followed by guitar. He attended music and arts education at the Delta Blues Museum, where he studied the history of the blues, was taught how to play blues classics by Bill "Howl-N-Mad" Perry and Richard "Daddy Rich" Crisman, and started playing gigs around town by seventh grade. In November 2014, as part of the Delta Blues Museum band, he



Christone "Kingfish" Ingram hails from Clarksdale, Mississippi, the home of Muddy Waters.

performed for Michelle Obama at the White House.

His debut album, "Kingfish," produced by Grammy-winning musician Tom Hambridge, was released on Alligator Records on May 17, 2019, and met with critical success across the board, earning him a nomination for Best Traditional Blues Album at the 62nd annual Grammy Awards.

Aside from his love of classic blues artist, he also lists contemporary artists like Jimi Hendrix, Prince, and hip-hop as influences, which gives his sound a fresh, modern feel.

He said he's noticed an increased interest in the blues among younger audiences.

"I'm definitely noticing a resurgence among young people and their interest in the blues," he said. "I see them at my shows."

On July 23, 2021, Ingram released his second record, "662," the area code of his hometown Clarksdale and the north Mississippi Delta. On April 3, 2022, he won the Grammy for Best Contemporary Blues Album, which he said he is still processing, calling it a "mind-blowing experience."

"Where I lived in the Delta had a rich blues history," he said. "It was all around me 24/7. I even grew up next door

to a blues band, so I couldn't escape it. I took inspiration for my songs from my daily life and my personal experiences because that's what the blues are all about."

The songs — reflecting his life in and away from his home in the Delta — speak to universal truths, as well as to similar experiences shared by his large and growing multi-generational, multi-cultural fan base.

Friday, Ingram will be bringing his show to The Arts Campus at Willits (TACAW) in Basalt as part of his Colorado tour — "Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram Presents the 662: Rocky Mountain Tour" — which will also take him through Boulder, Grand Junction, and Greeley.

"I may not be the best guitar player or have the best voice, but I put my whole heart into it. I'm real, and there are no gimmicks here. That's what I want audiences to take away," he said.