

**For Immediate Release:**  
March 24, 2009

**Some of Canada's Finest Musicians Gather to Celebrate the Music of  
INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED POET JEFF BIEN  
as he releases his first CD, "Songs of Forgiveness and Prayer"  
HUGH'S ROOM, WED APRIL 29, 8:30PM**



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**(TORONTO)** On **Wed April 29**, some of Canada's finest musicians will gather at **Hugh's Room** to celebrate the release of internationally acclaimed poet, **Jeff Bien's** first CD of music, ***Songs of Forgiveness & Prayer***.

Performing with Bien will be **George Koller** (bass), **Rick Lazar** (percussion), **Rebecca Campbell** (vocals), **Ravi Nainpally** (tabla), **John Gzowski** (oud/guitar), **Anne Lindsay** (violin), **Richard Underhill** (saxophone), **Ray Montford** (guitar); **Kobena Aqua Harrison** (African drum), and other special guests.

"This really is a testament to Jeff's work, that so many outstanding musicians with different touring commitments are putting aside their busy schedules for this show," noted Underhill, a Juno Award-winning jazz musician.

The much-anticipated release of *Songs of Forgiveness & Prayer* features Bien's original music in collaboration with many of the above-mentioned artists. His music has been praised for its vision and lyrical quality, and for inspiring and awakening social and spiritual consciousness. CBC has called his songs "living proof intelligence

can sing". Bien's work embodies diverse musical and cultural influences, engaging oral and formal traditions which embody the migrancy of African, jazz, classical, folk and spiritual idioms.

Jeff Bien makes his home in Kemptville, Ontario but he is a citizen of the world. He has been published and translated in more than 20 countries, and his books have been critically acclaimed in Canada and abroad. Bien has been compared to such wordsmiths as Leonard Cohen, Allan Ginsberg, and Walt Whitman, as well as the formalists, but his voice is his own.

In addition to the musical guests who are joining him for the CD launch, Bien has recorded, performed and collaborated with a wide spectrum of this country's finest, including Derek DeBeer, Pierre Cormier, Mercan Dede, Armando Borg, Thom Gossage, Mark Duggan, Ted Warren, John Geggie, Frédéric Alarie, Bob Cohen, Jason Fowler, Michel Pépin, Danny Greenspoon, Yannick Rieu, Rob Frayne, Oliver Schroer, Joel Zifkin, Ken Pearson, Dave Gossage, Kim Richardson, Ellen Hamilton, Julie Michels, and members of Montreal's Jubilation Gospel Choir.

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**WHO:** Jeff Bien - CD Release, "Songs of Forgiveness and Prayer"

featuring special guests:

**Rebecca Campbell** – vocals

**John Gzowski** – oud/guitar player

**Kobena Aqua Harrison** – drummer

**George Koller** – bass

**Rick Lazar** – percussion

**Anne Lindsay** – violin

**Ray Montford** – guitar

**Ravi Naimpally** – tabla player

**Richard Underhill** – saxophone

**WHERE:** **Hugh's Room**  
2261 Dundas St. W. (btw. Roncesvalles and Bloor St. W.), Toronto

**WHEN:** **Wednesday, April 29, 8:30pm**

**COST:** **\$20 advance / \$25 door**

**RESERVE/** <http://www.hughsroom.com>

**CLUB INFO:** [info@hughsroom.com](mailto:info@hughsroom.com) 416-531-6604

**ARTIST INFO:** <http://www.jeffbien.com>

**MEDIA:** **Lisa Weitz / LW Communications**

**ENQUIRIES:** [lw@lwcommunications.ca](mailto:lw@lwcommunications.ca) <http://www.lwcommunications.ca>  
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