

Michelle Johnson

EARLY BEGINNINGS

Born in New York City to diplomat parents, **Michelle Johnson** grew up in Cairo, Egypt and Hong Kong. The child of a Liberian father and an American mother, her international background has always impacted her singing and contributed to her musical choices. She speaks four languages and has traveled the world extensively. Her early influences include everyone from Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughn, and Nat King Cole, to Beethoven, Black Sabbath and Carole King. After a remarkable high school graduation in front of the Giza Pyramids, she attended **Yale University** where she received vocal and theatrical training, as well as a BA in English Literature.

FROM THE IVY LEAGUE TO THE BIG APPLE

With her Yale diploma in hand, Michelle moved to New York City, where she quickly became a top notch session and background singer, recording and performing with countless celebrities including **Elton John, Paul McCartney, Slash (Guns & Roses), Paul Rogers (Bad Company), Neal Schon (Journey), Anthony Kiedas (Red Hot Chili Peppers), and PM Dawn**. She also sang lead for New York City Swing, Starlight Orchestras, and many other successful big bands, and performed classical arias and assorted international music throughout New York City. While living in New York, Michelle landed a role on **Broadway** with **Elisabeth Shue** and **Nathan Lane** in the **Lincoln Center** production of *Some Americans Abroad*. She sang jazz at prestigious locales like **Tavern on the Green, the Rainbow Room, and the Supper Club**, and could also be found swinging with the all female **Kit McClure Big Band**, which toured Portugal, Martinique, and Japan.

FROM BROADWAY TO ROCK AND ROLL

After Broadway and the big band tours, Michelle joined TVT Records alternative recording artist **Rise Robots Rise**, and was featured on their albums and on **MTV's 120 Minutes**. She also recorded with the Black Rock Coalition and the CBS Records Live Jazz Project and played the New York underground scene at clubs like CBGB's and the Knitting Factory. Her television appearances also include the *Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *the Arsenio Hall Show*, *Disney Channel's "Grad Night"*, and *Soul Train*, as well as overseas television in Germany, Paris, and London. Michelle's favorite moments on the rock and roll scene include the Hollywood Bowl Earth Day performance with **Paul McCartney** (who let her riff all over *Hey Jude* with him, standing front and center in front of 60,000 plus fans!), the bus ride up to Woodstock with **Slash, Neal Schon, and Paul Rogers** (and of course the show), and recording background vocals for the irrepressible **Elton John**.

LEAVING FOR LAS VEGAS ...

After going on a world tour with Gee Street recording artist P.M. Dawn and appearing at Woodstock '94, Michelle moved to the Entertainment Capital of the World, Las Vegas! She began recording jingles and background tracks for big productions shows (*Enter the Night* at the Stardust, the Rio's *Masquerade in the Sky*, *American Superstars* at the Stratosphere, etc.) and joined the gospel ensemble in the cast of *Country Fever* at the Golden Nugget. The ensemble, helped open the Country Star restaurant with **Wynonna, Reba McEntire, and Vince Gill**. In 1997, Michelle was asked to be Musical Director in the *Voices of Hope* AIDS benefit at the **MGM Grand Hotel**. She also starred in the show, performing an original piece and arranging a finale for 30 singers and dancers. Following the great success of that show, Michelle's name became better known as a singer and music director. In 1998, she was invited to open for "Jazz Under Stars" headliner **Spyro Gyra**, and she did so, wowing a huge crowd out at State Mountain Park. The concert got rave reviews.

DIVA IN LAS VEGAS!

Today, Michelle Johnson is a headliner in her own right, performing in French at the Paris Hotel, in Italian at the Mirage Hotel, and in English at several other venues in Las Vegas. She recently performed with **David Foster** at a benefit for the Ronald McDonald House, and can also be seen regularly at the Las Vegas Hilton, where she shares the stage with **Sheena Easton**, and is featured on a duet with the Scottish pop star. She is also a singer songwriter who is in the process of recording her first compact disc. In addition to her Desert Angels Gospel Ensemble, she heads up her own production company, **Diva Las Vegas Productions**, which provides entertainment for corporations and private parties, and top notch background vocalists for celebrity tours, special concerts, and recording sessions. Recent clients include **Mercedes, Bayer, Toyota, Washington Mutual, the Beverly Hilton, and the Yale School of Drama**. Her mission is "to uplift and inspire people from all walks of life through live music." To find out more, go to www.divalasvegasmusic.com or call Diva Las Vegas Productions directly at (702) 869-4668. Whether you need a vocalist, arranger or producer, Michelle Johnson is a sure thing!