

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2023

# SPOTLIGHT

THE BOURBON ROOM HOLLYWOOD



## THE *un*OFFICIAL, *un*SANCTIONED OBAMA MUSICAL

ELI BAUMAN, MONICA SAUNDERS-WEINBERG, MB ARTISTS,  
AND MICHAEL DONOVAN PRESENT 44

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ELI BAUMAN

# A NOTE FROM ELI



There's a beauty in not knowing what the hell you're doing. And there's no way this particular musical exists if I let not knowing what the hell I was doing stop me from actually doing it. I had never written a musical and I hadn't written a song since High School - I was a 36 year old father who couldn't even play an instrument. But note by note, chord by chord, mediocre idea by mediocre idea, I learned in the doing. I scuttled about on this silly Musical enterprise after my family went to sleep, typically from 10 PM to 2 AM - prime insanity hours - when the meddlesome critical voice in my head was too tired to bother the wild romantic voice in my heart. Four years later, I had written fifty songs for "44," twenty-something of them worthy of you hearing tonight.

The corollary to not knowing what the hell you're doing is finding collaborators who do know what they're doing. The first stop on my Yellow Brick Road was my father, Jon, aka "Bowzer." He had to literally translate random notes I shouted at him into actual notes on the piano. The next invaluable piece of this was meeting our Musical Director, Anthony "Brew" Brewster, who produced every demo, breathed musical life into every silly idea I had, co-wrote some of the songs, and then roped in his incredible band, "House of Vibe," to play the show. Without Brew, this project never gets off the ground.

The band merits individual attention as well, because as I've always said to Brew, the band isn't background to the show, it is the show. Those spectacular individuals are Brew, Corey Cofield, Conrad Bauer, Kris Hawkins, Greg Raymond & Phil "Fish" Fisher. They are geniuses as individuals, and tight as hell as a collective.

Next on this journey toward Oz were our casting director Michael Donovan and producer/John Boehner, Kevin Bailey, who were insane enough to hitch their wagons to a person with zero qualifications. They are also responsible for this incredible cast, most of whom have been on this wild adventure since our first clunky presentation, in which I cut a full 30 pages at intermission. All of them are incredible on stage and off, but I must single out our lead, T.J. Wilkins, who recorded the first demos for the show back in 2018, and has since embodied the role of President Obama with smoothness, class and confidence. It's been one of my great joys to watch T.J. own every piece of this moment, and he is a brother for life.

All artistic endeavors, including whatever this is, need the financial support to bring them to an audience. And if you can marry that financial support with the creative and emotional support of a dear friend, then you're beyond lucky. And I am beyond lucky to know Monica Saunders-Weinberg. Monica is a person of unrivaled passion and generosity of spirit - a person who believes in art and artists, and miraculously, believes in me. She has also become one my dearest friends, and someone I treasure far beyond this production.

Last and furthest from the least is my wife, Joanna, and our kids Ivy Bird and Charlie. Let me tell you, nobody has married up more than I have. Not only is Joanna smart, beautiful and hilarious, but she's also way more talented than I am, and way more employable than I am, and thus, when I came to her and said, "I need to see this venture all the way through no matter how long it takes and by the way it is guaranteed to lose us money," she said yes and made it possible. Joanna and our children are the best thing that will ever happen to me, and have enriched every millisecond of my life.

Sincerely,

Eli Bauman

Eli Bauman, Monica Saunders-Weinberg, MB Artists, and Michael Donovan  
PRESENT



# THE *un*OFFICIAL, *un*SANCTIONED OBAMA MUSICAL

BOOK, MUSIC & LYRICS

**Eli Bauman**

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

**James Alsop**

MUSIC DIRECTION BY

**Anthony “Brew” Brewster**

DIRECTED BY

**Eli Bauman**

STARRING

**T.J. Wilkins**

AS BARACK OBAMA

**Shanice**

AS MICHELLE OBAMA

**Chad Doreck\***

AS JOE BIDEN

WITH

Kevin Bailey\* Celeste Butler Larry Cedar\* Marqell Edward Clayton  
Ally Dixon Kelley Dorney\* Summer Nicole Greer Scott Kruse  
Jane Papageorge\* Dino Shorté Jeff Sumner\* Michael Uribes\*

FEATURING

**House of Vibe as “The Andrew Jackson Five”**

Anthony “Brew” Brewster

MUSIC DIRECTOR, MUSIC CO-PRODUCER & KEYBOARDS

Phillip “Fish” Fisher  
DRUMS

Corey Cofield  
BASS

Kris Hawkins  
GUITAR

Greg Raymond  
KEYBOARDS

CASTING

**Michael Donovan Casting**

Michael Donovan, CSA    Richie Ferris, CSA

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OPENING NIGHT: OCTOBER 13, 2023 • THE BOURBON ROOM HOLLYWOOD

# WHO'S WHO

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Barack Obama.....	T.J. WILKINS
Michelle Obama.....	SHANICE
John Boehner.....	KEVIN BAILEY*
Mitch McConnell.....	LARRY CEDAR*
Joe Biden.....	CHAD DORECK*
Hillary Clinton.....	KELLEY DORNEY*
Voice of the People.....	SUMMER NICOLE GREER
Sarah Palin.....	JANE PAPAGEORGE*
Herman Cain.....	DINO SHORTÉ
Lindsey Graham.....	JEFF SUMNER*
Ted Cruz.....	MICHAEL URIBES
Brother Abe Lincoln.....	MARQELL EDWARD CLAYTON

## UNDERSTUDIES

For Barack Obama/Herman Cain: MARQELL EDWARD CLAYTON; for Joe Biden/Lindsey Graham/Mitch McConnell/Ted Cruz: SCOTT KRUSE; for Michelle Obama: SUMMER NICOLE GREER; for Voice of the People/Michelle Obama: CELESTE BUTLER; for Hillary Clinton/Sarah Palin: ALLY DIXON

Production Stage Manager.....	BRIDGET ROONEY*
Assistant Stage Manager.....	ALYSSA BARRON*
Production Assistants.....	HARPER TRAMM, SAM MILLETTE, CASSY SOTTILE
Production Manager.....	BRIDGET ROONEY*

## BAND

Music Director, Music Co-producer, Keyboards....	ANTHONY "BREW" BREWSTER
Drums.....	PHILLIP "FISH" FISHER
Bass.....	COREY COFIELD
Guitar.....	KRIS HAWKINS
Keyboards.....	GREG RAYMOND
Drum Tech.....	ISAIAH LAWLESS

*\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

44

THE *un*OFFICIAL, *un*SANCTIONED  
OBAMA MUSICAL



T.J. Wilkins



Shanice



Chad Doreck



Kevin Bailey



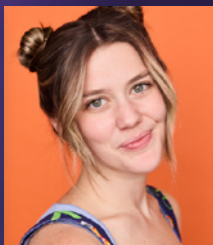
Celeste Butler



Larry Cedar



Marquell Edward  
Clayton



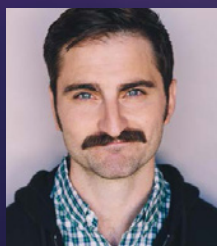
Ally Dixon



Kelley Dorney



Summer Nicole  
Greer



Scott Kruse



Jane Papageorge



Dino Shorté



Jeff Sumner



Michael Uribes

# WHO'S WHO

**T.J. WILKINS** (*Barack Obama*) is an entertainer through and through. Having shared the stage with the likes of Stevie Wonder, The Jacksons, John Legend and Beyoncé, he's no stranger to the spotlight. He was named in the Top 12 overall as a member of Team Usher on Season 6 of the NBC's "The Voice." As a singer, he became Grammy nominated in 2019 for the song "Spirit" from Walt Disney Pictures' *The Lion King*. As an actor, he has been featured on television, stage and screen for such networks as FOX, ABC, and Nickelodeon to name a few.

**SHANICE** (*Michelle Obama*) began her career scatting with legendary Ella Fitzgerald for Kentucky Fried Chicken at the age of eight. She went on to become the grand champion of "Star Search" at the age of 11. Her first album was released when Shanice was 14, but it was her worldwide smash, "I Love Your Smile," a pop hit in twenty-two countries, that garnered her a Grammy nomination, Germany's Golden Lion Award and international stardom. She has collaborated with Kenny Loggins, Kenny Babyface Edmonds, Justin Timberlake, and Josh Groban. She performed the duet, "If I Never Knew You" in English and Spanish with Latin pop star John Secada, on Disney's multiplatinum *Pocahontas* soundtrack. Adding to her list of accomplishments is her thirty-year record-breaking chart jump in Billboard with her first single, "When I Close My Eyes," from her self-entitled album on LaFace records. She became the first African American to star as Eponine in the Broadway hit *Les Misérables*, where she was widely received in her incomparable portrayal. Shanice later developed content for her own reality show. She and her husband, actor Flex Alexander, would star in the hit reality show "Flex and Shanice," which ran for three seasons on the Oprah Winfrey Network. She has recently signed a production deal to develop a new reality show.

**CHAD DORECK** (*Joe Biden*). An LA native, Chad has been a working actor for over three decades. Recent Credits include: DEAD RINGERS (recurring opposite Rachel Weisz) HBO's GRAY MATTER, The ABC pilot PUBLIC DEFENDERS, Ryan Murphy's HOLLYWOOD (recurring) and the hit Netflix sitcom THE UPSHAWES. 2022 saw Chad starring or supporting in 4 independent feature films. Other theatre includes TWIST (dir. Debbie Allen), SERRANO (dir. Joel Zwick), GIDGET (dir. Francis Ford Coppola), FOOL FOR LOVE (dir. Gloira Gifford), along with dozens of TV credits. Thanks always to his tireless reps, unwavering parents, Evelyn and Gloria. SAG-AFTRA, AEA, IG: @MrDoreck

**KEVIN BAILEY/MB ARTISTS** (*Producer & John Boehner*) MB Artists was formed in 1992 by partners Kevin Bailey and James J. Mellon. They founded LA's award-winning NoHo Arts Center, producing over 30 new plays and musicals, including *Ann*, written by and starring Holland Taylor. *Ann* made its Broadway premiere at Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, garnered a Tony Nomination for Ms. Taylor as "Best Actress," and played The Pasadena Playhouse in 2022. MB Artists produced Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard and their four highly successful plays in the *Greater Tuna* cycle, and the solo works of Jaston Williams. In addition to *44*, their current projects include the new musicals, *The Belles Are Swingin'* and "Did You See What Walter Paisley Did Today?" and the plays *White Lies* and *A Positive Negative*. Kevin and James are proud dads to their screenwriter son William, and their lovable dogs Mia and Cooper. Always for Nora.

**CELESTE BUTLER** (*u/s Voice of the People/Michelle*) is an international entertainer, multimedia event producer, and social change advocate. Her ambitions of global equity and inclusion are reflected in her work as Founder & CEO of Creation Against Barriers (CAB), an entertainment

# WHO'S WHO

company that supports cultural and historical education through music, events, and interdisciplinary projects. As a vocalist, Celeste has toured around the world and worked with legendary artists such as Diana Ross, Chaka Khan, Esperanza Spalding, and Patrice Rushen, just to name a few. Beyond receiving national interest, as a featured contestant on Season 4 of American Idol (ABC), you may have also heard Celeste's voice on networks like CBS, FOX, and Peacock. She has also been blessed to collaboratively release original social justice anthems "Bullets", featuring GRAMMY Award-Winning Drummer JR Robinson (Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston); and "No Peace", featuring GRAMMY Award-Winning Bassist, Andrew Gouche (Chaka Khan, Prince). Currently, Celeste performs as frontwoman Ursa Major in the groundbreaking immersive theater/funk-concert, *Brassroots District: Live in the Lot '73*. Other works include: original musical, *1777 Sycamore St.* (La Mirada Theater), live Theater of the Oppressed piece "Radical Fictions: A Seat at the Table" (California African American Museum), the world premiere of a devised theater piece, "Up-spoken" (California Wellness Foundation), and an award-winning short film "Swipe". Celeste is a two-time alum of the University of Southern California (USC), with a B.M. in Music Performance and a M.S. in Arts Leadership. *Phil 4:13*

**LARRY CEDAR** (*Mitch McConnell*) has hundreds of television/film credits including most notably HBO's *Deadwood* (as opium addict Leon Stalsworth), the upcoming feature film *This Bloody Country*, and has adapted and performed several of his own one-man stage plays based on the writings of George Orwell, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Franz Kafka, most recently Kafka's *The Trial*. Visit Larry on IMDB ([bit.ly/larrycedar](http://bit.ly/larrycedar)), Facebook ([facebook.com/larrycedaractor](http://facebook.com/larrycedaractor)), Instagram (@larrycedaractor), Twitter (@larrycedar), and his personal website [www.larrycedar.com](http://www.larrycedar.com)

**MARQELL EDWARD CLAYTON** (*Brother Abe Lincoln, u/s Barack Obama/Herman Cain*) is thrilled to be a part of 44! A native of California, Marqell has lived on both coasts and performed across North America. Select credits include: Background Vocalist on BTS' "Proof Live" feat. Anderson Paak. Theatre: Pre-Broadway tour of *Ain't Too Proud*, 5th Avenue Theatre, Pioneer Theatre Company, South Coast Repertory, Celebration Theatre, York Theatre Company, Rockwell Table and Stage. Film/TV: *Playing with Beethoven* (Heart on Fire Prod.), *Complexity* (CTM/Brandon Leake), "Conan" (TBS). Training: Cal State Fullerton BFA Music Theatre Program. Marqell gives honor to God and his family. Deuteronomy 31:6. Follow Marqell's IG, @marqelledwardclayton and check out his site 'marqelledwardclayton.com' for more info.

**ALLY DIXON** (*u/s Hillary Clinton/Sarah Palin*). Raised in a house where *Fox and Friends* was the guiding light with your morning Reeses Puffs, Ally is excited to finally put all that indoctrination to appropriate use. You can hear Ally on the Dreamworks animated series *The Croods: Family Tree*, *King Fu Panda: The Dragon Knight*, and in *Call of Duty Mobile*. You can see Ally on Instagram loudly solving petty theft, and performing her own political parodies, and in person probably having an existential crisis. @allysonofadixon

**KELLEY DORNEY** (*Hillary Clinton*) is thrilled to be back at the Bourbon Room donning her pantsuit again. She's lived and worked in NY, LA, and London. Local credits: *The Secret Garden* (Cholera/Mrs. Winthrop) at The Ahmanson, *You're a Good Man...* (Lucy) at SCR, *Nice Work...* (Billie) at MTW, *A Gentleman's Guide...* (Phoebe) at 3DT, *Lend Me a Tenor* (Maggie) at La Mirada, *The World Goes Round* at Reprise 2.0, and *Annie* at the Hollywood Bowl.

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**SUMMER NICOLE GREER** (*Voice of the People, u/s Michelle Obama*) has appeared most recently in Musical Theater West's *Spamilton* and *Ragtime*, FOX's "I Can See Your Voice," and plays a number of roles as a vocalist at the Disneyland Resort. In addition to theater, she has also been a member of Kanye West's Sunday Service Choir and is a credited vocalist with world-renown K-POP group BTS.

**SCOTT KRUSE** (*u/s Joe Biden/Lindsey Graham/Mitch McConnell/Ted Cruz*) is an actor, writer, and a real Travolta on the dance floor. He trained for years at The Groundlings and has a moist background in sketch comedy and improv. Scott has starred in several national commercials and is known for his recurring role as Boyle in "Agents of Shield" on ABC. You can see him next as a mulleted Walt on the film *Bromates*, starring Lil Rel Howery and Josh Brenner. Scott wrote, produced, and starred in the feature-comedy, *Man Camp*, which premiered in 2020 and is streaming like everywhere, including Paramount Plus. The film is still 100% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes. He's currently developing several film and television projects and will forever make stupid sketches that he thinks are funny.

**JANE PAPAGEORGE** (*Sarah Palin*) is over the moon about returning to the pole – I mean reprising her role as Sarah Palin! UCLA graduate with a BA in Theater Film and Television. She recently concluded a production of *A Chorus Line* as Valerie Clark. Past credits include: Hollywood Bowl's productions of *HAIR* and *A Chorus Line*, Jamie Leigh Lee in *Scary Musical the Musical*, original cast member of *Frozen: Live at the Hyperion* (Princess Anna), Anytime Annie in *The Rev's 42nd Street*, April in *Company*, Lulu u/s *Sally Cabaret*, *Spamalot*, "General Hospital". Recently starred opposite her fiancée in the short film "Butterflies of Love". This winter she'll be a part of *A Christmas Story* at the Ahmanson. The biggest thanks to Eli, her 44 family,

Kevin, Michael, Richie, and the love of her life, CJ. KMR Talent @janepapageorge

**DINO SHORTE** (*Herman Cain*). As a writer, director, actor, and comedian, Dino Shorté has been blessed with various degrees of success in just about every facet of the entertainment industry. However, his first love is the theatre. A native of Atlanta and as protective of the Entertainment Arts as a junk-yard dog is to its yard, he's developed an industry-wide reputation as "Mr. Get-It-Done!" And with an ever-expanding string of successful and popular hit shows, like Netflix's "The Upshaws," "The Wanda Sykes Show," "Cedric The Entertainer's Greatest At Home Videos," "CBS' Greatest Super Bowl Commercials," and more, he continues to leave his comedic and talented imprints throughout Hollywood.

**JEFF SUMNER** (*Lindsey Graham*). Theatre: *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Tracy Mills) at ICT; *The Wonderful Winter of Oz* (Scarecrow) at Laguna Playhouse; *Annie* (Bundles/Harold Ickes) at The Hollywood Bowl; *Sleeping Beauty* (Nanny Tickle) at TUTS. Disney's *Aladdin – A Musical Spectacular* (Genie) at Disneyland. Film: *Dumb and Dumber To*. TV: "Ugly Betty," *Desperate Housewives*," "Rosewood," "Togetherness," "Clipped," and "I'm Dying Up Here." Jeff teaches musical theatre to kids and adults. He is thrilled to once again help make seer-sucker a fashion trend. [Jeffsumner.net](http://Jeffsumner.net)

**MICHAEL URIBES** (*Ted Cruz*) hopes you are ready to love hating Ted Cruz again. He is originally from San Jose California. A graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts west coast campus. Theater credits: *Addams Family* (Gomez) the title role in *Hamlet* for the Las Vegas Shakespeare Company, *Zoot Suit* (El Pachuco), *Man of La Mancha* (The Duke) *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (Picasso), *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (Guildenstern), *Twelfth Night* (Tranio), *Camino Real* (Kilroy), *Oedipus El Rey* at The Boston Court (Choro) *Candida* (Eugene).



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Valley Theatre League Award in the world premiere musical *Musical Chairs* written by Academy Award winning composer Joel Hirschorn. Film and TV credits: *Goliath*, *Harry's Law*, *America's Most Wanted*, *Good Trouble*.

**ELI BAUMAN** (*Director/Producer/Writer/Composer*) was born and raised in Los Angeles to his mother Mary, a therapist for special needs children, and father, Jon, also known as "Bowzer" from the retro 50's nostalgia TV show/most random band to play Woodstock, "Sha Na Na." After enduring this not remotely strange childhood, Eli graduated from Columbia University with a degree in English and Creative Writing. Upon graduation, Eli toured the country with his father, singing in casinos ranging from the 10,000 se at "Mohegan Sun Arena" to the utterly depressing "Boomtown Casino" in Biloxi, Mississippi. After moving back to LA in 2007 to pursue a career in Hollywood, Eli gave up the glamorous world of television production for the even more glamorous world of political campaigning, moving to Las Vegas' largest and hottest county to organize for radical fringe candidate, Barack Obama, whom we've never heard from since. After the campaign, Eli coordinated Veteran's Affairs for Obama's 2009 Inaugural Committee and interned for ABC's Special Investigative Unit, where he was shoved by disgraced bamboozler, Bernie Madoff. Later, Eli transitioned back to scripted television, writing episodes of FX's "Lights Out" and NBC's "Prime Suspect," before moving onto variety television, including the Emmy's, the ESPY's, the Emmy nominated "ACLU: Stand For Rights with Tom Hanks" and the Writer's Guild Award nominated "Maya and Marty" with Maya Rudolph and Martin Short. Most recently, Eli has entered the highly lucrative world of musical theater – the culmination of those efforts you are witnessing tonight – and contributed material to the fraudulently "won" Biden campaign. Eli resides in Los Angeles with his wonderful and far more talented wife, Joanna, their spectacular daughter, Ivy, their newly-arrived sweetheart

of a son, Charlie, and their old toothless dog, Leon.

**BRIDGET ROONEY** (*Production Stage Manager*) is excited to be rejoining the 44 company. Recent credits include: *Did You See What Walter Paisley Did Today* (La Mirada Theatre), *The Wonderful Winter of Oz* (Laguna Playhouse), *Saturday Explorer Series* (24th Street Theatre), *The Wizard of Oz* (TACFA), *Into the Woods* (College of the Canyons), *Cries and Whispers* (CalArts CNP), *Little Women* (Digital Workshop), MFA, California Institute of the Arts.

**MICHAEL DONOVAN** (*Producer*) is the President of the Board for the Foundation for New American Musicals, and also serves on the board for Camp Bravo. Recent producing credits include the critically-acclaimed productions of *God of Carnage* and *Farragut North*. He is delighted to be working with his producing mentor, Kevin Bailey, and the uber-talented Eli Bauman.

**MICHAEL DONOVAN CASTING** (*Michael Donovan, CSA, Richie Ferris, CSA*) Michael Donovan is the recipient of 9 Artios awards, presented by the Casting Society of America for Outstanding Achievement in casting. Richie Ferris has 3 Artios awards. They have cast more than 1,000 shows produced at such venues as the Ahmanson Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, the Hollywood Bowl, Pasadena Playhouse, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Laguna Playhouse, International City Theatre, Ebony Repertory Theatre, the El Portal Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Getty Villa, the Ricardo Montalban Theatre, the Garry Marshall Theatre, Boston Court, the Soraya Performing Arts Center, the 24th St. Theatre, San Francisco Symphony, both the Palazzo and Paris in Las Vegas, Arizona Theatre Company, Arkansas Rep, Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Rep, Totem Pole Playhouse, and the Troubadour Wembley Park in London – as well as several national tours, numerous films, TV series and commercials.

# WHO'S WHO

## ARTISTIC

Director/Producer/Writer/Composer . . . . . Eli Bauman  
Choreographer . . . . . James Alsop  
Assistant Choreographer . . . . . Johnny Rice  
Costume Designer . . . . . Ariel Tinsey  
Assistant Costume Designer . . . . . Kendall Scarone  
Lighting Designer and Board Operator . . . . . Jacob Abraham  
Audio Production Engineer . . . . . Joe Kattampallil  
Audio Associate . . . . . Nick DePinto  
Production Manager . . . . . Bridget Rooney\*  
Company Manager . . . . . Matthew Herrmann  
Production Stage Manager . . . . . Bridget Rooney\*  
Assistant Stage Manager . . . . . Alyssa Barron\*  
Production Assistants . . . . . Harper Tramm, Sam Millette, Cassy Sottile  
House Manager . . . . . Matt Herrmann  
Host . . . . . Lauren Lorati  
Casting . . . . . Michael Donovan Casting  
Michael Donovan, CSA, Richie Ferris, CSA

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing & Publicity . . . . . Spin Public Relations  
Graphic Design . . . . . Jamie Channell Design, Mike Emerson  
Social Media/Website Content Producer . . . . . Conrad Bauer, Jud Nester

## SPECIAL THANKS

Conrad Bauer and Jon “Bowzer” Bauman



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



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   @44OBAMAMUSICAL

[www.44ObamaMusical.com](http://www.44ObamaMusical.com)



<https://on.soundcloud.com/9gBje>

If you'd like to sing along to your favorite 44 songs in the privacy of your own home, please enjoy this **FREE playlist!**