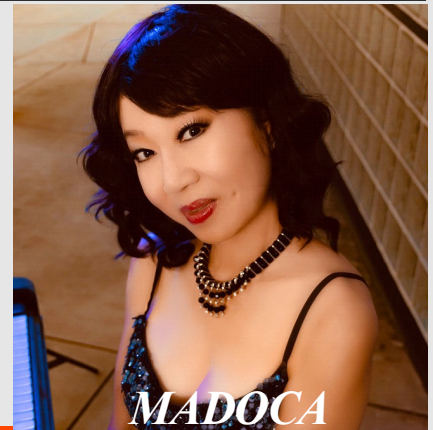
**Eric Smith**

New Date and Venue for “Cameron Wade Live!”

*Now the November 20th
Concert Will Also Be
Livestreamed*

**MADOCA**

“Time To Lift Our Spirits!”

One Man’s Mission To Help The Blind With Education and Love

Eric Smith is an Atlanta-area bass player and leader of the popular Epitome Show Band. Smith has also been blind most of his adult life. He recently started an organization named LEOTO (Living Everyday On Their Own) to help those who are also visually impaired and I interviewed him about his life and mission.

Q. When did you first start having vision problems?

A. When I was in high school, I went from having problems seeing small print to having problems seeing the blackboard. When I took my driver license test, I couldn’t pass the eye exam portion and they advised me to see an eye doctor. The doctor told me I had a condition called “retinitis pigmentosa.” My father was blind, and I knew the condition

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New Concert Venue and Livestreaming Provides Opportunity To Invite The World

My long-awaited concert, “Cameron Wade Live,” has seen so many changes in the last few weeks, I feel like we’re in continuing episodes of a series that has me on the edge of my seat! Ticket holders have been notified that the in-person audience for the show will be moved to the very intimate venue known as “Moyes” in Douglasville, Georgia. The great news is that now the concert will also be livestreamed, making it possible for me to invite the rest of the world.

Throughout all the changes, which have happened because scheduling conflicts and covid-19 safety concerns with the former venue, musical director Rick Hodge, opening act, Kam Showers and the dynamic band of musicians and singers for this event have been busy preparing for what I’m sure will be an exciting evening for everyone involved.

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Madoca’s Latest Single Grants Her Wish For a ‘New Vibration’

“I Feel You” is a much needed breath of fresh air in a world of pandemics and political unrest. The title lets us know that Madoca understands how a light and breezy composition featuring her beautiful piano melodies and the jazzy guitar riffs of Prince Project could definitely rescue our spirits from endless days of bad news and negative outlooks. Thanks Madoca -- for giving us what we needed. It was right on time!



Please access link to purchase Madoca’s single in the body of the newsletter email.

ran in my family, so I realized I had inherited the disorder as well. The doctor said I would lose half my sight by the time I turned 21.

Q.How did the idea of starting LEOTO come about? **A.** *The LEOTO foundation came about when I talked to other people with vision loss and learned that they didn’t know about certain programs such as: how to use their smart phones to access the internet, how to read Braille, and other resources available to them. Because of this, I saw there was a big need for blind people to gain knowledge about all the free resources available to them. I first had the vision about LEOTO about four or five years ago. In 2019, I started putting pen to paper and talking to individuals that I wanted to serve on my board. In 2020, we had our first board meeting where I laid out my game plan and my goals for the organization.*



Smith spends hours preparing for his Braille workshops.

Q.Did you receive help from anyone once you lost your sight? **A.** *I received a lot of help and support from my family. In my family alone there are 20 people who are blind. My father and my grand dad were very encouraging. They would tell me to focus on what I can do and not the things I can’t do. They motivated me to stay positive. I also got help from my teachers in high school. They gave me large-print material and made sure I received all the tools I needed in order to receive a good education. I also qualified for additional training with vocational rehabilitation services such as: how to use a cane and how to use a computer equipped with talking software. These services gave me the needed tools to develop everyday living skills and now I would like to share the knowledge that I have obtained to help to others through LEOTO.*

Q.What are the services offered by LEOTO? **A.** *One of the things we started on a regular basis were Braille workshops. Teaching Braille via Zoom was initially a challenge, however, I now have 13 students. Every Tuesday, I have a beginners class in the morning, and then I have afternoon workshops for my intermediate to advanced students. We also teach students how to utilize helpful apps on their ipad or iphone, text or receive phone calls, or access programs on the internet. On a larger scale, we are looking to buy a building so we can renovate it for state-of-the-art-apartments for blind and low vision residents who would like to live “everyday on their own” -- which is what LEOTO stands for.*

Q.Any success stories you’d like to share? **A.** *My students in the Braille workshop include a husband and wife. One has sight and the other doesn’t. I love seeing them work as a team to support each other – especially the sighted one, who seeks to understand what their spouse is feeling. It provides them both with education as well as quality time to spend with each other.*

Q.How does that couple’s progress make you feel? **A.** *Words cannot even express it. It’s just a very proud feeling.*

Q.How can others with vision problems contact LEOTO? **A.** *People with computer skills can go on the website – leoto.org. They can also send an email to esmith@leoto.org or they can call me directly at 404-534-2454. They can leave a message, and someone will get back to them.*

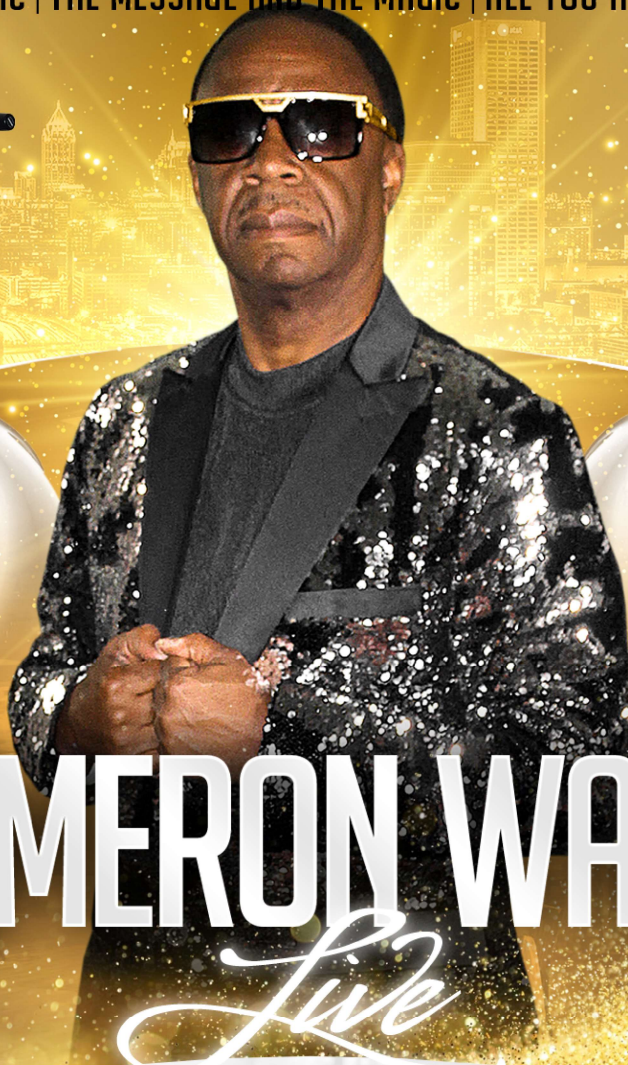
Smith added that LEOTO doesn’t charge their students anything for these workshops, so if anyone wishes to donate a monetary gift to LEOTO, they can reach out via the website, email or the phone number listed above.

HE'S BRINGING THE MUSIC | THE MESSAGE AND THE MAGIC | ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOW UP



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KAM SHOWERS

NOVEMBER
20TH



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RICK HODGE

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Although there are no more tickets for the in-person audience, there are an unlimited number of tickets for the livestreaming aspect of the show, which can be viewed in the comfort of your livingroom flat screen, computer, phone or whatever device you decide to employ. Either way, I hope you'll be attending.