



**Chart-Topping Emmy-Winning & Grammy Nominated Guitarist,  
Composer & Bandleader**

***Chieli Minucci***

**Finds Renewed Inspiration in New Special EFX CD, *Genesis***

**New CD Celebrates 30<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary of Special EFX & Joins Minucci with Special Guests  
Omar Hakim, Dave Mann, Mino Cinelu, Karen Briggs, Xu Feiyu, & Lao Tizer**

**The Buzz on Chieli Minucci**

*"...extraordinary range and technical finesse."* - ***JazzTimes Magazine***

*"Chieli Minucci is both an influential elder statesman and true innovator."* - ***Jazziz Magazine***

*"Chieli Minucci...a fire-breathing dragon on guitar."* - ***Down Beat Magazine***

"Every day I am grateful for the gift of creative energy," states Emmy-winning and Grammy-nominated guitarist Chieli Minucci (pronounced Key-eli Mee-noo-chee). With an enviable list of chart-topping radio hits, Chieli Minucci along with the late master percussionist George Jinda, masterminded the ground-breaking ensemble Special EFX. On May 21, 2013, Chieli Minucci swings full circle on Shanachie Entertainment with his latest effort, ***Genesis***, marking 30 years since the inception of Special EFX. The consummate artist is reenergized, and attributes this to the essential things in life. "I am inspired by healthy living, consistent relationships with family and loved ones, friends, and traveling. My music is simply a consequence of what I am thinking about and feeling." With the release of ***Genesis*** the evolution of Special EFX continues. Chieli Minucci confides, "It is my hope that when people hear ***Genesis*** that they will enjoy it and be able to relate to it in some way. I hope they are moved and are able feel what I felt as I wrote these songs."

There is no doubt that ***Genesis*** is a celebration. It is a remembrance of Special EFX's early beginnings and a continuance and testament to Chieli's enduring vision. Chieli welcomes back old friends and invites new ones for what is an exhilarating set of twelve originals. He is joined by longtime bandmembers, bassist Jerry Brooks, drummer Lionel Cordew and keyboardist Jay Rowe, all who have been a part of the ensemble for the past two decades; Special EFX alums saxophonist Dave Mann and legendary drummer Omar Hakim return to the group on ***Genesis*** and Chieli welcomes a host of special guests including master percussionist Mino Cinelu, violinist Karen Briggs, pianist Lao Tizer and vocalists Xu Feiyu and Vic Starsky. The music on ***Genesis*** is emotional, generous and transcendent, as is Chieli's own personal approach to life and his art. He shares, "I try my best to 'lift' others and I believe in love. I try to be consistent, try to be like a rock for those who need reassuring. I try to pass on what I have learned, and at the same time, let others experience life as they feel they must. Live and let live."

Chieli Minucci and company raise the bar high with the opening track "***Crazy Eights***," a high-octane bluesy jam that provides a stellar platform for Chieli to show off his technical prowess. The song equally underscores his genius for creating memorable melodies and riffs. Saxophonist David Mann (Tower of Power, Barbra Streisand, Chris Botti, Michael Franks) is featured in the track, as is legendary drummer Omar Hakim (Miles Davis, Weather Report, Madonna, Sting, Urban Knights) who provides ample fire. Mann and Hakim are also featured on the album's first single "***Till The End of Time***," a bluesy and soulful ditty with a magnetic funk undercurrent. Minucci's buttery and soulful guitar riffs glide above Mann's robust tenor and Hakim's funky and steady anchoring groove.

Through the years Chieli Minucci and Special EFX have had the joy of touring every corner of the globe. However Chieli's trip to Shanghai in October of 2011 holds a special place in his heart. "Getting the band to China was a dream for me. I was able to bring the members of Special EFX there for a huge concert where we were the only 'jazz' related act performing! It was unforgettable on many levels! This is what it is all about - travel, music, sharing." Chieli penned the ethereal ballad "**Mirage**" for Shanghai based vocalist Xu Feiyu. Feiyu wrote the haunting lyrics about love's occasional transparency. Chieli shares, "In some ways this song sums up the whole experience I had in my frequent travels to China this past year. Feiyu captured the essence of the melody with her insightful lyric." Feiyu also co-wrote the contemplative love song "**Wishing**," which Chieli calls his favorite on the album.

Chieli Minucci has long dreamed of being commissioned to score a feature length film. Inspired by the love theme in the Academy Award-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*, Minucci delivers the riveting and emotionally drenched "**So It Begins**," which chronicles the start of a relationship between a man and woman - slow, careful and evolving. Another cinematic piece is the appropriately titled "**The Haunting**." It's intricate meter, melodramatic feel, building flamenco accents and fiery violin of Karen Briggs and brooding piano from Lao Tizer, bring you to the edge of your seat waiting for Chieli's next move. Chieli Minucci takes us back to his childhood with the percussive and jubilant Caribbean flavored "**Calico**," named after a cat he had as a child. The song is actually dedicated to his late musical partner, George Jinda, and features French percussionist Mino Cinelu (Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder, Sting, Weather Report). "The song '**Genesis**' got its title as a result of my inspiration from the way the group, Genesis, used to arrange their guitars when Steve Hackett was the lead player," explains Chieli. "Just listen to 'Cinema Show' and you'll get it!"

Chieli Minucci has long made a career following his heart and going where the music has led him regardless of boundaries. Chieli's influences are far and wide. He credits The Beatles' eclectic approach to songwriting and record production as an influence and cites Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey as arrangement influences. He adds, "John McLaughlin, Pat Metheny and Peter Gabriel have influenced me with their adventurousness and ability to combine diverse cultures into their writing and producing." **Genesis** captures the intense energy that Special EFX delivers at their live performances and fuses all of the diverse styles and influences that have made them unique through the years. Chieli calls his song "**Far Away**," featuring 19-year old singer Victor Starsky (Chieli joins him on backing vocals) 'an Alan Parsons-type production!' adding, "I wanted to try something extremely moody, and more pop than jazz." Also included on **Genesis** are the ultra cool and breezy "**Blue Lagoon**" and the scintillating and fist-pumping "**Club JZ**," featuring Dave Mann and Chieli's agile guitar. "**Your Smile, My Heaven**," is one of the CDs epic moments. Its wistful, intensely emotional melody and swelling orchestration overflow with intensity. The electrifying effects and echoes employed on Chieli's lead guitar add a nice touch.

\*\*\*\*\*

Few bands in contemporary jazz have been as entertaining and artistically satisfying as Special EFX. Spearheaded by guitarist Chieli Minucci and co-founded by the late percussionist George Jinda (whose untimely passing came in 2001) in 1983, Special EFX helped to pave the road for contemporary jazz during its early years in the 80s and they continue to set the standard. As Special EFX embarks on its third decade as torchbearers of innovative and inspiring instrumental music, Chieli Minucci reflects on the band's longevity in the music business. "One of the reasons we have been able to maintain our popularity is because we have evolved and changed over the years. When the band first started we had a heavy world music influence. Later we highlighted more of an acid-jazz sound, as well as some progressive fusion-rock thrown in for good measure. When people hear our music, they can expect to hear a little of everything!"

Chieli Minucci was born in NYC, and grew up in nearby Forest Hills, Queens, where he still resides. His father (a concert pianist in Italy and a successful composer whose songs were sung by Nat 'King' Cole, Bing Crosby and Julius LaRosa and who later wrote the theme for the cult anime series "Robotech) introduced him to the piano at age six and encouraged him to become a composer. Chieli's son, who is in his 20s, is also a musician

thus making the Minucci clan three generations of musicians! Chieli shares, "I am sure that my father's influence will always be with me. My love of classic American songbook music as well as jazz comes directly from growing up hearing him tinkering on the piano, working out the details of his own compositions, day after day."

Chieli Minucci formed his first group, Taurus, at age 13. The following year he performed with his best friends on a cruise ship three sets every night. "I fell in love with the whole package - music making with my friends, meeting girls, barely-chaperoned travel, independence, and quite a bit of indulgence!" recalls Chieli. "Then, at 23, after getting paid \$350 for 7 gigs in a NYC club (\$50/night!), I was convinced it could be done!" While a student at Ithaca College in upstate New York, Chieli got his introduction to jazz. After college he gained some invaluable on-the-gig training with the NYC-based R&B group, The BB & Q Band. In 1983 he met percussionist George Jinda and together they formed Special EFX, recording for GRP, JVC and ultimately Shanachie as they helped chart the evolution of contemporary jazz. Minucci also recorded three solo projects for JVC before Special EFX made their debut on Shanachie in 1999 with *Masterpiece*. His previous Shanachie releases, *Sweet on You* and *Night Grooves* (2003) both spawned top charting Smooth Jazz radio singles (with "*Cruise Control*" from Special EFX's *Butterfly* staying at #1 an incredible five weeks and "*Endless Summer*" from *Sweet on You* hitting #2, and "*Kickin' It Hard*," from *Night Grooves* staying on the *My Girl Sunday* charts for a record breaking 33 weeks!) Clearly Chieli has arrived as a solo artist.

The in-demand New York born and raised tour-de-force has been first call for such iconic stars as Celine Dion, Lionel Richie, Jennifer Lopez, Jewel, Mark Anthony, Jessica Simpson, Anastasia and others, as well as jazz/pop artists Bobby Caldwell, Marion Meadows, Jay Beckenstein, Kim Waters, Alex Bugnon, Gerald Veasley, up & coming newcomer, pianist/composer Lao Tizer, Nestor Terez, Bob Baldwin, and many others.

On the international scene Chieli Minucci has formally signed on as a "DeTao Master", as part of his career's continuing development in Asia. This is all part of The People Republic of China's *DeTao Masters Academy* program to cooperate with western masters and forge lasting cultural relationships. Chieli has performed and conducted workshops in China five times since 2012.

Chieli has earned 10 Emmy Award nominations for his music on the long-running NBC daytime drama "The Guiding Light" and has won 3. He has also been the main producer for Universal Music's, Gotham Music Library, having written and recorded over 100 CDs. These CDs are geared toward such niche directions as extreme sports, inspirational, patriotic, orchestral, even contemporary folk. In 2003, Special EFX released the well-received *Party*, which featured the popular single "*Ladies Man*." In 2005 Chieli Minucci released *Got it Goin' On* which spawned the top five hit "*The Juice*." It was followed by the DVD, *A Night with Chieli Minucci & Special EFX*, which showcased a high-octane performance recorded at the world famous Harbourfront Centre Theatre in Toronto. *Without You* came in 2011.

A complete discography can be seen at [ChieliMusic.com](http://ChieliMusic.com), the official website of Chieli Minucci & Special EFX.

**For more information please contact Monifa Brown/Shanachie Entertainment  
(973) 579-7763 EXT 26/[mbrown@shanachie.com](mailto:mbrown@shanachie.com)**