

vol. 25 no. 2

2019 Annual Report

MUSIC MAKER **RAG**

RELIEF FOUNDATION



Our Mission: Helping Musicians Make It



Sustenance

Provides ongoing support to artists living in chronic poverty and emergency grants to artists in crisis



Performance

Supports artistic excellence through professional development, tour booking and management services



Education

Makes American musical heritage accessible to current and future generations through public exhibitions, youth engagement, and archival preservation

Music Maker Staff

Timothy Duffy, Executive Director
Denise Duffy, Managing Director
Aaron Greenwood, Program Manager
Christelle Ndong, Artist Support Specialist
Jed Finley, Program Associate
Karen Mack, Accounting Coordinator
Mollie O'Reilly, Giving Coordinator
Cornelius Lewis, Community Coordinator

Music Maker Board of Directors

Timothy Duffy, <i>President</i>	Henry Slyker
Rich Henneberry, <i>Treasurer</i>	Rick Teller
Catherine Elkins, <i>Secretary</i>	Saramel Evans
Denise Duffy	Tom Wallack
Bill Puckett	Dom Flemons

Music Maker Advisory Board

Bonnie Raitt	Dan Auerbach
Ardie Dean	Taj Mahal
Jackson Browne	Tift Merritt
Dickey Betts	Tom Rankin
Jimmy Herring	Sue Foley
Derek Trucks	Pura Fé
Susan Tedeschi	Founders
Pete Townshend	B.B. King (1925–2015)
Elvin Bishop	Levon Helm (1940–2012)
	Col. Bruce Hampton (1947–2017)



Eddie Tigner, 2015 © T. Duffy

*Music keeps you young;
the blues keeps you going.*

– Eddie Tigner (1926–2019)



Winston Blues Revival, 1999 © Mark Austin

A letter from our Co-Founders

Dear Friends,

When we founded the Music Maker Relief Foundation 25 years ago, we embarked on a mission to engage Americans with their rich, and largely forgotten, musical traditions. People said the Blues were dead, but what we found was something different. We found a rich tapestry of artists and musical traditions across the South hidden in plain sight, artists whose indelible contributions to the landscape of popular music the world over needed to be heard.

We believed that as long as this music was performed, it could never die. So, we set about getting artists gigs. Along the way we encountered a deep and broad set of needs. While it may seem obvious that musicians need instruments to play and vehicles to get to gigs, we also found they needed

food and medicine and their light bill paid for the show to go on.

In 1994, we founded Music Maker to empower and sustain communities of folk and blues musicians in and around Winston-Salem, North Carolina and beyond. Ever since that time, we have been a local non-profit organization with an international reach. We help artists throughout the US—from Waverly Hall, Georgia to Washington State, and they have performed all over the world from Pittsboro to Paris to Perth.

We founded Music Maker to offer a new model of engagement for working with blues and folk musicians—an intervention that operates at the crossroads of the arts and non-profit work. Music Maker identifies and serves artists who are vital links in our American musical heritage, and

whose music communicates part of an important story.

We measure the value of this music by its social and artistic significance, rather than its commercial success or current popularity. We call it “the best music you’ve never heard.”

Though often romanticized, the life of a professional musician is rarely glamorous. We focus our efforts on the most vulnerable artists—musicians over 55 years of age who live on less than \$25,000 a year—because there is a real danger that their music will be lost to our society and future generations if they are not supported and documented now.

We provide a safety net to an elderly population, and foster a community of partner artists that also support each other as they near the end of their lives. We connect younger generations with their artistic elders, the women and men who blazed trails, so our musical heritage continues to live on through the next generation and beyond.

We have found that when musicians are heard and respected, they are inspired to create more prolifically and aspire to greater artistic excellence. As individual artists thrive, so does the art form itself. We have discovered that as traditional artists gain recognition and respect, there is a positive ripple effect among the communities to which they belong.

We engage audiences with their cultural heritage in meaningful ways. When Americans interact with Music Maker artists by attending a performance or workshop, or engage with our exhibits, recordings, videos, or books, they enrich their understanding of the talented people around them and historic context of the music that surrounds them.

We want the world to appreciate how

“If we do not safeguard our cultural heritage, it will not be here for future generations.”

important and broad the American traditions we shine a light on are: Native American music, gospel, string band music, blues, singer/songwriter traditions, Zydeco, and more.

Our partner artists create Art that is important to our world and is timeless. We invite you to stop, look, and open your ears to the unseen greatness that so many Americans miss every day.

If we do not safeguard our cultural heritage, it will not be here for future generations. We need everyone’s help to secure our Nation’s music, and your help is what sustained us through the last 25 years. Without the generosity and enthusiasm of supporters like you, we would never have made it this far.

With love,

Timothy & Denise Duffy



Freeman Vines, 2015 © T. Duffy

Hanging Tree Guitars by Freeman Vines

May 29–October 17, 2020 | Greenville Museum of Art | Greenville, NC

Hanging Tree Guitars introduces the work of African American luthier and visual artist Freeman Vines. Vines' sculptures are imbued with an expressive form and symbolic imagery, shaped by hand from repurposed wood sourced from the natural and built landscapes around his home in an eastern North Carolina farming community.

Freeman Vines' instruments are sculpted from repurposed wood and found materials, which are arranged to illuminate the spirit of each object. Among Vines' most arresting works are a series of guitars carved from sections of a black walnut tree on which an African American man named Oliver Moore was lynched in 1930, an event that marked one of the final documented lynchings in North Carolina. Vines crafts this wood into potent and haunting objects, reclaiming the trophies of past racial violence and transforming it into guitars and a collection of sculptures.

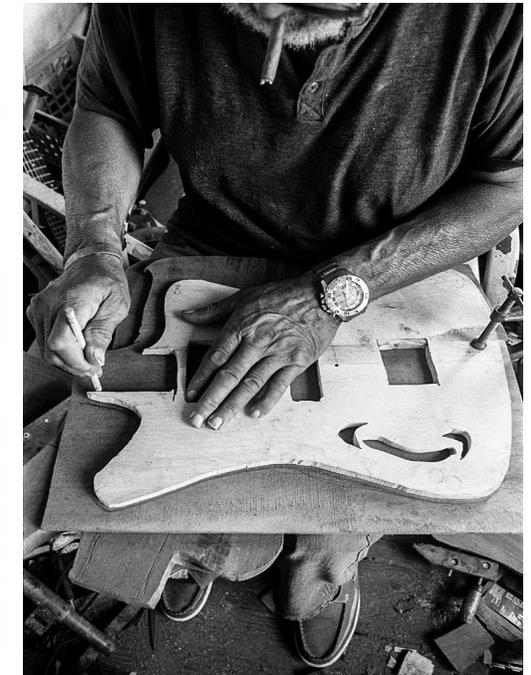
Images by Timothy Duffy offer a lens on Vines' person, environment, and art, framing and refracting the psychological impact of the work within the social and historical context of the American South. Transcribed interviews with Vines immerse viewers in the artist's worldview, exploring themes of memory, racial identity, and spirituality in the rural South.

A companion book, *Hanging Tree Guitars* by Freeman Vines with Timothy Duffy and Zoe Van Buren will be published and available through Music Maker in spring 2020.

This book and exhibit are the culmination of 6 years of collaboration between Freeman Vines and Music Maker. Timothy Duffy began regular visits to Freeman's home in Farmville, NC in 2013. Freeman invited Duffy and Music Maker staff and interns to document his artistry and work. Music Maker supports Vines artistry through grants and services to help with health, housing, transportation, and supplies.

Music Maker will launch this exhibit near Freeman's home at the Greenville Museum of Art in Greenville, NC with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and will tour the exhibit nationwide.

In February of 2020 Vines' guitars will appear alongside works by Lonnie Holley and Thornton Dial in *We Will Walk - Art of Protest and Resistance in the American South* curated by Sarah Martin and Hannah Collins at the Turner Contemporary Museum in Margate, Kent, UK.



Freeman Vines, 2018 © Simon Arcache

More Exhibits:

We Are the Music Makers!

Clay Center for the Arts, WV	now–11/3/19
Fort Smith Regional Arts Center, AR	11/21/19–3/8/20
Delta Cultural Arts Center, AR	10/1/19–1/30/19

Our Living Past: A Platinum Portrait of Music Maker

Clay Center for the Arts, WV	now–11/3/19
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CELEBRATE: MUSIC MAKER 25

December 4–8, 2019 | The Fruit | Durham, NC

Join Music Maker for the ultimate blowout 25th Anniversary celebration at The Fruit in downtown Durham! This December, we're collaborating with Duke Performances for a weeklong music series, shining a light on pioneering contributors preserving the rich musical traditions of the South.

PICKERS & STORYTELLERS:

Dom Flemons
Jerron "Blind Boy" Paxton
Jake Xerxes Fussell
Gail Caesar

December 4, 2019
8:00pm



SOUTHERN VOICES:

Lonnie Holley
Alexa Rose

December 5, 2019
8:00pm



ZYDECO:

Major Handy and
Buckwheat Zydeco, Jr. with
the Ils Sont Partis Band

December 6, 2019
8:00pm



FREE MUSIC MAKER 25 EVENTS:

December 5, 12:30–1:00pm | Power Plant Gallery | Durham, NC

Film screening of *THE MAN IS THE MUSIC* and *I Snuck Off the Slave Ship* followed by a Q&A with Lonnie Holley and Matt Arnett.

December 6, 12:00–1:00pm | The Fruit | Durham, NC

Panel discussion with Music Maker partner artists and special guests, and *Blue Muse* book signing with Timothy Duffy.

★ TICKETS ON SALE NOW! ★

To purchase tickets, visit bit.ly/MusicMaker25 or call 919-684-4444

Individual concert: \$25

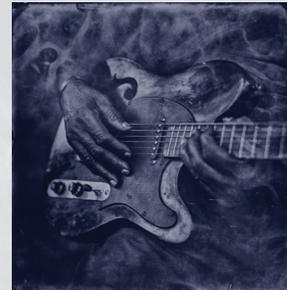
All-access package (all 7 concerts): \$140



NATIVE AMERICAN:

Pura Fé
Cary Morin
Deer Clan Singers
Lakota John and Kin

December 7, 2019
1:00pm



MUSIC MAKER BLUES REVUE:

feat. Cool John Ferguson,
Alabama Slim, Pat "Mother
Blues" Cohen, Pura Fé, Cary
Morin, Timothy Duffy, Sol
Creech, and Ardie Dean

December 7, 2019
8:00pm



GOSPEL:

The Branchettes with
special guest Phil Cook

December 8, 2019
1:00pm

The Glorifying Vines Sisters
and the Eastern NC Gospel
Revue

December 8, 2019
7:00pm

Visiting from out of town?

Contact Mollie O'Reilly for assistance planning your trip:

mollie@musicmaker.org or 919-643-2456



The Glorifying Vines Sisters performing in Telluride, 2018 © T. Duffy

Telluride Blues & Brews Festival

September 13–15, 2019 | Telluride, CO

Renowned as one of the most scenic and intimate music festivals in the country, Telluride Blues & Brews Festival is located in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. The multi-stage celebration of music and craft beer offers an eclectic mix of live blues, funk, indie, rock, jam-band, gospel, and soul performances accompanied by some of the best breweries in the country.

Music Maker artists **Sandra Hall, Alabama Slim, The Como Mamas, Jake Xerxes Fussell, and Willie Farmer** will perform at the nation's premier blues festival this year.

Presented by Telluride Express, the **Music Maker Drink House** at the Blues Stage will give you a glimpse into authentic blues culture. The Drink House features:

- **Listening stations** with original vinyl records. Bring a friend and use the dual headphones to sample classics from the blues genre and discover new and up-and-coming artists.
- **Artist meet-and-greets** from the Music Maker roster. Shake hands, ask questions, and learn more about the artists performing at the festival.
- **Photo booth** to commemorate the experience.

North Carolina Roots Music Series

October 10–December 12, 2019 | Hickory Grove Library | Charlotte, NC

Join us for this free series at the Hickory Grove Branch of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library! The series features three Music Maker partner artists: **Alexa Rose** (October 10), **Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen** (November 14), and **Thomas Rhyant** (December 12). Each show will be at 1:00pm and followed by a Q&A with the artists.

presented in partnership with



CULTURE BLOCKS



L to R: Alexa Rose, Thomas Rhyant, and Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen

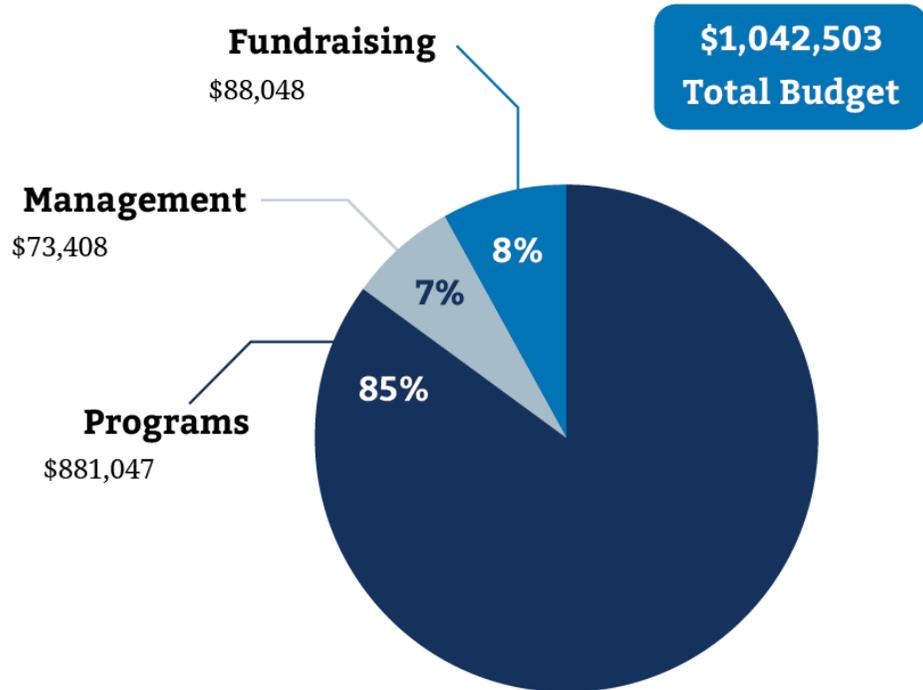
6th Annual Freight Train Blues

May–June, 2020 | Carrboro, NC

This free concert series honors the life and legacy of Piedmont blues legend Elizabeth “Libba” Cotten, born in 1893 in Carrboro, NC. The cultural significance, diversity, and vitality of Cotten's North Carolina musical community is highlighted by performers from across the spectrum of American roots music that are showcased in this series each year.

Stay tuned for Freight Train Blues 2020 dates and lineup!

★ 2018/19 FINANCIAL REPORT ★



Audited financial statements available upon request.

★ WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED ★



12,425

MUSICIAN GRANTS



7,578

PERFORMANCES



2,490

SONGS RELEASED



440

PARTNER ARTISTS



32

COUNTRIES TOURED



25

YEARS



3

PROGRAMS



1

MISSION

★ ARTIST NOTES ★



Beverly "Guitar" Watkins, 2007 © T. Duffy

Beverly "Guitar" Watkins suffered a stroke, but has stabilized and is in recovery ★ **Cookie McGee** was homebound during recovery after a routine visit to the doctor resulted in a punctured artery ★ Music Maker helped **Jimmi Mayes** make a few important trips to Chicago from his home in Jackson, MS to visit a specialty doctor ★ In a tragic turn of events, four weeks after he and his band backed up **Ironing Board Sam** on stage at New Orleans Jazzfest, **Lil Buck Sinegal** passed away at his home ★ **Sam Frazier, Jr.** got a new set of harmonicas ★ Music Maker helped **Elnora Spencer** get some essential furnishings for her home, including a couch and dinette set ★ **David McGrew** would like to dispel any myths that he has died, he was joking about his arrhythmia surgery and accidentally started a rumor about his own untimely end—he's still kicking ★ **Eddie Tigner, Willie Sonny Boy King, Sam "the dot man" McMillan, and Harvey Knox** joined the Silent Strings ★ **Lee Allen Zeno** is being treated for lymphoma and is slated to have stem-cell replacement therapy in the new year ★ Next Generation Artist **Lakota John and Kin** performed at the Kennedy Center and the Library of Congress ★ **Robert Finley** is having a go of it on America's Got Talent ★ Music Maker helped **Guitar Lightnin' Lee** purchase a new fridge and stove ★ **The Como Mamas** played the world-famous Ryman Auditorium ★ **The Dedicated Men of Zion, Sandra Hall, Jimmi Mayes, and Cookie McGee** became Music Maker partner artists ★ **The Dedicated Men of Zion** began work on their first international release with Big Legal Mess Records ★ **Harvey Dalton Arnold** spent 4 days recording his sophomore solo record with New York City's top session musicians and Music Maker long-time friend Zak Alister ★ **John Dee Holeman** celebrated his 90th year and got favorable reviews for his new record ★ **Alabama Slim and Guitar Lightnin' Lee** were featured on NPR Weekend Edition ★ **Freeman Vines and The Glorifying Vines Sisters** were featured in The Bitter Southerner ★ **Charles Jacobs** received treatment for cataracts and was surprised by how much better he could see.

★ PROGRAM NOTES ★

The Como Mamas made a few trips abroad, performing in Finland, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, France, Czech Republic, Guadeloupe, Austria, and Norway.

© Wallace Lester 2019



If you were in New Orleans between May and July, you would have been greeted by the billboard size faces of Music Maker artists Ironing Board Sam, Pat "Mother Blues" Cohen, Guitar Lightnin' Lee, Boot Hanks, and Little Freddie King all over town.

© Aaron Greenhood 2019



Music Maker gave Freeman Vines a GMC Yukon to cart himself and his art around town. Music Maker also helped move his workshop to a new space in downtown Fountain, NC.

© Timothy Duffy 2019



Mother Lena Mae Perry of the Branchettes performed at the North Carolina Governor's Mansion to inaugurate NC's Year of Music. She also completed a recording project with producer and musician Phil Cook set to release in early 2020.

© Jed Finley 2019

★ STAY CONNECTED ★

Join our mailing list for all the latest news & exclusive content!



Big Legal Mess Records Releases the Man From the Hill



We are thrilled to announce the release of Music Maker partner artist Willie Farmer's latest album, *the Man From the Hill*.

[Read more about Willie Farmer & listen to the Man From the Hill](#)



Diggin': Robert Finley - Age Don't Mean a Thing

Robert Finley will have two photos featured at the New Orleans Museum of Art - [read!](#)



WUNC Features the Carolina Chocolate Drops!

Tim talks about his favorite NO music on WUNC's Songs We Love - [read!](#)



Keep up with Music Maker's gigs

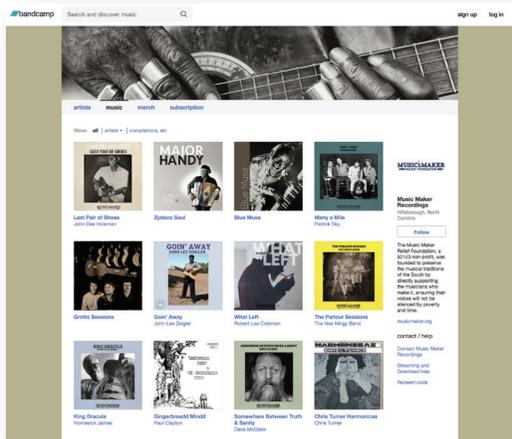
See who's playing in your area! You never know when a Music Maker artist will be rolling through your town. Check out the Tour Calendar - [read!](#)

Subscribe at:
musicmaker.org/signup

Get the latest on:

- artist news
- album releases
- tour dates
- sustenance stories

Check out all our releases on bandcamp!



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soundcloud.com/musicmakerrelief



© Joshua Johnson 2019

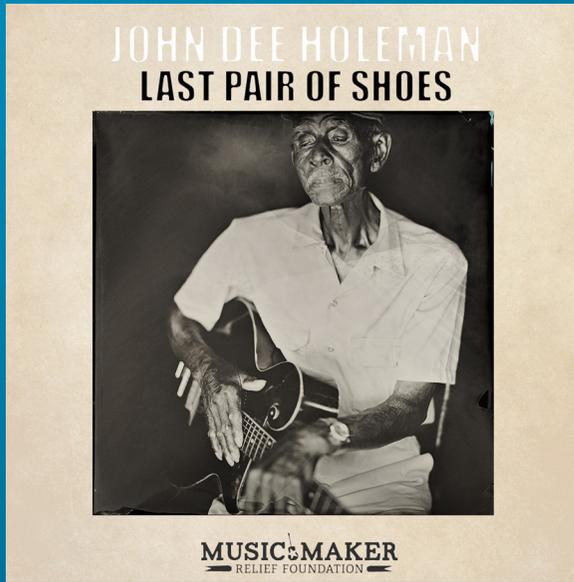
★ SANDRA HALL ★

"The Empress of the Blues"

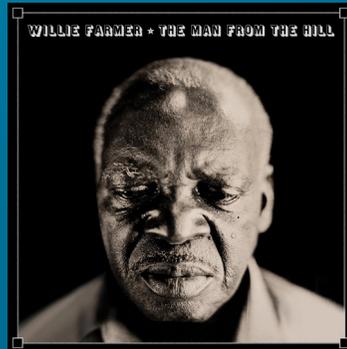
New Music Maker Partner Artist

Check out our blog @ musicmaker.org/blog

★ **2019 RELEASES** ★



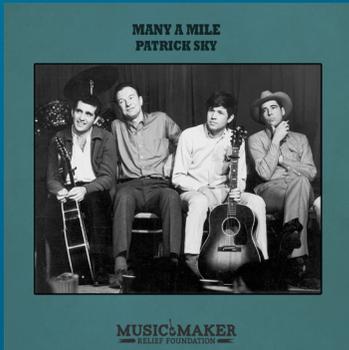
John Dee Holeman, *Last Pair of Shoes*



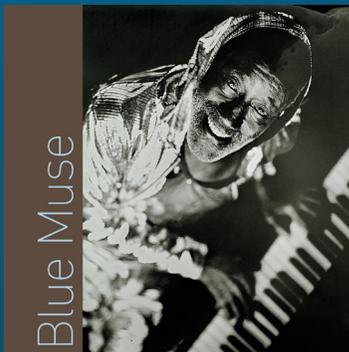
Willie Farmer, *The Man from the Hill* (Big Legal Mess)



Alexa Rose, *Medicine for Living* (Big Legal Mess)



Patrick Sky, *Many a Mile*



Various Artists, *Blue Muse*



Major Handy, *Zydeco Soul*

Purchase albums at musicmaker.org

★ **MUSIC MAKER MERCH** ★

Blue Muse: Timothy Duffy's Southern Photographs

Blue Muse Book - \$55

Published by UNC Press, the book features 60 tintype images captured by Timothy Duffy. These photographs compel us to pay attention, look closer, know the faces, and learn the names. (*Hardcover, 12" x 12" 137 pages*)

Blue Muse Album - \$10

This musical companion to the *Blue Muse* project features 21 tracks that capture the infinite complexity of Music Maker's partner artists and traditional American music. *Blue Muse* artfully places some of the most important, little-known musicians alongside rockstars and longtime Music Maker supporters Taj Mahal, Eric Clapton, and Dom Flemons.



Visit musicmaker.org/shop for more info and to purchase!

Music Maker Deluxe Trucker Hat - \$25

Celebrate 25 years of Music Maker with our limited-edition trucker hat! Available in two colors, this deluxe hat features an adjustable snap-back and an embroidered Dr. Burt patch.



Join the Monthly Giving Program

Investing in the brilliance of the Blues has never been easier—when you set up your monthly gift, you ensure that our artists' needs are met year-round. Your support can change lives, one month at a time.

“There’s a direct line of sight from the money to the impact. It’s incredibly personal.”

- Al B., Music Maker donor

“I was raised in a community that helped everybody. This is my community now.”

- Rich H., Music Maker donor and Board Member

YOUR MONTHLY DONATION WILL...

- ★ Help artists afford food, medicine, and home repairs
- ★ Allow artists to share their musical gifts with the world
- ★ Preserve our cultural heritage for future generations



JOIN THE CIRCLE

Members of the **Listener's Circle** receive a new compilation every other month, designed exclusively for Circle members.

Your gift of **\$30/month** or **\$300/year** grants you exclusive access to unreleased tracks, previews of upcoming albums, and interesting musical material from the Music Maker stacks!

visit musicmaker.org to start changing lives!

★ Thank you to our generous donors! ★

from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

Founders Circle (\$10k+)

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Carey Barnes and Ray Wheeler
Bull City Hospitality
Al and Caryn Bunshaft
Catherine Elkins
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Foundation
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Drema Fitzhugh
Maryann and Stewart Fleming
Johnny and Zoe Foster
Kayce Freed Jennings
Nancy Freeman
Laura Fryer
Kurt Gaertner
Kathleen Gaffney
Patricia Gavelda
Kenneth Giles
Jason and Margi Gold
Charles Gorman
Ervin Guentner
Michael Hale
Frenesa Hall
Ranota and Reginald Hall
Marjorie Hamilton
Linda Hanselman
Ashley Hardwick
John Soper
Tony Hartness
Tyler Haskell
Douglas and Nancy Henderson-James
Gordon and Corinna Herbert
Calista Hollyer
Thomas and Julia Homza
John and Kristin Hornburg
Bruce Jackson and Diane Christian
Mike Kappus
Scott Kellman
Elizabeth Kelly
Jeffrey Kilroy
Catherine and Vance Kramer

Robert Kramer and Susi Saxi
Patricia and Marty Krasney
Larry Kress
Robert Kricun
Steve Kristoff
Doug Langille
Joseph Lanza
Gerri LaPlaca
Neville Lee
Cornelius Lewis
Michael Lewis and Linda Singer
Andrew Lill
Karen and Gregory Mack
Teresa Mack
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Daryl Marquette
Katherine McVetty
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Kurt Messner
Graham Middleton
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Miller
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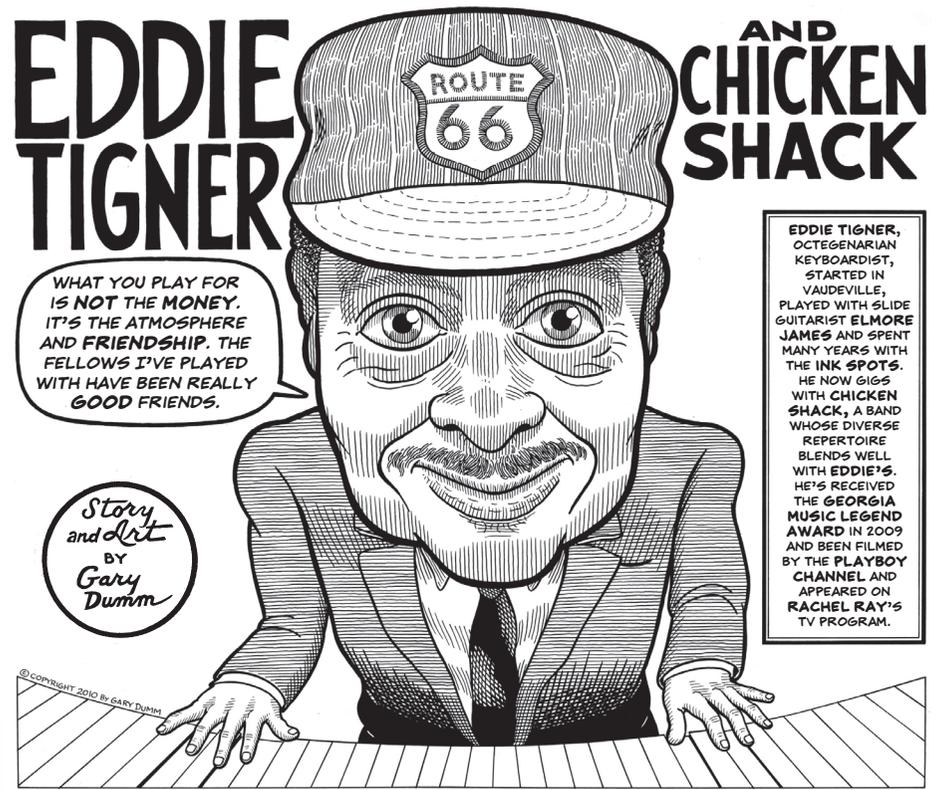
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Story and Art BY Gary Dumm



EDDIE TIGNER, OCTOGENARIAN KEYBOARDIST, STARTED IN VAUDEVILLE, PLAYED WITH SLIDE GUITARIST ELMORE JAMES AND SPENT MANY YEARS WITH THE INK SPOTS. HE NOW GIGS WITH CHICKEN SHACK, A BAND WHOSE DIVERSE REPERTOIRE BLENDS WELL WITH EDDIE'S. HE'S RECEIVED THE GEORGIA MUSIC LEGEND AWARD IN 2009 AND BEEN FILMED BY THE PLAYBOY CHANNEL AND APPEARED ON RACHEL RAY'S TV PROGRAM.

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