

ATHENS MUSIC WALK OF FAME

In 2020, the first ten inductees of the Athens Music Walk of Fame were installed in a two-square-block area in downtown Athens bounded by Pulaski Street, West Washington Street, North Lumpkin Street, and West Clayton Street with five more artists added in 2021. The walk passes several renowned music venues in western downtown, including the Morton Theatre, the 40 Watt Club, and the Georgia Theatre. In continuation of recognition of the artists who have helped make Athens a destination for music fans, the [Athens Music Walk of Fame Committee](#) selects five inductees each year to add to the walk.

The Athens Music Walk of Fame Committee is comprised of local music and history professionals, appointed by the Mayor. This committee weighs considerations such as contribution to the identity of Athens, historical context, breadth of career, distinct musical style, and diverse representation. The plaque is designed by local artist, Allen Sutton, selected from open call for proposals

The Athens Music Walk of Fame is funded by the Athens Cultural Affairs Commission and supported by community partnerships, including the Athens Downtown Development Authority, the Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Arts Division and the Athens-Clarke County Transportation and Public Works Streets & Drainage Division.

2020 INDUCTEES

- **The B-52s** - an American rock band that formed in 1976 in Athens, Georgia, United States. A major part of the new wave scene, the band started out as Fred Schneider (vocals), Kate Pierson (vocals, organ), Cindy Wilson (vocals, bongos), Ricky Wilson (guitar), and Keith Strickland (drums).
- **Danger Mouse** - Brian Joseph Burton, known professionally as Danger Mouse, is an American musician and record producer. He came to prominence in 2004 when he released The Grey Album, which combined vocal performances from Jay-Z's The Black Album with instrumentals from the Beatles' The Beatles, also known as The White Album. In 2008, Esquire named him one of the "75 most influential people of the 21st century".
- **Drive-By Truckers** - Based in Athens, Georgia, the Drive-by Truckers are a southern rock band. Renowned for earnest songwriting, a heavy touring schedule, and a distinctive musical style drawing from southern rock, country, R&B, punk, and soul, the group has developed a devoted following across the world. The band is known for its robust three-guitar sound, which has been likened to that of legendary southern rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd.
- **The Elephant 6 Recording Company** - a musical collective connected to Athens, GA. Notable bands associated with the collective include the Apples in Stereo, Beulah, Circulatory System, Elf Power, the Minders, Neutral Milk Hotel, of Montreal, and the Olivia Tremor Control. Although bands in Elephant 6 explore many different genres, they have a shared interest in psychedelic pop of the 1960s. Their music sometimes features intentionally low fidelity production and experimental recording techniques.

- **Hall Johnson** – Born in Athens, GA, Hall Johnson was a highly regarded African American choral director, composer, arranger, and violinist who dedicated his career to preserving the integrity of the Black spiritual as it had been performed during the era of slavery.
- **Neal Pattman** – Born in Madison County, GA, Pattman was an American electric blues harmonica player, singer and songwriter. Sometimes billed as Big Daddy Pattman, he is best known for his self-penned tracks, "Prison Blues" and "Goin' Back To Georgia". In the latter, and most notable stages of his long career, Pattman worked with Cootie Stark, Taj Mahal, Dave Peabody, Jimmy Rip, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Guitar Gabriel, and Lee Konitz.
- **Pylon** - An American new wave/post-punk band from Athens, Georgia, United States. The band's danceable sound, a blend of new wave, post-punk, jangle pop, alternative rock and funk rock, influenced the Athens music scene and the 1980s American pop underground. AllMusic wrote that Pylon's "role as elder statesmen of the alternative rock explosion is unassailable"
- **R.E.M.** - An American rock band from Athens, Georgia, that was formed in 1980 by drummer Bill Berry, guitarist Peter Buck, bassist/backing vocalist Mike Mills, and lead vocalist Michael Stipe. R.E.M. was pivotal in the creation and development of the alternative rock genre.
- **Vic Chesnutt** - James Victor Chesnutt was an American singer-songwriter from Athens, Georgia. His first album, Little, was released in 1990. His commercial breakthrough came in 1996 with the release of Sweet Relief II: Gravity of the Situation, a charity record of alternative artists covering his songs.
- **Widespread Panic** - a rock band from Athens, Georgia, United States in 1986, originally formed by John Bell and the late Michael Houser. The band currently consists of Bell (vocals, guitar), Jimmy Herring (guitar), Dave Schools (bass), John "JoJo" Hermann (keyboards), Domingo "Sunny" Ortiz (percussion) and Todd Nance (drums).

2021 INDUCTEES

- **Bob Cole** - Born in Athens in 1868, Cole was a national figure around the turn of the 20th century, best known for collaborating with brothers J. Rosamond and James Weldon Johnson on over 200 compositions. Cole helped elevate vaudeville performance beyond minstrelsy and stereotyping towards the sentimental, romantic, and elegant.
- **Lo Down & Duddy** - Groundbreakers of local hip hop, this duo helped put Athens on this genre's map with appearances on national television with David Letterman, collaborations with Bubba Sparxxx, Timbaland, Yung Joc, and tours with musicians such as Blink-182 and Maroon 5.
- **Of Montreal** - Lead performer and songwriter Kevin Barnes has solidified of Montreal's reputation by releasing an album per year for over two decades; still active and touring, they have become a mainstay in psychedelic pop nationally while continuing to call Athens home.

- **Art Rosenbaum** - Known also as a visual artist, University of Georgia professor emeritus, musician, and folklorist Rosenbaum has documented Athens-area and other traditional musicians around the country, winning a 2008 Best Historical Album Grammy award for his *Art of Field Recording Volume I: Fifty Years of Traditional American Music Documented by Art Rosenbaum*.
- **Nuçi's Space / Linda Phillips** - Phillips established Nuçi's Space on the eastern edge of downtown Athens in 2000 with the expressed mission of preventing and ending suicide; over the years, Nuçi's Space has expanded its mission as a health and resource center for Athens musicians to include low-cost rehearsal space, free legal advice, and support of the musician community in countless other ways.

2022 INDUCTEES

- **Bloodkin** - Danny Hutchens and Eric Carter arrived in Athens in 1986. Already musical partners, they formed Bloodkin and created music beloved in Athens and beyond for the next 35 years. During that time, they released 8 studio albums and a 5-disc boxed set of outtakes. Their songs have been covered by many artists, most notably fellow Athens Walk of Famers, Widespread Panic, including a top 40 Billboard single, "Can't Get High." Danny Hutchens died in 2021. Eric Carter continues to make music as Bloodkin, with a rotating cast of respected musicians.
- **Tituss Burgess** - Born and raised in Athens, attending Cedar Shoals High School and graduating from the University of Georgia's School of Music, Tituss Burgess is an award winning singer, actor and theater performer best known for his high tenor voice and his leading role on the *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, for which he received five Primetime Emmy Award Nominations. A veteran of the stage, Burgess made his Broadway debut in 2005 as Eddie in *Good Vibrations*. Since, he has held many memorable roles on the Broadway stage including Hal Miller in *Jersey Boys*, Sebastian the Crab in *The Little Mermaid*, and Nicely-Nicely Johnson in the 2009 revival of *Guys and Dolls*.
- **The Glands** - There are some artists whose influence is not so much in having hit records, but in influencing other artists. Such is the case with the Glands. Their two original studio albums, *Double Thriller* (1997) and *The Glands* (2000) were indie rock classics. In 2018, two years after the passing of band leader Ross Shapiro, New West Records released a box set titled *I Can See Your House from Here* that included remastered vinyl versions of the two original albums, and a new 23-track album, *Double Coda*. A posthumous NPR Music review stated, "Shapiro built hooks that betrayed both sardonic armor and a soft heart. Lively but nonchalant, the band stood on the accelerator, even as the frame rattled to pieces."
- **Ishues** - Deemed one of the 'architects' of the local hip hop scene, rapper Ishues (born Ismeal Cuthbertson) has toured the world from California to South Africa, representing Athens, performing with legendary acts like KRS-One. In addition to his contributions to music, he's dedicated to the community, serving as a co-founder of local youth

organization, Chess and Community. After a hiatus from music, Ishues continues to record and collaborate with emerging artists.

- **Love Tractor** - Founded in 1980 by guitarists Mark Cline and Mike Richmond, and bassist Armistead Wellford, students at the University of Georgia, Love Tractor are veterans of Athens' new wave "golden era". The band re-formed in 1996 recording 2001's *The Sky at Night* and 2015's *A Trip to the Museum*. Their early albums have been reissued, nearly four decades after original release, proving their music to be not only important to the Athens scene's formative years, but timeless as well.

2023 INDUCTEES

- **Monroe Bowers "Pink" Morton** - (July 31, 1856 – February 12, 1919) was a prominent building owner, publisher, building contractor, developer, and postmaster in late 19th-century Georgia. An African American, he lived most of his life in Athens, Georgia, where he published a newspaper and built the Morton Building. The building included the Morton Theatre on its upper floors, a vaudeville venue, and offices for African-American professionals including doctors and pharmacists on its ground floor. His theater, sometimes referred to as Morton's Opera House, hosted many prominent African American performers including from New York City's Cotton Club. Performers at the theater included Duke Ellington, Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway.
- **Normaltown Flyers** - The Normaltown Flyers have been playing their good time/up tempo music since 1979. Band members are Brian Burke (vocals, acoustic and electric guitars), Tom Ryan (bass, vocals, and saxophone), Davis Causey (electric guitar and vocals), along with newer additions Deane Quinter (on drums and percussion) and Tim White (keyboards). Through the years John Keane (of John Keane studios) has been very instrumental in helping the band with recordings and occasionally joins them on stage. The Flyers gained popularity with their regular performances at Allen's in Athens, Georgia and in other regional venues. In 1989 they attracted the attention of legendary Nashville producer Harold Shedd. Harold signed the band to Mercury/Nashville in 1990. They produced two CDs and two excellent videos for "Rockin' the Love Boat" and "Country Boy's Dream."
- **Jackie Payne** - (b. 1945) is an American blues singer. Payne was born in Athens, Georgia. He trained as a singer in his father's gospel choir and learned the blues from his uncle, Neal Pattman, who played harmonica. By the age of 13, he was singing professionally with the Allen Swing Band in Atlanta. He later joined an R&B group called The Serenaders. He moved to Houston, Texas in 1963, at the age of 17, and recorded his first regional hit, "Go Go Train" on the Jetstream label in 1965. He was nominated in both 2007 and 2008 for the Blues Music Award for Best Male Soul Blues Artist; an album he recorded with Johnny Otis was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1993.
- **Calvin Orlando Smith** - a graduate of Cedar Shoals High School and the University of Georgia, Calvin Orlando Smith went on to be the first African-American accepted into Cambridge University's prestigious Department of History of Art and Architecture and

receive a degree. As a performer, he has performed in three Broadway productions and appeared in seven national, international and or limited tours. Mr. Smith has worked regionally for 40 years as a member of the Actor's Equity Association and shared the stage with Morgan Fairchild, Cathy Rigby, Florence Henderson, Ben Vereen, JK Simmons, Isaac Hayes, the New Kids on the Block and most recently, Garth Brooks. In June 2022, he made his Carnegie Hall debut in Brahms' "Requiem".

- **WUOG** - WUOG 90.5 FM is the University of Georgia's alternative college radio station. It is an all-student, all-volunteer, non-commercial station, first broadcast on October 16, 1972, now celebrating over 50 years of operations. On February 21, 2009, the lobby of the WUOG station inside of the Tate Center was named in honor of Wilbur Herrington for his service as station engineer since the station's first broadcast in 1972. It was on WUOG that R.E.M. were first broadcast; a live recording of "Hippy, Hippy Shake" was played in the summer of 1980. Drummer Bill Berry was also in a short-lived combo of radio personalities from the station, known as the WUOGerz. WUOG offers regular rotation programming as well as specialty shows. The program "Live in the Lobby," broadcast on Tuesday and Thursday each week, features live on air in-studio sessions from local Georgia musical artists.

2024 INDUCTEES

- **40 Watt Club** – Originally a nickname given to Pylon's rehearsal space located above 171 College Ave, the first "40 Watt Club" was christened in 1979. After changing locations and ownership over the years, the legendary music venue moved to its fifth and present-day location, at 285 West Washington Street under the direction of current owner Barrie Buck.
- **Bar-B-Q Killers** – an alternative rock band from Athens, with the late Laura Carter (vocals, guitar), Claire Horne (guitar), David Judd (bass) and Arthur Johnson (drums). They released the album Comely in 1986. They performed on Athens, GA: Inside/Out (1987), a video documentary that was an important document of Georgia music culture.
- **George Fontaine Sr.** – a UGA graduate, Fontaine is the co-founder of New West Records, based in Athens and Nashville, and co-founder of Normaltown Records with his son, George Fontaine Jr. Fontaine was part of a team that converted the Georgia Theatre into a music venue in 1978.
- **John Keane** – is an American record producer based in Athens, Georgia, who has worked extensively with R.E.M., Indigo Girls and Widespread Panic. He owns and operates John Keane Studios in Athens, his hometown, which opened in 1981 and is still in operation today.
- **James R. Smith / Voices of Truth** – directed by co-founder James R. Smith, this choir specializes in traditional choral music including hymns, spirituals, anthems and gospels. They have performed for over 40 years and continue to preserve the roots of sacred music, focusing on the traditions that helped African Americans survive slavery.

2025 INDUCTEES

- **Walter Allen Sr.** – Walter Allen Sr. was a revered Athens educator, musician, and civil rights activist whose legacy lives on in the city's cultural and civic life. As a dedicated teacher and mentor in the Clarke County School District, he empowered generations of students through education and music. A tireless advocate for racial justice and community uplift, Allen helped shape the East Athens community with his leadership, compassion, and unwavering commitment to equality.
- **Randall Bramblett** – A pillar of the Southern music scene, Randall Bramblett is an acclaimed singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and session musician whose career spans decades. Known for his soulful voice and lyrical depth, Bramblett has worked with legends like Traffic, Widespread Panic, and Bonnie Raitt, while also maintaining a prolific solo career rooted in Southern rock, blues, and jazz-inflected Americana.
- **Five Eight** – Formed in the early '90s, Five Eight is an Athens-based rock band renowned for their emotionally raw lyrics, explosive live energy, and fiercely loyal fanbase. Often described as “too loud for folk and too honest for punk,” their music tackles mental health, addiction, and redemption, carving out a unique and deeply personal niche in the local and national alternative rock scenes.
- **Flagpole Magazine** – Flagpole Magazine is Athens' fiercely independent alternative weekly, covering local news, politics, arts, and—most notably—music since 1987. With its finger on the pulse of the city's creative community, Flagpole has long been a platform for emerging talent and a voice for progressive causes, serving as a cultural compass for locals and newcomers alike.
- **Michael Guthrie Band** – The Michael Guthrie Band has been a staple of the Athens music scene since the late 1970s, delivering jangly power-pop and rootsy rock with a loyal local following. Fronted by Michael Guthrie's distinctive vocals and guitar work, the band is known for its energetic live shows and dedication to original music, embodying the enduring DIY spirit of Athens.

CURRENT MAP

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