

The Gravy Infusion



What is Appalachian Music?

by *Hannah From*



I grew up in the North Georgia Mountains. I love my home. I love the rolling hills, cornbread and butterbeans, and my community—the ones who raised me. But I think the thing I love most is the music. I grew up listening to and learning old-time and bluegrass music, which turned into one of my greatest passions as I play in the Berea College Bluegrass Ensemble and Berea Folk Root Ensemble.

My labor supervisor recently asked, “How do you define you define Appalachian music?” This is a difficult question. Appalachia is a place where people of different backgrounds and cultures come to live, build communities, and their cultures become entwined, each leaving behind bits and pieces of their own traditions.

The Spanish brought the guitar. Italians brought the mandolin. The Scots-Irish brought the violin songs—or fiddle tunes—as well as many of the ballads which were handed down through oral tradition. Germans brought the dulcimer. And last, but not least, Africans brought polyrhythms and the banjo, arguably the most significant and influential instrument in the Appalachian region.

So in conclusion, there is no one right answer to the question, “What is Appalachian Music?” It is what you make it, in all its many shapes and forms. It is—like all folk music—a starting place for people to grow off of. There isn’t just one way to play this “genre” and there isn’t just one group of people who can play it.

To read the full article visit our [blog](#)

Excerpt From "Old Timer to Grandchild" (1978)

... Let folks talk about our backward ways. I like it. If forward's what's been coming in right here lately, I'd go into the backup if I could. Back up to the little creeks with fish in them, the trees with birds, the caves with animals, the air clean and smelling of hay and apples.

~Lillie D. Chaffin

Pulitzer Prize-nominated Kentucky poet
from Pike County

Writers of Appalachia Series



Micheal Crole



Rose McLarney

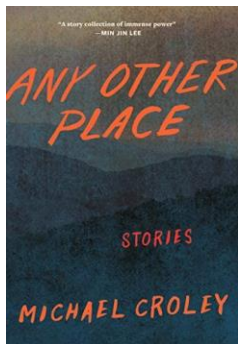


Meredith McCarroll



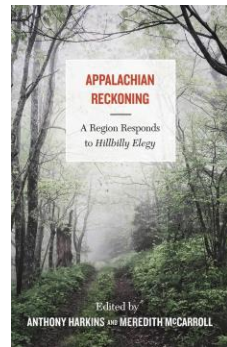
Anthony Harkins

We are pleased to announce our new *Writers of Appalachia* an interview series with acclaimed authors and winners of the Weatherford award for best representing the challenges, personalities, and unique qualities of the Appalachian south.

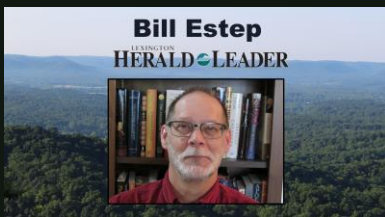
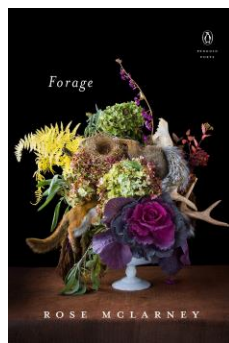


Silas House's interview with Michael Croley came out on April 24. To watch, click [here](#).

Chris Green's interview with Meredith McCarroll and Anthony Harkins launches this Saturday! Click [here](#) for the Facebook event.



Ansel Elkin's interview with Rose McLarney will launch on June 7! Stay tuned!



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