

2017 Coopers Glen Artist bios

Wayne Hancock -

Since his stunning debut with "Thunderstorms and Neon Signs" in 1995, Wayne "The Train" Hancock has been the king of Juke Joint Swing - that alchemist's dream of honky-tonk, western swing, blues, Texas rockabilly and big band. Wayne's uncompromising interpretation of the music he loves is in fact what defines him: steeped in traditional but never "retro;" bare bones but bone shaking; hardcore but with a swing. Wayne is the embodiment of genuine, house rocking, hillbilly boogie. The Train's reckless honky-tonk can move the dead.

Joel Mabus -

Joel Mabus is a maverick in the folk music world. He defies any easy pigeonhole. By turns, he picks a mountain banjo to accompany an ancient ballad, sings a witty song about modern life, plays a sweet Irish melody on guitar, swings a hot jazz number, and then reaches deep for a soulful expression of values in a troubled world. He tops it all with a fiddle tune or old Carter family song -- all skillfully blended into a seamless flow. One fan said, "Its music from the heart that hits you right between the eyes." A mainstay on the folk circuit these past 30 years, Joel has 24 albums to his credit; the latest is A Bird In This World.

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver -

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver have nearly 40 albums to their credit, are seven-time IBMA Vocal Group of the Year winners, and have multiple Grammy, Dove, ICM, IBMA, and SPBGMA Award nominations. Lawson is reigning SPBGMA Mandolin Player of the Year, and was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame in September 2012 at the Ryman Auditorium. Lawson's band were 2012 ICM Vocal Group of the Year, and are just coming off a recent prestigious Dove nomination and two Inspirational Country Music Association nominations.

The Ragbirds -

For years, "home" was a place The Ragbirds rarely visited. The band's music - a genre-bending hybrid of indie-pop melodies, global rhythms and songwriting styles influenced from all over the world - was as broad as their audience, which stretched from the group's hometown of Ann Arbor, Michigan, to the shores of Osaka, Japan (where they scored a Number One pop hit with the song "Book of Matches"). Show by show, in venues ranging from rock clubs and performing arts centers to festivals encompassing everything from bluegrass to electronica, The Ragbirds developed a well-deserved reputation as one of the most dynamic, high-spirited live bands in roots music.

Soltre -

Linguists have debated the true meaning of Soltre for years. Some say it refers to a philosophy of peace and love. Others say it is a word rooted from a Gaelic word for laundry soap. At Coopers Glen Soltre means four guys with a wide variety of musical background and talent that have come together to make the Celtic music they love.

Stella! -

Stella! is a three-piece, all-women, American roots band from southeast Michigan and has been referred to as a singer-songwriter super group with three-part vocal harmonies and three songwriter voices. Stella! was first conceived of by singer-songwriter Jo Serrapere after a conversation with American music critic, Bruce Springsteen biographer, and Creem Magazine co-founder Dave Marsh. Jo was inspired to put together a new group to showcase country-roots songwriting. With the release of their debut album, "Sorry, Stella," the girls were invited to join Michigan-based music collective Earthwork Music (earthworkmusic.com).

Molly O'Brien and Rich Moore -

Mollie O'Brien and her husband, guitarist Rich Moore, have quietly made it their mission to find, mine and reinvent other artists' songs. As songwriters they add their own tunes to the canon of American Grammy winner Mollie has long been known as a singer who doesn't recognize a lot of musical boundaries, and audiences love her fluid ability to make herself at home in any genre while never sacrificing the essence of the song she tackles. Rich, while known to produce some of the funniest onstage running commentary, is also a powerhouse guitar player who can keep up with O'Brien's twists and turns from blues to traditional folk to jazz to rock and roll. He creates a band with just his guitar and, as a result, theirs is an equal partnership. Their latest release is Love Runner on Remington Road Records.

Heywood Banks -

Stuart Mitchell, the creator of Heywood Banks, claims his character was born on a mountaintop in Tennessee and lived for many years in a log trailer. Heywood's biological parents, Hank and Heyena Banks were killed in a freak revolving restaurant accident back in the sixties - someone had hit the Puree Button by mistake...grisly! Heywood Banks is simply one-of-a-kind, almost impossible to describe, with a style his very own. A veteran of television and radio Heywood intersperses his humorous observations of life with twisted, inventive, bizarre songs, sung and played in a variety of styles, from folk, to country to rock to pop, and way beyond.

Tony Trischka -

Tony is considered to be the consummate banjo artist and perhaps the most influential banjo player in the roots music world. For more than 45 years, his stylings have inspired a whole generation of bluegrass and acoustic musicians with the many voices he has brought to the instrument. In addition to his playing Tony is well known for his extensive experience in music instruction as well as a producer of a PBS documentary and grammy nominated music album featuring well-known artists Steve Martin, Paul McCartney and the Dixie Chicks. Tony continues to maintain a national and international touring schedule with his band of extraordinary musicians. Tony will be joined by Dominick Leslie, one of the leading young mandolinists of today, and Rex Hargreaves, nationally known innovative, cross-genre violinist.

Drew Nelson -

Michigan-born Navy veteran Drew Nelson is a storytelling songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. A fly fisherman and world traveler, he writes as a witness to the lives and journeys of those he has met along the way, mixing Americana and roots-rock with traditional folk styles. Drew has toured across North America and Europe, performing solo and opening for popular rock artists like Melissa Etheridge and Edwin McCain as well as esteemed folk singers like Josh White Jr. and John Gorka. His down-to-earth songwriting which portrays our world and ordinary people with deep feeling and unflinching clarity. He has worked hard in life and hasn't been afraid to get his hands dirty. Drew has 100% credibility in the subject matter he writes about.

Nashon Holloway -

Nashon is a soulful songstress who released her first studio album "The Palace & the Hut" this year. Performance credits include features on The Oprah Winfrey Show with David Foster, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Taste of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Qatar. In addition to being a recording and performing artist, she teaches private voice to children in the states and visits alternative schools, juvenile homes, churches and hospitals in an effort to collaborate with students of all ages on music as healing, communication and artistic therapy. Nashon is a one-of-a-kind singer/songwriter with an artistic, jazzy style and relevant essence born of authenticity.

Four Wheel Drive -

Four Wheel Drive Band members are Jack Dailey, Noah Smith and friends from the Allegan and Marcellus area. The band is strictly country and will be singing all your old time favorites. Four Wheel Drive will be featured after the Saturday evening concerts for a Honky Tonk Dance in the Bell's Room with food and drink available for purchase.