

# 2016 deaths take a toll on music innovators

Although a significant number of musicians die each year, 2016 seems to have been particularly hard on musical innovators.

While a handful mentioned are from the Baby Boomer generation — and the rest from the Silent Generation (ages 71-91) — who had full lives and careers, it doesn’t diminish the impact of their loss. Here, in order of their passing in 2016, are musical innovators who helped change the course of popular music:

•**David Bowie, Jan. 8 (69, cancer)**

Bowie released 25 studio albums, with no two alike. He changed musical palettes like most people change socks. People point to different parts of Bowie’s career that inspire them the most. And that may be his single-most important contribution to popular music: the continual desire to move forward, pressing the existing envelope of imposed restrictions, fearless of whether it was lauded by the masses or ignored. A true visionary. A true artist.

•**Dale “Buffin” Griffin, Jan. 17 (67, Alzheimer’s disease)**

Mott the Hoople was the face of glam in Britain in the early ’70s. Dale Griffin played drums on each of their albums. He produced numerous acts after Mott finally folded, such as The Cult, New Model Army and Hanoi Rocks. He produced the John Peel Sessions for BBC Radio One from 1981-94. Sadly, Griffin was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s in 2009 just as Mott the Hoople reunion shows were being planned. He was able to

sit behind the drums for the encores, while The Pretenders’ Martin Chambers performed alongside. •**Glenn Frey, Jan. 18 (67, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, pneumonia)**

The Eagles may not have created country-rock — it didn’t hurt that former bands of two of the original members, Bernie Leadon

(Flying Burrito Brothers) and Randy Meisner (Poco), each did — but Glenn Frey and company brought it to the masses. Sales of just “Hotel California” and “Eagles Greatest Hits” topped 40 million. While not as prolific as most of the others on this list, few can match the band’s number of sold-out performances, even without the benefit of new music.

•**Signe Anderson, Jan. 28 (74, COPD); Paul Kantner, Jan. 28 (74, organ failure, septic shock)**

The Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service and Jefferson Airplane put San Francisco on the musical map in the mid-1960s. Of the three, the Airplane was certainly the most innovative, with its swirling cacophony of surreal psychedelics and blues with gender equal vocals. Signe Anderson was the first female vocalist prior to Grace Slick. Paul Kantner was the metaphysical and spiritual leader of the Airplane and, later, Jefferson Starship. How very cool that the former bandmates expired on the same day at the same age!

•**Maurice White, Feb. 3 (74, complications from Parkinson’s disease)**

As founder, drummer and chief songwriter for Earth Wind & Fire, White took soul, funk and rhythm

& blues and married it with world music with a particular focus on North African mythology. From 1972-82, they released a string of majestic albums that sound as fresh today as when released. Though Parkinson’s forced him to retire from performing in 1994, he remained active behind the scenes for EW&F and others for many years.

•**Sir George Martin, March 8 (90, died in his sleep)**

Producer extraordinaire, Martin produced The Beatles for the majority of their career. As if that wasn’t enough, he also produced a wide variety of artists, including Cheap Trick, America, Jeff Beck, Elton John, Little River Band, UFO and Kenny Rogers.

•**Keith Emerson, March 11 (71, suicide)**

The keyboardist/songwriter was a third of Emerson, Lake & Palmer, a classical piano virtuosity and a jazz trio. Mussorgsky’s “Pictures at an Exhibition” or Aaron Copeland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man” may not scream rock ‘n’ roll to you, but they did to Emerson. His “Fanfare” cover is heard regularly at sporting events around the world 40 years after its release. He helped turn many a young person on to the classics in the process. Sadly, his inability to perform the intricate piano pieces he was known for, coupled with a pending Japanese tour that he might have to cancel, was too much for him to accept. He chose to end his life.

•**Merle Haggard, April 6 (79, pneumonia)**

Before anyone knew what to call it, Merle Haggard started what has become known as “outlaw country.” And it wasn’t necessarily

because he was a criminal, even though he did spend some time behind bars. His “outlaw” status came from doing things his way without the help of the “country music establishment.” He didn’t give a rat’s a\*\* about Nashville and gave them the finger whenever it struck him. And he had a pretty significant career regardless. As important, Merle helped to mentor a whole bunch of younger “outlaws,” like Sturgill Simpson, to carry the torch. Merle Haggard’s legacy is in good hands.

•**Prince, April 21 (57, accidental overdose)**

Prince’s death is certainly the most shocking of the musicians who died in 2016. His impact touches the entire musical spectrum, because Prince was not afraid to incorporate elements from any genre into his musical stew. Also, he was one of the most amazing guitarists ever to perform live, including his 2007 Super Bowl appearance, the only halftime concert worth watching. His solo on George Harrison’s “While My Guitar Gently Sleeps” at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony made the song his for the rest of eternity. Like Jimi Hendrix before him, Prince was constantly performing and he usually recorded what he played. So like Hendrix, we’re likely to see Prince music released well into perpetuity.

•**Leonard Cohen, Nov. 10 (82, cause of death not reported)**

That voice. Melancholy, minimalist music, sparingly accompanying poetry is not going to work if the voice is not convincing. Leonard Cohen had the voice to carry that weight. He released his first album at age 33 — and his last three weeks before his death.

He took time off from the music business to become a Buddhist monk. Returning to music in the late ’90s he had a renewed sense of purpose. And like his peer Bob Dylan, he toured more in his 60s and 70s than any point in his career. •**Leon Russell, Nov. 13 (74, died in his sleep)**

In the late ’50s Leon Russell — the Master of Space and Time — moved to Los Angeles from Oklahoma to begin one of the most varied musical careers in popular music. Starting out as a session player who could perform whatever was requested on guitar or keyboards, he became a member of the Wrecking Crew, the seminal LA session collective. After going solo, he worked with Joe Cocker with his “Mad Dogs and Englishmen” tour and album and was the musical director for George Harrison’s “Concert for Bangladesh.” George Benson, The Carpenters, Helen Reddy, Rita Coolidge, B.B. King, Donny Hathaway and Amy Winehouse all had hits covering Russell’s tracks. In 2010, Elton John and T-Bone Burnett felt Leon’s legacy was being ignored. To remedy that, they got together to write, record and release “The Union.” It was a worldwide hit, with several publications lauding it a perfect release. In no uncertain terms, Leon was able to know how much he meant to so many music fans before he passed.

*A retired educator, Johnny Vinyl spends his days with Lucifer, a 7-year-old German shepherd, reading and riding the vibe. His column, Ride the vibe, focuses on entertainment. Contact him via tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com*

## MISSION

# ‘Indian and White Guy’ perform unique show

Musical-comedy duo to play at Wildhorse

East Oregonian

The politically incorrect musical-comedy duo of Williams & Ree returns to Wildhorse Resort & Casino for a 21-and-older show.

Better known as “The Indian and the White Guy,” Bruce Williams and Terry Ree met at Black Hills State College in South Dakota. They began playing together in a band, filling time between songs with comedy sketches.

Tickets are now on sale for the Thursday, Dec. 8 show. The doors open at 6 p.m. and the show starts at 7 p.m. in the Rivers Event Center at Wildhorse, located off Interstate 84 Exit 216, Mission. All seats are at round tables and reserved upon purchase. A no-host bar will be available.

The premium “Stick a Fork in Me” seats, which include a free barbecue gift, are \$29 and the regular tickets are \$19. Tickets can be purchased at the casino gift shop or at www.wild-



Photo contributed by RockTweten

**Tickets are now on sale for Williams & Ree, better known as “The Indian and the White Guy. The duo will perform their politically incorrect music-comedy show Dec. 8 at Wildhorse Resort & Casino.**

horseresort.com.

After realizing their unique brand of humor drew larger crowds, the comedy team was born. However, their music isn’t to be discounted, as the pair was nominated for a Country Music Association award as a vocal duo.

Describing themselves as a Plains Indian (Ree) and a Western Angloid (Williams), the pair shares a message of love and harmony, with an

underlying note of deceit and debauchery. For more than 40 years, Williams & Ree have found humor in everyday life. Their lively shows are full of zings interspersed with songs.

For more information about the musical-comedy team, visit [www.williams-sandree.com](http://www.williams-sandree.com).

Contact community editor Tammy Malgesini at [tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com](mailto:tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4539.

## BRIEFLY

### Chart-topping country musician to perform at Stet’s

HERMISTON — After being discovered during a talent contest, Jason Michael Carroll’s debut release soared to number one on Billboard’s Top Country Albums.

“Waitin’ In The Country” also produced three Top 40 hits including, “Alyssa Lies,” “Livin’ Our Love Song” and “I Can Sleep When I’m Dead.”

The North Carolina musician’s next two albums also charted on the Billboard Top 200. Opening for Brooks & Dunn, Trace Adkins and Alan Jackson, Carroll has also performed on “Good Morning America,” the CMA Music Festival and on the Grand Ole Opry stage. s

Currently on tour, Jason Michael Carroll will perform solo Friday, Dec. 2 at 9 p.m. at Stet’s Steakhouse, 1619 N. First St., Hermiston. General admission for the 21-and-older show is \$20. Also, tickets for VIP reserved, which includes a meet-and-greet, are \$40. They are available at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2707263](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2707263).

For more information, call 541-289-7838. For more about the musician, visit [www.facebook.com/jasonmichaelcarroll](http://www.facebook.com/jasonmichaelcarroll).



Contributed photo

### Biblical coloring book inspires art exhibit

LA GRANDE — A mixed media art exhibition gained its inspiration from a Bible-themed coloring book.

John Michael Byrd’s “Drunk Strange Waters” recently opened at the Nightingale Gallery at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. The show’s title is derived from the Bible passage 2 Kings 19:24.

Byrd recently rediscovered the coloring book, which he said is one of his first visual memories and was instrumental in inspiring and creating his visual vocabulary. Dissecting the pages, Byrd cut the images into simpler parts before arranging and photographing them. After manipulating the images in Photoshop, he printed each new image on clear transparencies. Finally, Byrd back-painted specific parts to highlight implied narratives.

The pieces are about trying to make sense of what he has been told. They become visual poems through the act of making. Byrd pieces back together his childhood memories in a way that is more satisfying than reality.

The exhibit is on display through Tuesday, Dec. 6 in the gallery, which is located in Loso Hall on the La Grande campus. It’s open Monday through Fridays from noon to 4 p.m.

For more information, contact [cpeeke@eou.edu](mailto:cpeeke@eou.edu) or visit [www.eou.edu/art](http://www.eou.edu/art). For more about the artist, visit [www.johnmichaelbyrd.com](http://www.johnmichaelbyrd.com).

## Festivals

### Hermiston Festival of Trees

•Saturday, Dec. 3, 6 p.m.; dinner, gala event  
•Sunday, Dec. 4, noon; Family Day

•Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395  
[www.facebook.com/hermistonfestivaloftrees](http://www.facebook.com/hermistonfestivaloftrees)  
\$35/dinner, reservations available for tables of 8 (available for sale Nov. 1 at the conference center and Good Shepherd Medical Center). Features dinner, tree viewing and live/silent auction. Family Day is \$5 suggested donation per family, includes tree viewing, games, activities and live entertainment.

•Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate  
[\\$30/evening gala, free/Family Day. Gala features heavy hors d'oeuvres, live/silent auction; Family Day includes tree viewing, games, activities and live entertainment.](http://www.sahpendleton.org)

### Pendleton Festival of Trees

•Friday, Dec. 2, 6 p.m.; celebration & auction  
•Saturday, Dec. 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Family Day

•Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate  
[\\$30/evening gala, free/Family Day. Gala features heavy hors d'oeuvres, live/silent auction; Family Day includes tree viewing, games, activities and live entertainment.](http://www.sahpendleton.org)

### Old Fashioned Holiday Stroll

•Saturday, Dec. 10; 3-7 p.m.  
•Downtown Pendleton  
[www.facebook.com/events/726842304145210](http://www.facebook.com/events/726842304145210)

Free. Celebrate the holiday season while admiring winter window displays and drinking free hot cocoa. Holiday carols performed by local musical groups. Also, specials and discounts at many local shops and venues.

## Art & Museums

### Tremendous Trio Book Signing

•Saturday, Nov. 19; 5-7 p.m.  
•Pendleton Book Company, 15 S. Main St., Pendleton

Free. Book-signing event features award-winning author Rick Steber and Pendleton-area authors J. R. “John” Groupe and Rebecca “Becky” Fletcher Waggoner.

### Jean Ann Mitchell & Ariel Anderson

•Saturdays/Sundays; noon-5 p.m.

•Arts Portal Gallery, 508 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater  
Free. November exhibit features Mitchell (watercolors) and Anderson (mixed media).

### Eileen Thiel & Cameron Scott

•Sunday, Nov. 20; 4-6 p.m.  
•400 E. Grant St., Enterprise  
[www.fishtrap.org](http://www.fishtrap.org)

Free. Book release party, includes reading and signing (books available for purchase). Eileen Thiel’s memoir, “Seasons Silently Waiting,” tells the story of a sheltered city girl’s marriage to a country boy potato farmer. More than a love story, it’s also a story of determination and faith. A writer and educator, Cameron Scott’s second collection of poetry, “The Book of Cold Mountain,” won The Blue Light Book Award.

### “Drunk Strange Waters”

•Monday-Fridays, noon-4 p.m.

•Nightingale Gallery, Eastern Oregon University, La Grande  
[www.eou.edu/art/nightingale-gallery](http://www.eou.edu/art/nightingale-gallery)

Free. John Michael Byrd’s solo exhibit’s title is derived from Biblical passage II Kings 19:24. Images inspired from a Bible coloring book the art-

## WHAT TO DO

ist had as a child and recently rediscovered. Runs through Dec. 6.

### “Borderline”

•Monday-Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.  
•Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

Free. In conjunction with a mental health awareness campaign on campus, Michigan artist Jill Miller work examines an autobiographical understanding of depression through a series of figurative paintings. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through Dec. 8.

### “The Infinite Possibilities in Clay”

•Monday-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
•Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, 2020 Auburn St., Baker City

[www.crossroads-arts.org](http://www.crossroads-arts.org)  
Free. A handful of clay artists are featured. Much of the artwork is for sale. Runs through Nov. 30.

### Batik Convergence

•Tuesday-Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

•Peterson’s Gallery, 1925 Main St., Baker City  
[www.petersonsgallery.net](http://www.petersonsgallery.net)  
Free. Features a collective of regional batik watercolor artists. Runs through Nov. 30.

## Music

### Decade X

•Saturday, Nov. 19; 8 p.m. No cover  
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission

### Battle of the Bands

•Saturday, Nov. 19; 9 p.m.  
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

\$10 or \$5 and a new toy, which will be donated to Toys for Tots and Santa Express. Ashes to Ashes and Dirty Voltage square off in a battle of riffs, drum beats and guitar solos. Raffles, with proceeds benefiting needy kids in town.

### Coyote Kings-Tip & Rob

•Friday, Nov. 25; 6-9 p.m. No cover.  
•Nookies/Hermiston Brewing Co., 125 N. First St., Hermiston

### Groove City

•Friday, Nov. 25; Saturday, Nov. 26; 8 p.m. No cover  
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission

### Community Christmas Concert

•Friday, Dec. 2; 7:30 p.m.  
•Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint, 850 S.W. 11th St., Hermiston  
Free. Features local talent.

### Shanks Pony

•Friday, Dec. 2; Saturday, Dec. 3; 8 p.m. No cover  
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission

### Jason Michael Carroll

•Friday, Dec. 2; 9 p.m.  
•Stet’s Steakhouse, 1619 N. First St., Hermiston  
[www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2707263](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2707263)

\$20/general admission, \$40/VIP reserved, includes meet-and-greet. 21-and-older event features North Carolina country musician, whose debut release, “Waitin’ In The Country,” produced three Top 40 hits.

## Night life

### DJ music

•Saturdays, 8 p.m.

•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

### Whiskey Wednesday Game Night

•Wednesdays; 3-7 p.m.  
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

No cover. Xbox 360, Nintendo Wii, PlayStation 3 and Nintendo 64.

### Digital Karaoke

•Thursdays and Fridays, 8 p.m.  
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

### Mac’s Trivia Night

•Thursdays, 8 p.m. No cover  
•Mac’s Bar & Grill, 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton  
21 and older. East. Drink. Think. Teams of 2-8 compete in trivia contest with other teams. Live host and prizes.

### Wine tasting

•Fridays, 4-8 p.m.  
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.

### Open Mic

•First/third Friday each month, 8 p.m.-midnight  
•The Packard Tavern, 118 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton  
[www.facebook.com/groups/pendletonopenmic](http://www.facebook.com/groups/pendletonopenmic)

### Karaoke

•Fridays 8 p.m. (9 p.m. if game on)  
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

### DJ and dancing

•Fridays, 8 p.m.  
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

## Theater & film

### “The Butler Did It Again”

•Saturday, Nov. 19; 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 20; 2 p.m.  
•BMCC, Bob Clapp Theatre 2411 N.W. Carden Ave.

\$15/adults, \$10/children, students. College Community Theatre presents a murder mystery who-done-it gone horribly awry.

### “The Snowflake Man”

•Sunday, Nov. 27; 2 p.m.  
•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.  
[www.pendletonarts.org](http://www.pendletonarts.org)

\$5. Puppeteer Sarah Frachette of PuppetKabob performs using Czech-style marionettes and pop-up backdrops.

### “Nutcracker”

•Dec. 11-13  
•Richland High School, 930 Long Ave.  
[\\$27/adults, \\$13/children, \\$18/students & seniors. The holiday classic is presented by the Mid-Columbia Ballet. Tickets for shows, which typically sell-out, go on sale Nov. 1.](http://www.midcolumbiaballet.org)

### Hot tickets

•**Williams & Ree (known as “The Indian and the White Guy”):** Dec. 8, Wildhorse Resort & Casino. \$29/\$19 via the casino gift shop or [www.wildhorseresort.com](http://www.wildhorseresort.com).

•**Trans-Siberian Orchestra: The Ghosts of Christmas Eve:** Dec. 30, Moda Center, Portland; Dec. 31, Key Arena, Seattle. \$41-\$76 via [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

Want to get your event listed in our calendar? Send information to [tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com](mailto:tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com), or c/o Tammy Malgesini, 333 E. Main Street, Hermiston, OR, 97838.