



Organized by: [Birthplace of Country Music Museum](#)

Available to travel to museums, libraries, cultural centers, and other venues and events from February 2024

EXHIBIT DESCRIPTION

Old-time music is described and experienced in different ways and for different purposes, **but at its heart, old-time is mountain folk music with strong ties to Appalachia and the diverse peoples who have called it home.** While old-time music has primarily been related to “hillbilly music” and its roots and branches can be found in the development of country and bluegrass, it is one of the melting pots of American culture, connecting to multiple genres, influences, and instruments.

Women have always been central to old-time music – in the home and on the stage, and as instrumentalists and singers, preservationists, activists, promoters, and cultural memory keepers. *I've Endured: Women in Old-Time Music* highlights the many women who have been integral to this music, exploring the challenges they've faced making a career in the field, the ways they have impacted the genre, and their vision for the future of old-time. Featured women and stories include iconic musicians like Elizabeth Cotten, Ola Belle Reed, Maybelle and Sara Carter, and Ramona Jones; hidden heroines like Elsie McWilliams, Jenny Lou Carson, Katherine Jackson French, and Lottie Kimbrough; and women like Rhiannon Giddens, Cathy Fink, Tatiana Hargreaves, and Trish Kilby Fore who are carrying on and innovating old-time traditions today.



EXHIBIT DETAILS

I've Endured: Women in Old-Time Music is organized thematically into six sections with a total of twelve (12) standing panels:

- **Section 1: Introduction (1 standing panel, front and back)**
 - What is old-time music?
 - Why women in old-time music?
 - Who else isn't represented?
 - * Audio element: Contemporary female musicians explaining what old-time music means to them
 - **Section 2: Foundations & Caretakers (2 standing panels, front and back)**
 - Cultural Memory Keepers
 - Songsters and Songcatchers
 - Foundational Women Musicians
 - Preservationists
 - **Section 3: Challenges (3 standing panels, front and back)**
 - Confronting Challenges
 - Family Responsibilities
 - Financial Inequality
 - Double Standards
 - Bias and Representation
 - Finding Her Voice
 - * Audio-visual element (TV): Contemporary female musicians talking about past and present challenges to performing and a career in music
 - **Section 4: Women's Stories in Music (3 standing panels, front and back)**
 - Hidden Heroines
 - From Contest Winner to Stage
 - Iconic Musicians and Commercial Success Stories
 - Tradition-Bearing Songwriters
 - Progressive Leaders
 - **Section 5: Community and Participation (2 standing panels, front and back)**
 - Unbroken Threads (preserving tradition)
 - Pushing Boundaries (innovating)
 - Representation Matters (other underrepresented groups)
 - Participation and Community Building
 - **Section 6: I've Endured (1 standing panel, front and back)**
 - Connecting Past, Present, and Future
 - Visions for the Future
 - * Audio-visual element (TV): Contemporary female musicians talking about their inspirations and what they envision for the future of old-time music
- It also includes four (4) standing panels (front and back) with original artwork by Gina Dilg of "traditional superheroes" Etta Baker, Samantha Bumgarner, Ola Belle Reed, and Jean Ritchie, and nine (9) wall panels on the following topics:
- The Women of the WLS National Barn Dance
 - Alice Gerrard
 - Women and Old-Time Dance
 - Women at the Workbench (luthiers)
 - Old-Time Music: From Appalachia and Beyond
 - Women as Educators
 - Costume and Stage Attire
 - Murder Ballads
 - Who Did We Miss? (interactive, post-its for visitors to use to let us know who was missed)
- There are several artifacts that can travel with the exhibit, including 78 and LP records, posters, songbooks, and sheet music.

You can access a Google Drive folder [HERE](#) to view images of the exhibit from the opening reception in March 2023, along with several photographs of individual panels.

Venues are also welcome to supplement the exhibit with objects, images, and stories related to women in old-time music from their own communities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Programming guide
- Tour outline
- Website: WomenInOldTimeMusic.com
 - Close-Up (bios of women featured in the exhibit and others not included)
 - Voices (full videos of interviews with 18 contemporary women artists, including Alice Gerrard; Amythyst Kiah; Bev Futrell, Sue Massek, and Karen Jones of the Reel World String Band; Tariana Hargreaves and Allison de Groot; Emily Spencer; Martha Spencer; Trish Kilby Fore; Sheila Kay Adams; Cathy Fink; Kalia Yeagle; Toni Doman; Ivy Sheppard; Roni Stoneman; Elizabeth LaPrelle; and Suzy Thompson)
 - Sounds & Songs (Spotify playlist)
 - Additional and Educational Resources (including a K-12 lesson plan to come)
- Press kit (press release template, social and promotional graphics, etc.)
- Installation instructions
- Registrar's packet

RENTAL TIMEFRAMES AND FEES

- Three (3) months, \$1,200
- Four (4) months, \$1,600
- Six (6) months, \$2,200

Interested venues that cannot afford the above rates can contact Head Curator Rene Rodgers at rrogers@birthplaceofcountrymusic.org to discuss the possibility of a subsidized fee.

SHIPPING / DELIVERY

- Delivery or shipping is not included in the above fees.
- Depending on distance between the Birthplace of Country Music Museum and your venue, delivery and installation can be facilitated by BCMM's curatorial team (cost to include U-Haul rental, one night hotel room(s) if needed) OR shipping by common carrier will need to be arranged.

INSURANCE

Host venues will need to insure the exhibit while it is at their site, and a COI must be provided to BCMM.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please reach out to rrogers@birthplaceofcountrymusic.org if you would like further information or have any questions.



ADDITIONAL INFO

The Birthplace of Country Music, Inc. (BCM) – a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization located in Bristol, Tennessee-Virginia – is comprised of three branches: the Smithsonian-affiliated Birthplace of Country Music Museum; the annual Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion music festival; and Radio Bristol, the public radio station that broadcasts from the museum. BCM's mission is to perpetuate, promote, and celebrate Bristol's rich musical heritage; to educate and engage audiences worldwide regarding the history, impact, and legacy of the 1927 Bristol Sessions; and to create recognition, opportunities, and economic benefit for our local and regional communities. BCM accomplishes this mission through exhibits, educational programming and work with area school systems, outreach through our museum and radio station, academic and learning workshops, performances, community partnerships, advocacy, and much more.

I've Endured: Women In Old-Time Music was developed in-house by BCM staff, along with assistance from an outside content development team of scholars and old-time musicians. Research included interviewing 18 contemporary musicians and sharing questionnaires with a wide range of musicians and industry professionals in the field. The exhibit was funded in part by grants from Virginia Humanities, the Massengill-DeFriece Foundation, the IBMA Foundation, the East Tennessee Foundation Arts Fund, Virginia Tourism Corporation, and several local women-led business sponsorships including The Crooked Road and Friends of Southwest Virginia. Details and a full list of those involved with the process can be found at WomenInOldTimeMusic.com.

