

OXFORD AMERICAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: **Kelsey White** kwhite@oxfordamerican.org 501-374-0000

***Oxford American* announces its Country Roots Music Issue**

The 24th annual music issue will celebrate the radiant essence of “countrified” sound

September 20, 2022—CONWAY, AR—This year, the *Oxford American* is thrilled to announce that our 24th annual music issue will celebrate the radiant essence of “countrified” sound. We’ll conclude our 30th anniversary year with a deep dive into our Country Roots. This issue will cover performers, songwriters, instruments, scenes, and the ambient noise that make a song glow with the heat and authenticity of our region.



Part of almost every *OA* music compilation, country songs clear space and allow release; its artists are “rigorously honest about so much of the complexity and conflict of life,” songwriter and scholar Alice Randall has said. Through essays, stories, and odes to the sounds of our region, the Country Roots Issue will explore and explode Harlan Howard’s old idea of country music as “three chords and the truth,” and we will share with our readers hidden histories, compelling dramas about the ever-changing present, and hopeful paeans to our collective future.

Our writers find soulful resonance in bird cries and Hank Williams ballads, Tanya Tucker’s luminous “Delta Dawn,” Patsy Cline’s “Walkin’ After Midnight,” and Johnny Cash’s basslines. Elsewhere, they listen for the country in the Karen harp’s six strings, and keep time with Buddy Harman, “the original country drummer,” who made records with Elvis, Brenda Lee, Ray Price, Loretta Lynn, Tammy Wynette, and more. Contributors Sarah Smarsh, Imani Perry, Jason Kyle Howard, and Yusef Komunyakaa examine love, femininity, death, and homegoings in the sonics of Tracy Chapman, Big K.R.I.T., Trio, Millie Jackson, and Solange. We’ll feature new work from previous contributors alongside a host of new writers reflecting on classics, covers, traditions, and so much more.

Published since 1997, the Music Issue is the *Oxford American*’s most acclaimed and popular production.

From 2009 until 2015, and from 2017-2019, the *OA*’s music issue featured a different Southern state each year (we’ve covered Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Texas, Georgia, Kentucky, and the Carolinas). In 2016, we departed from the states to examine “Visions of the Blues,” covering subjects that represent the genre’s past, present, and future. In 2020, GRAMMY-winning musician Brittany Howard selected her favorite music issue pieces of all time for our Greatest Hits issue. Then in 2021, our magazine focused on the Southern influence of American music beyond our region’s borders, reimagining these far-flung locales as Up South.

OXFORD AMERICAN

Our 2022 music issue celebrates the roots of country music across a 170-page magazine packed with visual art, liner notes, essays, profiles, Q&As, and more. Every Country Roots issue will include a free companion CD in addition to curated Spotify playlists. Stay tuned for more information about this exclusive supplement to the issue.

The 2022 Southern music issue is available now for pre-order at OxfordAmericanGoods.org. It will be on select newsstands on December 6, 2022.

Subscribe to the *Oxford American* by visiting OxfordAmerican.org/subscribe.

For bulk orders, contact info@oxfordamerican.org.

ABOUT THE OXFORD AMERICAN

Founded in 1992, the Oxford American (OA) is a nonprofit arts organization whose mission is to explore the complexity and vitality of the American South through exceptional writing, music, and visual art.