

THE BLISS HIPPY STORY

Bliss Hippy began in 1990 in the Missouri Ozarks in Rolla, MO as "Sidio and Hall", consisting of Richard and Maureen Hall, with various other musicians serving as enablers for the duo over the years. Shortly after their marriage in 1993, Richard and Maureen released their first album "Sidiosynchrasyes and Hallucinations" in 1994. In addition to Richard and Maureen, the largely acoustic album, included bassist and cellist Greg Spillman; the late great Blake Travis on Conga, with special guest appearances from friends Luce and Richie Myers. During this time, the duo played primarily in the local area, in particular at the Blue Heron Rookery, in Rolla, one of the most well-known listening rooms in the Midwest at the time.

The band took a musical hiatus for many years, but began to write, sing, and perform with conviction again in 2011. By popular demand, Bliss Hippy found themselves back in the studio for the first time in 19 years with a whole new set of original songs, which resulted in the release of their second album "Bliss with an Attitude" in 2013. While still acoustically focused, the musical intensity grew, with help from the electrical guitar stylings of Joe Dunlap as well as the solid rhythm provided by bassist Tristan Dunlap and Josh Goodridge on Djembe and a variety of other percussion instruments. Once again Luce and Richie Myers made special appearances on the album, along with bowed bass player Peter Price. Though the duo's song writing has matured, the general sublime and silly river stills runs through, as the album name implies.

In 2014 Bliss Hippy raised the bar significantly. First, the duo won two awards in the Great American Song Contest for their songs "God's for Everybody" and "Drinking with Jesus". Second, the band toured nationally for the first time in the summer of 2014 in the southwest and western United States, including Texas, California, and Washington. They also returned to the studio to record their third album "The Tao of Bliss" released in May 2014. While this album also includes the support of familiar bliss hippy friends (Joe Dunlap, Josh Goodridge, Luce Myers, Richie Myers, and Peter Price), there are a number of songs performed by the duo alone. In addition, this third album greatly benefited from the creative work of sound engineer and musician Wil Reeves and his Centro Cellar Studio in Columbia, MO. Again, the album represents the band's dualistic nature with inspiring anthems such as "Miracle," to irreverent classics such as "Grab and Beer", "I Ain't Dead", and "Grandpa's Pants."

At the end of 2014, Bliss Hippy released their fourth album "Buddha Face", a album focused on Dharma themes. Maureen also began serving as "Dharma Troubadour" traveling to retreats and providing musical support for her meditation mentor, Venerable Pannavati. Bliss Hippy. The duo continues to become more and more involved in inspirational music, playing at Buddhist retreats, for Quaker events, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship services and Jewish Synagogues.

In 2015 Bliss Hippy continued to play more and more regional shows in Missouri, as well as the Southwest, Midwest, and International Folk Alliance meetings, and embarked on an their most ambitious tour yet from April until August covering 12 states from California to Maine.

In an effort to help support the folk music community and all the amazing touring musicians, Bliss Hippy made a conscious effort to begin serving as both musicians and presenters in 2015, hosting Private Showcase Rooms at the Folk Alliance Region Midwest and Folk Alliance International annual meetings. They also began hosting a house concert series in Rolla – the “Bliss Hippy Room at Inspirational Center”, hosting a few concerts each year.

The Bliss Hippy room has grown to become one of the most popular rooms at Folk Alliance meetings, due to the preparation and loving care the couple puts into hosting; and, in fact, The Bliss Hippy room was awarded the “Best Private Showcase Room” at the 2017 Folk Alliance Region Midwest meeting. Bliss Hippy also continues to tour nationally every summer, and they are planning to record a new album soon, selecting from the many songs they’ve written since their last album was released.

When they aren't playing music, Richard hangs out at Missouri University of Science and Technology where he is a Professor of Information Science and Technology and Maureen enjoys her retirement as a Doctor of Chiropractic and Medical Acupuncture. She also does much outreach work in the Buddhist community, in particular in support of Heartwood Refuge and Retreat Center in Hendersonville, NC. When they are home, Maureen and Richard find themselves walking through the Ozarks woods or floating on Ozark streams, often bringing a banjo and fiddle along to serenade nature, as they age peacefully and happily.