

Paint Branch Creek, featuring musicians Eric Maring, Allison Hughes, Greg Heelan, Patrick Lynch and Arun Ivatury, with lyrics by Eric Olson, is an acoustic musical collaboration rooted firmly in Americana. The group's performances at venues including Milkboy Arthouse and the New Deal Cafe and at house concerts throughout the region have been described as "amazing" and "exceedingly beautiful," featuring songs with a "soulful vibe" that "sound like long-forgotten songs from the past."

Paint Branch Creek's distinct sound features rich three-, four-, and even five-part vocal harmonies that evoke deep emotion and float over strummed and picked guitars, mandolin, banjo, and fiddle. The group crafts memorable music that simultaneously honors tradition and treads new ground.

Lyrically, Paint Branch Creek's original songs tell stories that conjure visions of America past and present, replete with classic themes of the open road, love and loss, deep contemplation, and thrilling adventure.

Paint Branch Creek has created deep connections with its enthusiastic audiences and earned loyal fans. Engaging and personable on stage, the group creates shows that are thoroughly entertaining, deeply moving, and not to be missed.

The band's debut album, *In the Home of the Brave*, was released in spring 2018.

Individual Bios

Eric Maring (*Guitar, Banjo, Harmonica, Vocals*): Traveling, exploring, understanding, and celebrating the joy of being alive have always served as the heart of Eric Maring's musical life and songs. An accomplished performer, songwriter, guitarist, dance caller, tabla player, early-childhood music educator, and father of two young musicians, Eric Maring has striven for over 20 years to guide audiences of all ages to peak emotional experiences and community bonding through music. In that time he has made four major recordings - his 2001 debut solo release *Birdsong* (praised as one of the top local releases of the year by the Washington Post); his 2004 release *Penguins Rock the World!*; and his collaborative efforts with Jawbone (Amikaeyla, Eric, and Greg Heelan) including the exuberant and highly acclaimed all-ages record *Holy Guacamole!* In the years since his first release, he has had the honor of finding himself onstage at the Birchmere, Iota Cafe, Blues Alley, HR-57, the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center, and the Takoma Park Folk Festival as well as many schools in the Washington, DC area. Influences: Zakir Hussain and all Indian classical music, Tommy Emmanuel, Led Zeppelin, Indigo Girls, Pink Floyd.

Allison Hughes (*Vocals*) is a performer, director and teacher based in College Park, MD. She has been singing since her childhood in Virginia, going on to study vocal performance at Shenandoah Conservatory and the University of Central Florida. Along with her vocal work for Paint Branch Creek, Allison appears as a classical soloist and presents recitals in the DC area. Allison maintains a private teaching studio and currently serves as music director for the College Park Chorale, a 60-member adult community chorus. She founded and co-leads the fun and unusual (*un*)choir, a pop-up community sing, and directs staged productions of youth and adult community musical theater.

Greg Heelan (*Guitar, Vocals*) has been making music since his early youth. His ability as a deeply emotive singer began as a featured soloist in various choral groups, then as front man in the 1990s for the New York based rock band Basil Phomene. After relocating to the DC metropolitan area in 1997, he found a kindred spirit in regional singer/songwriter Eric Maring, launching a now-20 year collaboration. Along with Eric, in the early 2000's Greg joined forces with singer Amikaeyla to create the regional all-ages group "Jawbone," whose record *Holy Guacamole!* has been a family favorite for over 10 years. Contributing vocals on multiple albums over the years, Greg has honed his talents as a solid harmonizer and lead vocalist in the tradition of CSNY, Billy Joel, and other vocally strong rock groups. Today he lives in Washington DC, where he restores and remodels historic homes.

Patrick Lynch (*Guitar, Vocals*) is a native of Indiana who moved to College Park in 2011 when he took a job at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. One of the great privileges of that move has been the chance to meet and play music with the members of Paint Branch Creek and other friends in the neighborhood. He likes music from bluegrass to hip-hop to classic rock, but thinks no one writes songs better than John Prine.

Arun Ivatury (*Mandolin, Violin, Vocals*), New York native and jack of many musical trades, began his musical adventures on the violin at age 5. Over time he has explored other sounds, including saxophone, voice, and most recently the mandolin, and sought out encounters with classical, pop, jazz, choral, rock, and folk music. Commissions from the College Park Chorale launched Arun into composing, including the well-received original choral work "Envoys of Beauty." In addition to playing mandolin, electric mandolin and violin for Paint Branch Creek, Arun sings in the College Park Chorale and College Park Chamber Singers, co-leads the pop-up (*un*)choir community sing, and performs locally as a tenor and classical violinist.

Eric Olson (*Lyricist*) grew up in western Massachusetts, in the Northampton area. He also has family roots in Minnesota. His lyrics often reflect the joys and sorrows present in the history of New England and Midwestern communities. He has worked for then-Congressman Bernie Sanders, for the Takoma Park-based FairVote, and for the Sierra Club. He served as a member of the Prince George's County Council from 2006-2014. Eric is now Executive Director of the College Park City-University Partnership, a community development corporation supported by the University of Maryland and the City of College Park to build an even greater "college town" environment. He first started writing lyrics in March 2015. Influences: Bob Dylan, the Grateful Dead, Joni Mitchell, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, John Prine, Emmylou Harris, Indigo Girls, early Bluegrass, Beatles, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams, John Denver, James Taylor, Tom Rush, Bruce Springsteen, Paul Simon, Dar Williams.