

= The Greencards =

The Greencards are a progressive bluegrass band that formed in Austin , Texas , and are currently based in Nashville , Tennessee . The band was founded in 2003 in Texas by Eamon McLoughlin , an Englishman , and Australians Kym Warner and Carol Young . The musicians originally performed in local Austin bars , and soon found increasing acclaim . They have released one independent album , *Movin ' On* , in 2003 , and two albums , *Weather and Water* , and *Viridian* , on the Dualtone record label . Their fourth album , *Fascination* , was released on Sugar Hill in 2009 . Their fifth album , " *Brick* " , 2011 , was self @-@ produced with the direct support of their fans . Pre @-@ production donors were recognized with their names inscribed on the " bricks " that make @-@ up the cover art .

Their debut album , *Movin ' On* , was the recipient of local Texas awards and charted on Americana radio stations . Country Music Television named their follow @-@ up *Weather and Water* as one of the ten best bluegrass albums of 2005 , and The Greencards were invited to tour with Bob Dylan and Willie Nelson in the same year . *Viridian* would go on to take the number one position on the Billboard magazine 's Bluegrass Music Chart , making The Greencards the first international band to ever do so . *Viridian* was a critically praised album , and was nominated for Best Country Album by the Australian Recording Industry Association . The track " *Mucky the Duck* " from *Viridian* was nominated for a Grammy Award at the 50th Grammy Awards .

The Greencards are noted for their playing of American bluegrass with a worldly feel , and for their incorporation of other genres of music . Often labeled as part of , and said to be representative of , the " newgrass " movement , they draw from Irish folk music , gypsy music , rock ' n ' roll , folk balladry , and Latin American musical sources . The Greencards ' sound has been compared to progressive American folk rock , and they have been credited with helping to expand bluegrass music .

Eamon McLoughlin left the band in December 2009 , and currently resides in Nashville TN . Carl Miner , originally from Oregon , joined the group in May 2010 , playing acoustic guitar . Carl won the 1999 National Flatpicking Championship at the Walnut Valley Festival , and currently resides in Nashville , TN .

= = History = =

= = = Formation = = =

The Greencards were initially composed of two Australians , Kym Warner on mandolin and Carol Young on bass , and an Englishman , Eamon McLoughlin on fiddle . Raised in South London , McLoughlin began to perform country music shows with his family on weekends , influenced by George Jones , George Strait , and Ricky Skaggs . Born to Irish parents , McLoughlin 's father was head of a London @-@ based country band . At age nine , McLoughlin moved away from piano lessons to play fiddle , and performed with his father 's band . McLoughlin had earlier relocated from Brighton to Austin in 1997 , after leaving Sussex University with a degree in Politics and American Studies . Trained in London studying Royal Schools of Music Grades before emigrating , McLoughlin also toured with the Asylum Street Spankers , Austin Lounge Lizards , Bruce Robison and Ray Wylie Hubbard after arriving in the United States .

Prior to the founding of The Greencards , Young won the Australian Independent Country Artist of the Year award in 2000 , and had recorded two No. 1 Australian @-@ charted country music singles . Young was a singer in Outback country bands and acts , including Gina Jeffreys . Young was previously nominated as " Best Female Vocalist " by the Country Music Association of Australia , and won the Australian independent country artist of the year award in 2000 due in part to her No. 1 singles " *True Blue Fool* " and " *Part of the Past* " .

Warner was an aspiring bluegrass musician ( which was unusual in Australia ) after inheriting the music from his father , an early Australian bluegrass pioneer . The winner of the Australian National

Bluegrass Mandolin Championship for four consecutive years , Warner had toured with country music artists including Gina Jeffreys , and with Young in Kasey Chambers 's band . Young and Warner knew each other previously , and according to Warner , had been drawn to bluegrass and American roots music through an appreciation of George Jones and Merle Haggard . Warner and Young made the decision to emigrate to America to pursue musical careers in that country , after they met . Young and Warner later lived together in Sydney while trying to find work in the moribund Australian bluegrass scene . After leaving Australia , they spent time in West Texas before relocating to Austin .

On an early trip the pair took to Austin , Warner and Young met McLoughlin at a recording session . Warner was producing an album for the recording artist Bill Atkins and found they needed a fiddle player , which led to the recruitment of McLoughlin . Initially the immigrants came to know one another through their mutual love of Monty Python , Benny Hill , and Fawlty Towers . They began to have jam sessions afterwards and there was evident chemistry between the trio , which led to their writing songs together . They named themselves The Greencards in honor of the fact that all three band members carried United States green cards . They eventually began to perform shows locally in Austin to finance the recording of what would become their debut album , 2003 's *Movin ' On* . In the process , they became one of the most popular musical groups in Austin . Representative of an emerging " newgrass " movement , The Greencards ' acoustic sound was said to incorporate eclectic influences from Irish traditional , Romani gypsy , and Latin American musical sources .

Their first performance together as a band was at the Austin Irish pub , Mother Egan 's . Given a noon to 3 pm Central time slot , they surprisingly began to fill the pub with patrons week after week . Their fans at Mother Egan 's soon began calling them the " Bluegrass Bunch " . Several months later , The Greencards began performing an additional three to five times per week in Austin , in addition to their Mother Egan 's Sunday show . Warner credited the frantic pace of their performance schedule during their Austin formation to their cohesion as a group and with driving them to create more new original music . During their time performing locally in Austin , they toured with various local Texas musicians , including Robert Earl Keen . Warner said that during their early career performing together , audiences would always assume they were American musicians until they finally spoke between songs , revealing their English and Australian accents .

Mario Tarradell of WFAA @-@ TV news called the idea of an American bluegrass band composed of two Australians and an Englishman not as " outrageous " as it may seem . He quoted McLoughlin in an interview :

The ironic thing is that we grew up listening to primarily American music and fell in love with American music . I love country music . I grew up with George Jones and Charley Pride and Jim Reeves . All that stuff was playing in the house . That 's what I wanted to seek out . That 's what I wanted to play . Carol was into Tammy Wynette . Trev Warner is Kym 's dad , and he was the first person to bring bluegrass music to Australia .

= = = *Movin ' On* ( 2003 ? 2004 ) = = =

In 2003 , The Greencards recorded and self @-@ released *Movin ' On* , their debut album , which sold 10 @,@ 000 copies at shows and online , and entered the top five on the Americana radio charts . Pat Flynn , one of the band members of the New Grass Revival , guested on the recording of *Movin ' On* as a session guitarist , and would return to do so again on *Weather and Water* . The album was said to break past traditional rules of bluegrass music by integrating a jam @-@ band mindset while blending classical folk balladry and rock ' n ' roll into the sound . Contrasting with that appraisal , the album was also cited as a traditional and successful " lo @-@ fi " approach to bluegrass music . Critics noted the virtuoso solos on mandolin , fiddle , and guitar on *Movin ' On* .

The Greencards gained more fans and became known by name quickly after the release of *Movin ' On* . The band was credited with performing the most energetic sets during the course of the 2004 Austin City Limits Music Festival , were said to bring a global sound to bluegrass , and ? by drawing on influences such as Bob Dylan and The Beatles ? were pushing the genre 's boundaries . Their live show during this period was ranked by the Houston Chronicle in the top five nights of live music

for the year in 2004 .

Movin ' On earned The Greencards the 2004 Austin Music Award for Best New Band . Several months after the awards the band was signed by Dualtone Records and began work on their next album , Weather and Water . The label re @-@ released Movin ' On at the beginning of 2005 , generating still more airplay and sales .

= = = Weather and Water ( 2005 ? 2006 ) = = =

Their second Dualtone album , Weather and Water , was released on June 28 , 2005 . Warned stated that during the recording sessions , Dualtone Records let them record what they wanted , with no interference or changes requested . In a review of Weather and Water in The Washington Post , it was noted that on this album , unlike their debut , the focus was on the music supporting lyrics , rather than the blues virtuosity of Movin ' On . All three members of the band sang on Weather and Water , but Young 's voice was noted for its " dreamy , haunting quality " . Their music through the Weather and Water album had been called Celtic @-@ influenced and bluegrass @-@ flavored by John Lehndorff of the Rocky Mountain News , but he noted that the band had a distinctly American sound despite their overseas origins . In the spring of 2005 , The Greencards performed at South by Southwest in Austin for the first time , and afterwards made their debut at the prestigious MerleFest .

Jason Gonulsen of Glide Magazine noted that The Greencards ' debut Movin ' On didn 't capture the band 's live energy , but that Weather and Water overcame this , and was one of 2005 's best bluegrass albums . The music video for the band 's single " Time " from Weather and Water received heavy airplay and rotation on Country Music Television . " Time " was described as the centerpiece track of Weather and Water . Weather and Water was also cited as expanding the boundaries of the bluegrass genre .

Country Music Television named Weather and Water one of its ten favorite bluegrass albums of the year , saying , " At the nexus of bluegrass , country and pop , this charming trio immediately win over such diverse audiences in concert . Luckily , their winning personality translates to this disc ? even with several melancholy , yet melodic , songs . Not for nothing did Bob Dylan and Willie Nelson choose them to open their summer tour of minor league ballparks . " The Greencards were the opening act for Dylan and Nelson on their 2005 summer tour . Kym Warner credits Gary Paczosa , an engineer who worked on Weather and Water , with helping them get the opportunity to tour with Dylan and Nelson . Paczosa had previously served as an engineer on recordings for Alison Krauss , Nickel Creek and Dolly Parton . " He makes the best @-@ sounding acoustic records in the world " , according to Warner . Throughout 2005 they toured extensively with Dylan and Nelson , and afterwards toured with Tommy Emmanuel . During the summer segment of the 2005 tour with Nelson and Dylan , Kym Warner wanted to have the opportunity to pick Dylan 's brain about music and performing . However , Warner did not get to spend much time alone with Dylan during their time on the road together . Dylan later told Warner at the end of the tour , " You 'll be fine from now on . "

At the end of 2005 , The Greencards relocated from Austin to Nashville , Tennessee to be closer to their production company and its staff . Coinciding with their move to Nashville and work on their second album Weather and Water , the changes in location and sound were observed by critics to be a deliberate move from the jam @-@ style of their debut album Movin ' On to instead concentrate on Americana @-@ focused music . By 2006 , The Greencards had an annual slot at Merlefest , held yearly in Wilkesboro , North Carolina . The band was nominated in the Americana Music Association Awards for 2006 in the category of New / Emerging Artist of the Year , winning the award . In December 2006 , their tour van rolled over on a patch of ice after leaving a performance in Bryan , Texas , on the way back to Austin , but with no serious injuries .

= = = Viridian ( 2007 ? 2008 ) = = =

On their previous albums , The Greencards had individually recorded their musical tracks

separately in isolation booths of recording studios . For Viridian , however , the bandmembers recorded their album together in real time in an open room , which was said to be a factor in creating a spontaneous feel for some of the album . Most of the songs on Viridian are sung by Young , and all of the tracks on Viridian were written by The Greencards , with the exception of " Travel On " , which was penned by Kim Richey of Nashville . Their sound , through Viridian , was likened to the Canadian alternative country band The Duhks . After its release , Viridian claimed the No. 1 position on Billboard magazine 's Bluegrass Music Chart . Doug Lancio , a producer who had previously worked with Patty Griffin , was said to have been a positive factor in the success of Viridian . Prior to the 2007 album , Lancio had not previously worked with The Greencards . The Greencards are the first international musical act to ever reach No. 1 on the Bluegrass Music Chart .

In a review of Viridian , Embo Blake of Hybrid Magazine noted Carol Young 's vocal skill , as she " effortlessly diphthongs cadence " on the track " Waiting On The Night " . According to ABC News in Dallas / Fort Worth , the album has a traditional bluegrass core , with a worldly flavor . Bruce Elder of the Sydney Morning Herald called Viridian a " tour de force " .

In the wake of Viridian , The Greencards have been internationally referred to as one of the most popular Americana musical acts in the United States . Bruce Elder went on to say that the band may , after Viridian , be the best country music performers to ever come out of Australia . In 2007 , they were nominated for Best Country Album at the 21st Australian Recording Industry Association awards , ultimately losing out to Keith Urban . In December 2007 , it was announced that their song " Mucky the Duck " from Viridian was nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Country Instrumental Performance at the 50th Grammy Awards , but ultimately lost to Brad Paisley 's " Throttleneck " . Written by Warner , " Mucky the Duck " was inspired by one of the band 's favorite Houston musical venues , The Mucky Duck . Eamon McLoughlin is a regular blogger for Country Music Television . After the Grammy Awards , he wrote about the band 's experience at the event , noting that despite not winning , the bar had been raised for their next album .

The Greencards announced on their website in August 2008 that they had returned to the studio to record their fourth album with producer Jay Joyce . In September 2008 , again via their website , they announced that they signed with Sugar Hill Records for their fourth album , to be released in spring 2009 .

= = = Fascination ( from 2009 ) = = =

On April 21 , 2009 , The Greencards released their fourth studio album , Fascination . Warner describes the album as " their most focused " work . On their previous albums , the three band members had individually put forward ideas for the music , until enough cohered into the finished work . For Fascination , he says they put aside their individual pride to create a stronger work . The years of touring experience The Greencards have accumulated since their earliest work has helped them , as well . Referring to when they formed the band , he said , " We just played in Austin . We just wrote probably anything , which was the only stuff we knew , which was more of a traditional thing . But since then , we 've had five or six years of touring , all of the experiences , all of the people you meet . We 've been so fortunate to play at all of these festivals which have a really eclectic form of music styles . "

According to Young , the music on Fascination was a progression for the band , and a challenge for them . Comparing their prior work to the new album , she said , " They 're probably a bit more bluegrass @-@ influenced than this one here . While we still have the bluegrass and roots music influences , we really wanted to push ourselves harder on this one , something a bit more challenging to play live . " She described their music through their fourth album as having evolved , explaining that it began as traditional roots and bluegrass , but after six years is " our own little sound " . The track , " The Crystal Merchant " , was nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Country Instrumental Performance .

In 2009 , The Greencards continued to tour , performed again at MerleFest , the Strawberry Park Bluegrass Festival in Preston , CT , and were on the bill for Lollapalooza .

== Buy A Brick campaign ==

On November 8 , 2010 The Greencards announced that they will self @-@ finance the production on their next album , set for May 2011 , rather than taking an advance from a record company . The Buy A Brick campaign is selling a package of an advance copy of the final CD , a digital image of the album artwork , video updates of the recording of the album and the subscriber 's name ( up to twenty characters ) on the album artwork . Subscriptions are either \$ 100 or \$ 200 US with the more expensive package getting the album one week earlier and the subscriber 's name on the front of the CD package .

== Musical style and influences ==

Considered by critics to be part of the progressive bluegrass ( " newgrass " ) musical school , The Greencards draw from a wide variety of musical influences , ranging from Bob Dylan and the Beatles to the Celtic tone of Irish traditional music , gypsy themes , and Latin sounds . Despite the wide array of influences that shape their music , The Greencards have always maintained a distinctively Americana sound . While the various sounds that influence their work are always detectable , none ever dominate the band 's music . Jim Abbott , of the Tribune News Service , described The Greencards as polished , " earthy , charming roots music with a sophisticated sheen " , but noted that some bluegrass purists may miss the vocal idiosyncrasies that can be found on other acts such as the Del McCoury Band . Their appeal has been attributed to both their " instrumental dexterity " as well as the manner in which they both revere and flaunt bluegrass conventions . The progressive nature of The Greencards ' bluegrass sound has been compared to Nickel Creek and Alison Krauss & Union Station .

The Greencards ' work on *Movin ' On* had a looser , jam @-@ based feeling to it , which they later firmed into a more polished sound after relocating to Nashville from Austin for *Weather and Water* . John T. Davis in *No Depression Magazine* stated The Greencards ' best work on *Weather and Water* contained a " stillness " , which he felt contrasted with the speed and " frantic " pace of some of the songs on *Movin ' On* . While other critics had mentioned The Greencards in the context of jam bands , Davis went on to say that he felt the band was not one , and that they favored a leaner and " clean " sound driven more by Celtic roots .

During their 2005 tour with Dylan and Nelson , Buzz McClain of *The Washington Post* believed that The Greencards play traditional American music better than some Americans do , because of their deep respect for bluegrass and the Americana sound . According to David McPherson in *Bluegrass Unlimited* magazine , the band 's three @-@ part harmonies evoke the soul sounds of Gospel music . Kym Warner has said that Robert Earl Keen , Kelly Willis , and Patty Griffin were key influences musically in The Greencards 's sound during their time in Austin , with the previously unreleased Griffin song " What You Are " being covered on their album *Weather and Water* . The recordings on *Viridian* , in particular the songs " River of Sand " , " Waiting on the Night " and " When I Was in Love With You " , were said to evoke the sounds of progressive folk rock that emerged in the 1960s . In *Nashville Scene* , Edd Hurt noted the eclectic tone of the band 's overall body of recordings , and believed that their albums belonged to the tradition of singer @-@ songwriter musicians .

Their musical appeal to fans has been attributed to both their " instrumental dexterity " as well as the manner in which they both revere and flaunt bluegrass conventions . Naila Francis described The Greencards 's sound as having a mellow tone , with " tender ballads and yarns " in their songs , but punctuated by bursts of energetic musical restlessness . *Country Music Television* in particular noted their melancholy but melodic sound . The Greencards have described their sound as " high energy acoustic music " .

== Discography ==