

FULL BIO

...the voice of an angel with a soul to match...

Monica Taylor earned the nickname, *The Cimarron Songbird*, by Jimmy LaFave and Bob Childers thanks to her distinctive singing style and her home near the Cimarron River. Her songs, written from the heart, are rooted in her Cherokee/Scottish/Irish heritage and explore home, the red dirt landscape and lifestyle, love and yearning. With a sound like Emmylou Harris and a slight yodel in her voice, Monica captivates you her vocals.

When Monica enrolled at Oklahoma State University in 1989, she found her way into the budding Red Dirt music scene. As a young bluegrass and country singer/songwriter, she began playing and collaborating with the godfather of Red Dirt music, Bob Childers, and befriended musicians Jimmy LaFave, Red Dirt Rangers, The Medicine Show, Tom Skinner, Greg Jacobs and other now-legendary musical folk. Her musical story, like so many, started in central Oklahoma, and it would prove to be a wellspring for her career.

After a stint of rugged living and music-making in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado in the early nineties, Monica returned to Stillwater in 1996 and landed at The Farm—the legendary place where so many songwriters in the Red Dirt music scene dwelled, literally and figuratively. True to her gypsy spirit, Monica made a happy home under a tarp stretched between a tree and an old barn, with her trusted German Shepard/Lab mix, Rosebud, as her constant companion. For the next few years, Monica made music with a litany of musicians who passed through The Farm including members of The Great Divide, Jason Boland and the Stragglers, Cody Canada and the Departed, Stoney LaRue, Brandon Jenkins and scores of other songwriters, young and young-at-heart.

In 2010, Monica began The Cherokee Maidens & Sycamore Swing, a Western swing trio with former Dixie Chick, Robyn Macy, and Kentucky-rooted, Lauren White. Their style has been described as ‘Bob Wills meets up with The Andrews Sisters,’ all bound by the roots of bluegrass and a knack for heavenly harmonies. The group released “Cherokee Maiden” in 2011 and performed at music festivals around the region from 2010-2020. “Ride Again” and “My Dixie Darlin” brought them acclaim from the western music societies and were nominated for Album of the Year at the Academy of Western Artists Awards. Two original songs co-written by Monica and Robyn were nominated for Song of the Year at the same time.

Monica has also released a series of albums featuring collaborations with her many music friends including “Cimmaron Valley Girl” in 2006 and “Cotton Shirt” in 2009. Before her solo career, she was part of a popular Folk duo called “The Farm Couple” that toured across the southern states and the southwest region, and recorded three albums of original songs that were a mix of The Louvin Brothers, Hank Williams, and mountain-styled songs.

In 2012, Monica started the annual Cimarron Concert Series where she hosts acclaimed songwriters from around the country in the sanctuary of the Old Church in Perkins, Okla.

When the pandemic began in 2020, Monica saw the opportunity to fulfill a longtime dream of documenting and recording an anthology of Red Dirt songs featuring the many musicians she wrote and played with over the years. Over two years she worked with engineer/producer and now-husband, Travis Fite, to record “A Red Dirt Ramble: A Tribute to the Pioneers of Red Dirt Music Dirt” at The Ripley Farm recording studio in Lone Chimney, Okla.—the home of the late producer and lead man of The Tractors, Steve Ripley.

With over 55 guest vocalists and musicians from the Oklahoma and Texas Red Dirt scene, “A Red Dirt Ramble” pays tribute to the older songwriters who created the Red Dirt genre—a melting pot of styles including bluegrass, Tulsa Sound, Cajun, Western swing, country, and of course, gospel. These Red Dirt innovators started swapping songs with one another outside of Stillwater, Okla. at a hallowed old farm where many of the musicians lived from 1979 until the farmhouse burned down in the early 2000s. Many have since passed away, which is what spurred Monica to capture their legacy through the voices of her many music friends made over the years. Volume 1 of this anthology will be released in November 2022, with the Volume 2 release coming in Spring 2023.

She has simultaneously recorded her own new album, “Trains, Rivers, & Trails” which has a few of the same key instrumentalists that play on the Red Dirt Ramble recording: John Fullbright, Roger Ray, Casey van Beek, Jake Lynn, Jared Tyler, and Travis Fite. This will be released July 2022 in the US and in Europe. She is booking a northwest tour for late summer 2022 and a tour in Europe later this year and spring 2023.

SHORT BIO

Monica Taylor earned the nickname, *The Cherokee Songbird*, for her distinctive singing style, her Cherokee heritage and her home near the Cimarron River in Oklahoma. For more than three decades she has been writing songs from the heart and has recorded and performed with a litany of famed Red Dirt, country and bluegrass musicians including Jimmy LaFave, John Fullbright, Jared Tyler, Robin Macy, and the godfather of Red Dirt, Bob Childers.

Monica has worked with many performers on stages across the country. Garrison Keillor, Asleep at the Wheel, the Nitty Gritty Dirtband, Ellis Paul, Sam Baker, Keith Carradine and others. With a sound like Emmylou Harris and a slight yodel in her voice, Monica captivates you her vocals.

MONICA TAYLOR & HER RED DIRT RAMBLERS

"I feel blessed to have performed with really fine musicians and songwriters over the years! If you attend one of my shows you will see these friends alongside me on stage - as a full band or 3 or 4 piece."

Monica's band is made up of some of the cream of the Oklahoma crop of professional musicians Monica on guitar or bass, Travis Fite on lead guitar, Jared Tyler on dobro or banjo, Shelby Eicher on fiddle and mandolin, and Jordan Hehl on upright bass.