

Artist Bio

Rudy Cortese | Rudy's Bluegrass Revue

Rudy Cortese – a singer, songwriter and composer from Cortland, NY. He moved to Arizona at 8 years old.

He is a five-time winner of the Four Corner States Banjo Championships, and also an Arizona state banjo champion, as well as winning numerous contests in the southwest region. Rudy's invigorating charisma on stage and off is undeniable and his energy is passionate and infectious. His original songs come from the heart and from a love for nature. His presence and sound are all his own, reflecting the road he has traveled, "a long, tumultuous, toilsome road, not a smooth one paved with gold." Rudy captures the essence of our connectedness by engaging the audience with his powerful songwriting abilities and arrangements, inviting the listener to take a journey into the life experiences that we all share.

Rudy started playing banjo at the age of 12, and composing music at 17 years old. He is a multi-instrumentalist proficient on banjo and mandolin as well as the guitar, and occasionally playing fiddle. He has over 30 years of experience playing music in the Southwest and currently resides in Leicester, North Carolina.

Rudy has been instructing students on banjo since he was 15 years old, influencing many players, Trevor Smith of Wood and Wire being one of them. Rudy has played banjo with the Cherryholmes family band before Cia Cherryholmes became a master of the five-string banjo. He helped put together a local favorite bluegrass band Crucial County, which launched Jesse Stockman and Jess Barry into positions in Doyle Lawson's band.

Rudy has played banjo in several different groups. One of the bands was a favorite award-winning group Cadillac Mountain, steeped in traditional high energy bluegrass. In Savitur, an Indian/jazz fusion band, he added his version of sitar sounds and compositions from the banjo. The Haymarket Squares, a Phoenix-based band that sings protest songs in a punkgrass style. He played with the late James Reams and the Barnstormers in a residency in Las Vegas and a showcase at IBMA. He has played local shows with Greg Blake, Nick Chandler and Mike Mitchell.

His latest project is his own band Rudy's Bluegrass Revue, an eclectic mix of original music from bluegrass, country, classical, folk and blues, to familiar melodies of our time.

Adding harmony and lead vocals, tenor guitar and cello is Elizabeth Kronlage. Together, Rudy and Elizabeth won the duet championship at the Four Corner States Bluegrass Festival in 2019. On upright bass is Chris Carter, a native of the Blue Ridge Mountains, born and raised in Madison County, and steeped in traditional bluegrass and mountain

music his whole life. Together they make the trio that is Rudy's Bluegrass Revue, an upbeat positive vibe of music flowing your way.