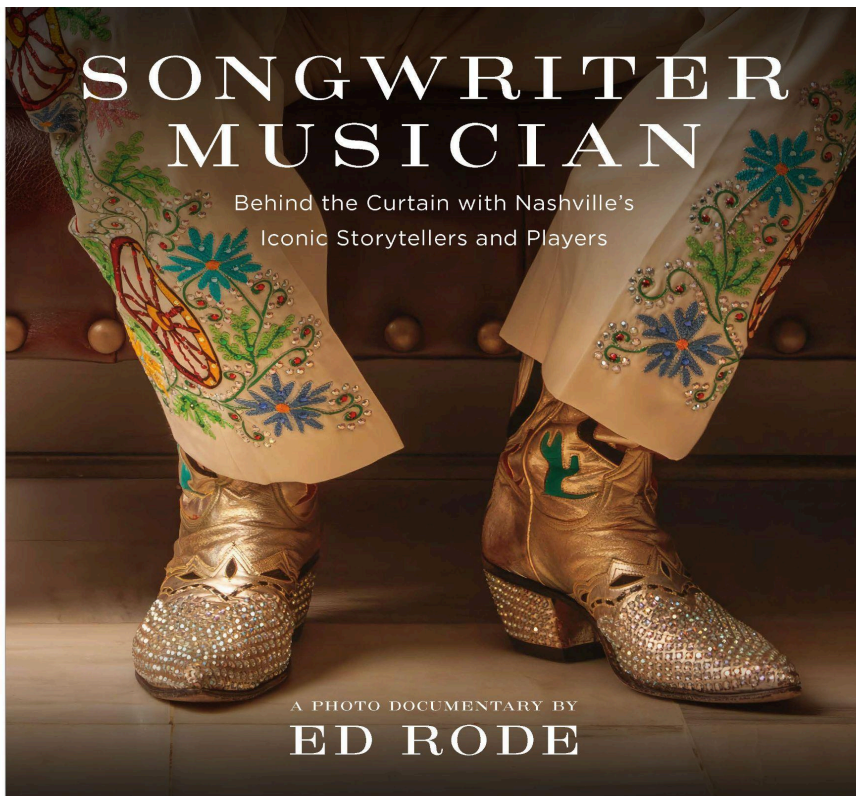


NEWS RELEASE

‘Songwriter Musician,’ a stunning photo documentary of Nashville's brightest stars, songwriters and session greats, takes you inside Nashville's music scene.

From Chet Atkins to Jack White, Patsy Montana to Taylor Swift and Johnny Cash to Jelly Roll, this collection spans generations and genres. For respected industry photographer Ed Rode, capturing the essence of these iconic artists has been a 30-year labor of love.



NASHVILLE, TN – An uncommonly intimate storytelling retrospective, ***Songwriter Musician*** documents three decades of Nashville's stars, songwriters and session greats at decisive, unguarded moments in their careers.

Conceived and compiled by veteran pop culture photographer **Ed Rode**, the photo documentary book is being released today.

Inside its pages, a teenaged Taylor Swift spins and smiles, beaming and bracing as superstardom barrels her

way. “I Fall to Pieces” songwriter Hank Cochran stretches back on a well-worn hammock, in the exact spot where he searches the sky for timeless hits. Michael Rhodes wraps his arms around his favorite bass, a tool that’s anchored sessions for greats from Johnny Cash to Elton John.

The subjects span generations and genres, each portrait precisely capturing the individual, their humanity and their artistry. Rode's accompanying personal stories and artist biographies place each moment, and each subject, into the broader story of Music City.

"When I started this photographic journey, I realized early on that I was witnessing musical moments few people get to experience," Rode says. "It felt important to capture and collect them for generations to come. To me, this book is a window into the soul of Nashville's music community."

The project — a tour through Nashville's creative core, framed by Rode's lens — took root in 1990, inspired and encouraged by legendary guitarist, producer and label executive Chet Atkins. Rode, then working as a photojournalist for the daily *Nashville Banner*, met Atkins on assignment and struck up a friendship. He told Atkins about a hopeful but blurry vision for a far-reaching, pointedly personal documentary project.

"This is a town of songwriters and session musicians," Rode remembers Atkins telling him. "Go photograph them because they're usually in the background. People out there hear their work, but don't know who they are."

Atkins opened doors, introducing Rode to other legends who'd built Music Row's bedrock, from Harlan Howard and Curly Putman to "Cowboy" Jack Clement. Rode marked the moments, and the vision for *Songwriter Musician* came into focus.

"One of the greatest figures in country music helped me forge partnerships and foster friendships," Rode says. "What Chet Atkins contributed to Nashville's story is incalculable. What he contributed to this project is just as immeasurable."

"Some of the faces in this book may be unfamiliar beyond Music Row, some are among the most celebrated in the world," Rode says. "Every one of them adds their own color and contrast to Nashville's music community. I hope this book brings it all into view — from the humanity behind the superstars to the history-changing contributions of people behind the scenes."

Songwriter Musician features images from Tennessee, is printed in Tennessee, and is available at EdRode.com

About Ed Rode

Ed Rode is a nationally recognized photographer based in Nashville, Tennessee. His three-decade career in visual storytelling encompasses music, architecture, travel and corporate photography.

His work has appeared in numerous national publications; in exhibits from the Nashville International Airport to the legendary Bluebird Cafe — whose tradition of spotlighting

songwriter portraits was initiated by Rode; in documentary books helmed by *Rolling Stone*; and on album covers for artists including Willie Nelson, The Chicks and Peter Frampton. Rode has a master's degree in Photo Communications from Ohio University. In addition to his career as a full-time professional photographer, he is also an instructor in the Journalism and Mass Communications Department at Murray State University.



Ed Rode

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Author Interviews

Ed Rode
Author + Photographer
Ed Rode Photography, LLC
ed@edrode.work

Photographs

Chris Sommerdyke
Project Manager
Ed Rode Photography, LLC
chris@edrode.com

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