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Billy Reid Revives Shindig at Home in Florence With The Kills, Gillian Welch, and His Family and Friends

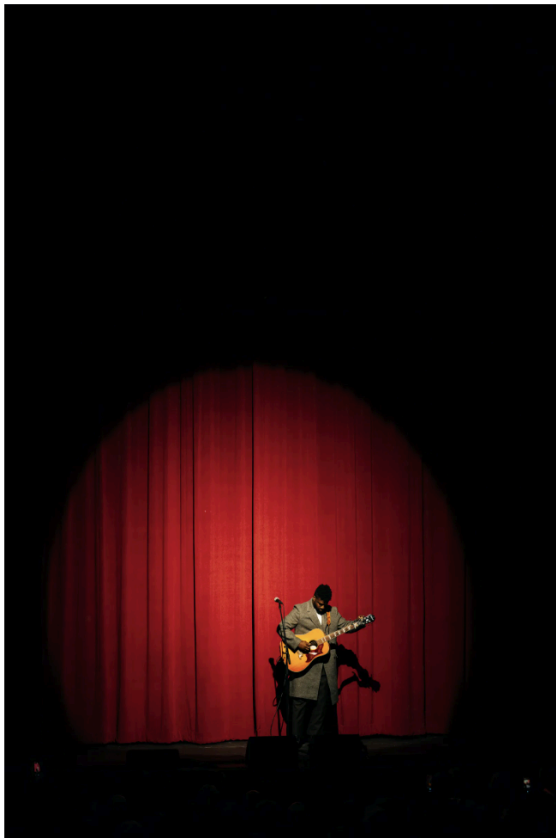


Billy and Jeanne Reid with their children Abba, Walton, and Maffie. Photo: Caleb Canales / Courtesy of Billy Reid

Shindig originated 15 years ago, as a way for [Florence, Alabama-based designer](#) Billy Reid to shine a spotlight on his hometown and offer proof that fashion—and fashion brands—can thrive far from New York and Los Angeles. There was no doubting it as customers from Nashville, St. Louis, Houston, and beyond gathered at the Billy Reid flagship store to shop, sip cocktails, and check out an installation of drawings by The Kills' Alison Mosshart. It was the kickoff event for a weekend of music and food that culminated in a runway show celebrating Reid's 20th year in business.

"The community energized me," Reid said in an interview about his early instincts to gather people in Florence. "We have this unbelievable legacy of music, we have the [Frank Lloyd Wright-designed] Rosenbaum House, and we have this incredible downtown that was preserved. I believed that if we could get people here they'd have a good feeling about omit. It was different than what other folks were doing were doing, and people would talk about it." Reid's annual party put Florence on the fashion map, but the region has been a destination for the musically inclined since at least the 1960s.

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Abraham Alexander: Adam Katz Sinding 2024



Walton Reid.

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Billy joined Walton, who performed his own original material.



David Rawlings and Gillian Welch. Adam Katz Sinding 2024

Just across the Tennessee River from Florence are a pair of world famous recording studios, where Shindig out-of-towners were treated to tours. Aretha Franklin recorded “Do Right Woman, Do Right Man” and “I Never Loved a Man (The Way That I Love You)” at Fame Studios, among many other chart-topping hits, and the greezy, rhythm section-forward sound of Muscle Shoals Sound and its house band The Swampers, was so peerless when it opened in the late 1960s it attracted the biggest recording stars of the era, The Rolling Stones, Cher, and Paul Simon included. In fact, it’s still luring them today—Lana Del Rey’s console tape was pinned to the isolation booth wall at Muscle Shoals. (Album forthcoming)

The weekend’s live music spanned genres. After free-to-the-public outdoor performances by Sistastrings and The Brook & the Bluff in Wilson Park on night one, The Kills killed with a raucous yet intimate performance at the Shoals Theater. On night two, singer-songwriter Abraham Alexander played as friends modeled the 20th anniversary collection. Later Gillian Welch and David Rawlings sang one heartbreaker after another, “The Way It Will Be” being the most heartbreakingly lovely. Those who came to eat weren’t disappointed either. James Beard Award winning chefs Adam Evans and Sean Brock cooked a dinner as gourmet as barbecue gets, and the Gholston’s food truck serving late night pulled pork and brisket deserve a James Beard of its own.

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The show featured a little-bit-country, little-bit-rock-n-roll mix of fall 2024 men's and women's looks rooted in tailoring; custom designs; garments pulled from Reid's 20-year archive; and other pieces made by community artisans. It lived up to the designer's own assessment of his brand, offered in 2012, the year he won the CFDA/*Vogue* Fashion Fund competition, back when the industry was trend-obsessed and absolutely nobody was saying things like Reid did when he offered this sound bite: "American fashion, built to last."

Music, food, fashion—Shindig has it all. But what really gives it its flavor is family, and it's truly a multigenerational affair. Two of Reid's three children, Abba and Walton, walked in the runway show, after working at the store most of the weekend, and Billy joined Walton on the roof of the design studio where Walton was performing his own original material. Then there was Larry, Reid's 85-year-old father, who charmed everyone with his Shindig Revival tee and long silver-white hair held off his face with a Gucci logo headband, like Alessandro Michele, if he'd been spliced with Richie Tenenbaum and aged a few decades.

"The first one was the best one," Larry declared from his front-row seat at the fashion show, when asked about the Shindigs he's attended. "It was a surprise that they got it up as good as they did and all that, and they didn't have as much people putting it together, but they've all been great."



Larry Reid. Photo: Hunt Farnell / Courtesy of Billy Reid

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Inside the Billy Reid store in Florence. Photo: Hunt Fanelli / Courtesy of Billy Reid



The Friday night drive. Photo: Adam Katz Sinding 2024



Billy Reid at the tailgate party. Photo: Adam Katz Sinding 2024



Jeanne Reid at the tailgate party. Photo: Adam Katz Sinding 2024