

BAND BIO

*First Place, 2005 SPBGMA International Band Championship (Nashville, TN)
First Place, 2003 Telluride & 2002 Rockygrass Band Contests (Telluride & Lyons, CO)*

It's rare that a two-year-old band can claim to have performed on the stages of **Telluride Bluegrass Festival, High Sierra Music Festival, Grand Targhee Bluegrass Festival, Rockygrass Bluegrass Festival, Blue Ridge Harvest Fest**, and many other renowned venues from **North Carolina to California**. Seldom are young bluegrass bands considered "authentic" enough to share the stage with the likes of **Jimmy Martin, J.D. Crowe, Hot Rize, Rhonda Vincent, Jerry Douglas, Sam Bush, Del McCoury, David Grisman, Ricky Skaggs**, and many other recognized musicians in bluegrass music—yet also have such a fresh presence that they are invited to perform alongside popular acts like **Creedence Clearwater Revisited, G. Love & Special Sauce, Galactic, and Medeski Martin & Wood**. And not very often does a band save up their gig money for a year in order to finance their debut CD, and then sell out of two thousand copies in less than two months from the back of their Ford van. These sorts of achievements don't come easily for any band, and they certainly didn't come easily for **Hit & Run**; yet somehow, this young group of hard-working Colorado musicians have carved their own vision and shared these successes.

Hit & Run Bluegrass formed in early 2002 with the mutual desire to play authentic-yet-modern bluegrass. A few months later, the group of stellar pickers won the **2002 Rockygrass Band Competition** in Lyons, CO. Less than a year after that, Hit & Run took first place at the **2003 Telluride Bluegrass Festival Band Contest**, making them the first and only band to win both contests. According to Denver's *Westword* newspaper, "Something's got to be up when one bluegrass band suddenly surpasses all the others. Here in Colorado, that band is Hit & Run." Hit & Run went on to take first place at the **2005 SPBGMA International Band Championships in Nashville, TN**—a rare feat for a first-time competitor.

"Hit & Run is far and away the most exciting up-and-coming bluegrass act in Colorado right now," shares **Eric Pirritt**, Colorado talent buyer for Boulder's Fox Theatre. "They have been able to harness a style of bluegrass that has both young kids and older folks lining up in the streets for their show, each and every time they play." Hit & Run's appeal may be their youthful energy combined with polished vocals, hot picking, and their contemporary sound, inspired by the hardcore grooves of **Alison Krauss & Union Station, Blue Highway, and Lonesome River Band**, among other favorites. Hit & Run tastefully interprets standard bluegrass and traditional tunes, and they skillfully craft original tunes; their music is "handspun yet motor-driven, a well-oiled machine of sound produced by men and women with flying fingers and high, lonesome voices." (*Westword*)

You may have met these young pickers around campfires at festivals across the country. **Todd Livingston**, known for ripping, lonesome, blues solos, has been turning heads as the **2001 Rockygrass Dobro Champion**; his apprenticeship with **Grammy-winner Sally Van Meter** is evident by his tasteful arrangements and backup. **John Frazier's** mandolin virtuosity has garnered him recognition as one of Colorado's premier mandolinists; he earned a full merit scholarship to the 2004 Mandolin Symposium. His "classic" sounding original songs are an integral part of Hit & Run's repertoire. Banjo champ **Aaron Youngberg** brings his rock-solid timing to the band. 22-year-old **Erin Coats** grew up playing the bass since age nine with her banjo-pickin' dad in Wyoming. Her powerful bluegrass voice has been likened to Emmylou Harris by reviewers. **Rebecca Hoggan** has received national attention in *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine, Bluegrass Unlimited, and Bluegrass Now* for her flatpicking guitar and vocal accomplishments, which are exhibited on her debut solo release, "**Born in East Virginia**."

Two-time Grammy winner Gene Libbea joined the band as bass-player/singer from January to June 2003, while Erin Coats took a leave of absence. His 13-year tenure with the **Nashville Bluegrass Band**, as well as his 30-plus years as a professional musician, brought priceless ideas and input to Hit & Run Bluegrass during that time. Says Libbea: "This band has immense talent. They are destined to go far."

Hit & Run was invited to record their debut album, "**Beauty Fades**," at **Doobie Shea Studios in Boones Mill, Virginia**. **Tim Austin**, founder of the **Lonesome River Band** and **Doobie Shea Records**, produced and engineered the project in January 2004. The album was released after much anticipation on April 2, 2004, and quickly sold two thousand units in two months. Their sophomore effort, to be released in summer of 2005, was produced by Rebel Recording Artists **Kenny & Amanda Smith** in Charlotte, North Carolina, and has garnered interest from several national bluegrass record labels.

"It is easy to see why Hit & Run is moving up so quickly—their music is powerful and their professionalism is amazing for such a young band," comments **George Gertz**, producer of the **North Fork Valley Bluegrass Festival**. Hit & Run is quickly gaining the respect of promoters, fans, musicians, and media across the country. With an increasingly heavy national touring schedule, this hard drivin' bluegrass band plans to share as much energy and enthusiasm as possible in the years to come.