

**KANNAPOLIS, N.C.** — With the Doc Watson family in attendance, the names of the 2019 North Carolina Music Hall of Fame inductees were announced by Susi Hamilton, state secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources secretary.

The five announced were:

- Elizabeth Cotten — Grammy Award winning blues and folk musician born in Carrboro.
- 9th Wonder — Hip-Hop producer, record executive, rapper and lecturer born in Winston-Salem.
- Merle Watson — Two-time Grammy Award-winning guitarist born in Deep Gap.
- Mitch Easter — Producer, musician, and songwriter born in Winston-Salem.
- Big Daddy Kane — Grammy Award winning hip-hop recording artist and actor from Raleigh.

For the first time, the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame also announced that inductees Pastor Shirley Caesar and Kellie Pickler will return to the Induction Ceremony as highlight inductees in October.

The announcement took place at the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame Museum in Kannapolis. The announcement was closed to the public, however, inductees such as 2018 inductee Dolphus Ramseur and 1999 inductee Ken Knox of Chairmen of the Board were in attendance.

The official induction of the 2019 class will take place on October 17, 2019 at a red carpet Induction Ceremony in Kannapolis, NC. The Ceremony will be open to the public, will include a pre-ceremony reception for VIP ticket holders, and will host live performances by NCMHOF inductees. Tickets for the ceremony go on sale late Spring 2019.

North Carolina Music Hall of Fame Executive Director Veronica Cordle stated that “this was a very unique way for the Hall of Fame to announce its 2019 inductees. We are honored to have Susi Hamilton here to assist us in letting everyone know who the new inductees will be. We are so excited about 2019 and hope the press conference and partnership with Come Hear NC allows us to reach the public’s ear.”

The announcement of the 2019 inductees comes on the heels of Governor Roy Cooper making the proclamation of 2019 being the “Year of Music” in the state of North Carolina in November of 2018.

This announcement complements “Come Hear North Carolina”, the new comprehensive campaign from the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, to celebrate the musicians, songwriters studios, venues, instrument makers, labels, record stores, promoters, places, listeners and communities who create, support and sustain music in North Carolina.

“The partnership with Come Hear NC is bringing incredible attention to NC’s music especially through social media. Their support and focus on music throughout the state will really shine a big spotlight on NC’s talent. Through the partnership, our 2019 Induction Ceremony will be filmed by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources for livestream to showcase our inductee live performances. This will show the magnitude of talent from our state.” said Cordle.

**About the NCMHOF:**

The North Carolina Music Hall of Fame is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Its museum, located in

Kannapolis, NC is open to the public Monday-Friday 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. For more information about the Hall of Fame or to purchase tickets to the 2019 Induction Ceremony go to the NCMHOF website: [NorthCarolinaMusicHallofFame.org](http://NorthCarolinaMusicHallofFame.org).

About the North Carolina Arts Council:

The North Carolina Arts Council builds on the state's long-standing love of the arts, leading the way to a more vibrant future. The Arts Council is an economic catalyst, fueling a thriving nonprofit creative sector that generates \$2.12 billion in annual direct economic activity. The Arts Council also sustains diverse arts expression and traditions while investing in innovative approaches to art-making. The North Carolina Arts Council has proven to be a champion for youth by cultivating tomorrow's creative citizens through arts education by doing daily web-stories, artist interviews, special commissions, North Carolina musician stages at major festivals, educational programming and performances.

**About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources:**

The N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

NCDNCR includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony Orchestra, the State Library, the State Archives, the N.C. Arts Council, State Preservation Office and the Office of State Archaeology, along with the Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, please visit [www.ncdcr.gov](http://www.ncdcr.gov).

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