

**** The Ebony Hillbillies: Folk-2-Funk Festival, Sun. 2/12**

2:00-Young People's Workshop (bring instruments) YS Room

3:30- Concert in Auditorium

A New York subway platform institution since the late 1980s -- find them at Times Square, Grand Central Station and 34th Street at Macy's -- the **Ebony Hillbillies** have also played at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall and for the International Bluegrass Music Association in Nashville. They influenced the formation of the other premier black string band, the Carolina Chocolate Drops.



The **Hillbillies'** current incarnation includes Newman Baker on a lap washboard, outfitted with tiny cymbals, that he plays with shotgun shells on his fingers; Bill Salters, two-time Grammy winner and composer of "Just the Two of Us," among other hits, on stand-up bass; Gloria Gassaway on bones and vocals; and original members Norris Bennett, a former full-time recorded street musician, on banjo and mountain dulcimer, and Prince on Fiddle.

"The black string band of the 19th and early 20th century was improvisational," Prince says. "Some of the ideas sound very funky and very modern. The **Hillbillies** continue that improv tradition and channel blues and jazz riffs". "We're trying to do this in the most sophisticated way we can," Prince said. "We want to make the music as if it never stopped."

The group has recorded three albums -- "Sabrina's Holiday" , "I Thought You Knew" -- and "Barefoot and Flying" .

<http://www.ebonyhillbillies.com/>

<http://www.examiner.com/local-music-in-new-york/ebony-hillbillies-t-ada-explore-traditional-music-roots-at-apap>

**** A presentation of the Barrier Beach "Roots" Progeny Project**