

# THE QUEEN'S CARTOONISTS

Biography – 1000 words



The Queen's Cartoonists play music from classic cartoons and contemporary animation. The performances are synchronized to video projections of the original films, and the band leads the audience through a world of virtuosic musicianship, multi-instrumental mayhem, and comedy.

Behind the project is a single question: is it possible to create jazz and classical music in the 21st century that appeals to everyone? Even people who normally wouldn't go to concerts? The Queen's Cartoonists present a concert for everybody - regardless of age, gender, or familiarity with the concert hall.

Tying this diverse concert together are comedic anecdotes involving the cartoons and their composers. The band is on

a musical mission of equal parts performance, preservation, and education. Expect the unexpected from repertoire that includes the Golden Age of animation, cult cartoon classics, modern animation, and elements of a musical circus!

Since their inception in 2015, The Queen's Cartoonists have brought their unique sound to performing arts centers in over 20 states and have opened for the New York Philharmonic. The 6 members, all currently living in Queens, New York, are world-class professional musicians. The band has been featured in numerous major publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Mashable*, and on NPR.

## MEET THE QUEEN'S CARTOONISTS!

### **Joel "Sweet Sauce" Pierson**



Dr. Pierson has made a career out of music and mockery, or perhaps a mockery of his career in music. He has worked with artists of great repute (the New York Philharmonic, the Kronos Quartet), and artists of even greater ill-repute (Linkin Park, Ke\$ha). Wayne Newton told Joel he loved him, and Paul McCartney gave him a shoulder massage. He has performed on all seven continents (yes, even Antarctica), and as a songwriter was signed to Warner Brothers Records. His music has been performed by major symphony orchestras including Atlanta, Houston, Toronto, Cleveland, & The Philly Pops. Joel wrote additional music for the 2013 film *The Internship*, and is the author of the books *You Suck at Piano* & *20 Piano Pieces for People with Emotional Problems*. See and hear more on his website: [www.therealjoelpierson.com](http://www.therealjoelpierson.com)

### Mark “Dingo” Phillips



The descendent of a sheep-thief and a woman who baked her enemies into pies, Mark Phillips is the luckiest jazz immigrant in history. Upon deciding to move Up Over (what Australians call the US) to pursue great music and fewer deadlier creatures, Mark was told that in fact he was already a US citizen. The hard part being magically taken care of, Mark landed in Queens in 2011. His wacky musical journey started by studying classical saxophone, but has since morphed into being the best damn cartoon clarinetist on multiple continents. His instrumental accomplishments have not gone un-noticed, as he is now a Selmer Artist, ranking him among the best woodwind players in New York City. His bartending skills, while occasionally useful, have proven to be less distinguished, as Australians have a natural tendency to over-pour and under-care about their patrons.

### Drew “Dranka” Pitcher



New York City based multi-multi-multi-instrumentalist Drew Pitcher was raised close to Michilimackinac, Michigan, which, by complete coincidence, is also his DJ name. After pounding the pavement with dope beats building his street cred, Drew dropped his true musical skill: being a world-class player of the tenor sax, alto sax, clarinet, bass clarinet, flute, and harmonica. Drew attended the University of North Texas where he performed and recorded with the Grammy nominated One O’Clock Lab Band. Dark economic times followed. Drew made ends meet by recording smooth jazz Christmas albums under the moniker “Montgomery Bruce”, traveling the world seeking gigs, and performing with artists such as The Coasters, The Drifters, The Platters, and sadly, Wayne Newton. Having survived these travels, Drew now resides in New York, where he ferments malted barley and hops in his apartment.

### Greg “Eggs and” Hammontree



Greg Hammontree has been tinkering with music his entire life, sometimes at places like Radio City Music Ball, Symphonic Space, The Jazz Standards, Studio 55, Flushing Town Mall, The Bowery Bathroom, The Louis Armstrong Mouse Museum, and in Chinatown. No wait, I meant actual China. It’s real, people - Greg has been there and lived to tell the tale. Greg has a surprising number of dedicated fans in Italy, even though his Italian is “no es bueno.” He has a reputation of being a fearless cartoon trumpet master, meaning he will take on any challenge, no matter how fast, ridiculous, or potentially dangerous. Greg received his Master’s in Jazz Performance from CUNY, Queens College and is now a professional freelance trumpet player in New York City, #unemployed #happyhour #blessed #hashtag

**Rossen “Chock Full” Nedelchev**



Rossen Nedelchev is a professional drummer, producer and educator in New York City. He hails from Sofia, Bulgaria, and let me tell you, that's a helluva cab fare. Get it? He hailed a cab from Europe? His jack-of-all-trades mentality extends to musical styles as well, being an in-demand session drummer in the worlds of pop, jazz, funk, jazz-funk, rhythm & blues, blues & rhythm, rhythm & rhythm, and bluesy jazz. Rossen is the band leader for the rhythm & rhythm band Alter View and he plays drums for the 8-time NAMMY award-winning, Grammy nominated singer Jana Mashonee, the NYC pop/electronic band The Qualia and The Queen's Cartoonists. He produces for a variety of artists and has a Graduate Diploma in jazz performance from the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music.

**Matt “4eva” Jung**



First things first, Matt would like to specify that he has performed in Antarctica twice as many times as Joel has. Now, back to our regularly scheduled program: While most kids in the '90s were listening to that cool rock music, Matt Jung was listening to comedy cassette tapes and writing songs in tribute to various culinary delights, most notably an ode to blueberry pie. His first instrument was piano, but later he picked up the oboe, and then the saxophone. Next he picked up the tuba, but put it down right away because it was too heavy, since he suffers from poor upper body strength. Matt eventually studied jazz bass at the University of Southern California. Interesting fact: Matt attended USC on a rowing scholarship, despite never rowing before. He didn't ask questions, and still wonders why his Aunt Becky gets silent whenever he mentions it. Matt played bass full-time on various cruise ships, where he “had to” perform in such outfits as a clown costume, a banana costume, and an oversized diaper. He has also visited the websites of such artists as Miles Davis, Johnny Cash, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.