

SUSS 2024 Bio

New York-based instrumental group SUSS plays a distinctive form of instrumental music sometimes referred to as “ambient country,” emphasizing the droning qualities of country music and Western film scores. Combining the high-lonesome sound of pedal steel guitars and harmonicas with meditative synthesizers and loops, the group's music owes as much to Brian Eno's collaborations with Daniel Lanois as to the film scores of Ennio Morricone and Ry Cooder. The band's self-released 2018 debut, *Ghost Box*, became a surprise underground hit and a staple of ambient playlists, leading to the band's signing with Northern Spy. The group continued expanding on their signature sound with numerous additional releases on the label, including the 2024 release of *Birds & Beasts*.

The band's original members included Bob Holmes and Gary Leib, (both members of the country-slanted new wave group Rubber Rodeo during the '80s) as well as Pat Irwin (formerly of the B-52s , Eight Eyed Spy and the Raybeats), Jonathan Gregg (Jonathan Gregg & the Lonesome Debonaires, The Linemen) and engineer/producer William Garrett.

Their first release on Northern Spy Records, *Ghost Box (Expanded)*, was described by Pitchfork magazine as "a vivid landscape where mellifluous tones foster the mystery and magic of a fabled landscape." 2019 and 2020 saw the release of *High Line* and *Promise*, which made it onto many of the Top Ten Ambient album lists of their respective years. 2021 saw the departure of Garrett and the unexpected passing of Leib, after which SUSS released the posthumous EPs *Night Suite* and *Heat Haze*, which included tracks recorded just before his death. 2023 saw multiple releases from SUSS, including *Winter Was Hard* and *Across the Horizon*, which together with the previous EPs were released as the self-titled double album *SUSS*, heralded by Aquarium Drunkard as “a majestic double album, full of slow motion twang, suspended synth drones, and gorgeous swells of pedal steel. This is country music mutated and stretched along a vast horizon, open music for open souls.”

2023 also saw the release of a collaboration with the artist Andrew Tuttle — a 30-minute track called *Rising* on the Longform Editions record label. SUSS' fifth album on Northern Spy Records, *Birds & Beasts*, will be released in 2024 and shows the band heading off into a new direction, populating their stark landscapes with the creatures, cycles and rhythms of the world around them.