## **Biography**

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‍**Southern Avenue** is an award winning, 2020 **Grammy Nominated** band out of Memphis, Tennessee.

The group combines the talents of a prodigiously talented set of young musicians who bring their individual backgrounds to the table to create music that carries the Southern soul legacy into the 21st century, spanning the band members' wide-ranging musical interests while showcasing the powerful chemistry and electrifying live show that they've honed through extensive stage and studio experience. Since the release of their award winning debut album in 2017, Southern Avenue has played in over a dozen countries and wowed audiences at such festivals as Bonnaroo, Firefly, Electric Forest and Lockn’.

Guitar phenom **Ori Naftaly** originally built his reputation in his native Israel before joining forces with deeply expressive Memphis-bred singer **Tierinii Jackson** and her subtly powerful drummer sister **Tikyra Jackson**. The band's lineup is rounded out by versatile keyboardist **Jeremy Powell**, an early alumnus of Stax Records' renowned music academy and bass player Evan Sarver who joined the group in 2019.

*The Grammy Nominated album -* ***"Keep On"*** brilliantly captures Southern Avenue's combustible chemistry, with the emotion-charged energy of such distinctive originals as "Whiskey Love," "Savior," "Too Good for You" and "We Are Not So Different" reflecting the players' evolving talents. The band recorded the album at Memphis' legendary Sam Phillips Recording, with guest appearances by seminal Stax Records artist William Bell and a horn section comprised of Art Edmaiston (JJ Grey & Mofro, Gregg Allman) and Marc Franklin (The Bo-Keys, Gregg Allman).

GRAMMY Award winner Bell, a formative figure in the development of Southern soul, was impressed by the band's talents. "In terms of new artists with the talent to become the stars of the future, you need to look no further than Southern Avenue," Bell commented.

**The critics have been similarly impressed.** "Southern Avenue's modern sound melds gospel-infused R&B with a rootsy rock feel," wrote *Mix*. *Relix* referred to Southern Avenue as "a deeply soulful Memphis band that’s turning the scene on its head," while *Goldmine* called their music "a frothy Memphis soul stew fit to twitch your body to in ways you didn't think you could," The *Chicago Reader* called the band's debut album "a boiling retro-soul primer," adding that "Tierinii has a riveting stage presence. They do the Stax legacy proud." *No Depression* commented that it's "easy to imagine Southern Avenue as a house band in their native Memphis or Muscle Shoals in the glory days of the '60s, sent back to the future to save us from in authenticity and our collective hurt."

The seeds for Southern Avenue's birth were first planted when Ori Naftaly, who'd grown up in Israel with a deep-rooted passion for American soul, blues and funk, came to Memphis in 2013 to compete in the prestigious International Blues Challenge. Although his talents were embraced by American audiences, Naftaly felt constrained in his own band, feeling the need to embrace a more expansive musical vision. That opportunity arrived when he met Tierinii Jackson, who'd gotten her start singing in church, before performing in a series of cover bands and theatrical projects.

Despite not having a record deal at the time, Southern Avenue quickly found success touring in America and Europe. They won additional attention playing some high-profile festivals and making it to the finals in the International Blues Challenge.

Their efforts were further acknowledged by fans and peers in 2018, when their Stax debut was honored with a Blues Music Award for “Best Emerging Artist Album.”

"What makes it Southern Avenue," Tierinii states, "is that when we come together, the music we make together is music we could never come up with individually. It's really rewarding to have so many influences in the band, and that we can find the balance between them."

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