



# Music Tourism Convention

11-14 April 2023 Cleveland, Mississippi, USA

**Music Tourism Convention is the world's most extensive conference bringing together the music and tourism sectors to explore how music impacts, benefits and improves tourism offers, branding, partnership development and economic development.**

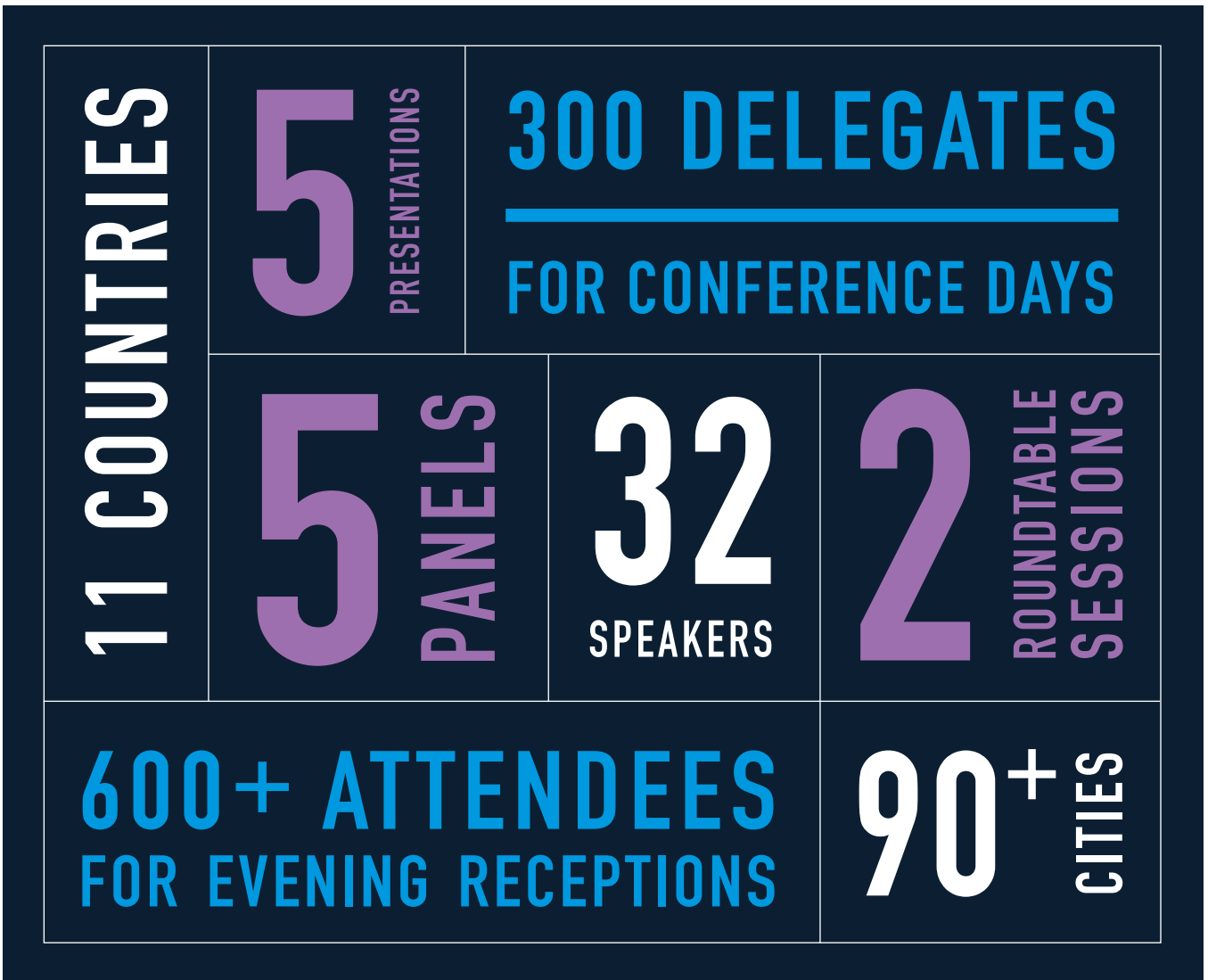
Music Cities Events in partnership with Visit Mississippi, Visit Cleveland Mississippi, GRAMMY Museum Mississippi, Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area and Delta State University were proud to present the 5th Global and 2nd U.S. edition of the Music Tourism Convention, featuring four days of talks, presentations, live music, networking opportunities and a full-day music tour.



Held on April 11-14, 2023, at the Lyric Hotel and with live music events at Dockery Farms and the GRAMMY Museum Mississippi in the evenings, the event included 32 speakers and 300 delegates during conference days and more than 600 people at evening receptions.

Cleveland Mississippi Music Tourism Convention took place in the state known worldwide as the 'Birthplace of America's Music', and in a city that is at the core of the Blues Music Trail, located within a 35 mile radius of over 40 Mississippi Blues Trail sites, including Dockery Farms (home of Charley Patton and the birthplace of Delta Blues).

## Music Tourism Convention in Detail



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## Turning your city into a music destination

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**After having to postpone its original date (2021) due to the Covid pandemic, the Cleveland Mississippi Music Tourism Convention finally took place at the birthplace of blues.**

On April 11-14, 2023, delegates from 11 countries and 90+ cities gathered at the Lyric Hotel in Cleveland for two days of panel discussions, presentations, roundtable sessions, evening events, networking opportunities and a full day music tour. The 5th global edition of the Music Tourism Convention started with an opening reception at the Statehouse of the Lyric hotel with live music by Mississippi Marshal on behalf of the Deep Roots Live Music Series.



**FOR EVERY \$1 INVESTED  
MUSIC TOURISM CONVENTION  
GENERATED A \$5 RETURN**





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# Discovering the Mississippi Blues Trail

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On Wednesday 12 April, the Gin at the Lyric Hotel dressed up to host a full day of talks and presentations that explored topics such as using festivals as part of a tourism strategy, strengthening the music sector to turn it into a music attraction, collaborating with local artists, the future of music tourism, music museums, music tourism's role in creating audiences for music scenes, revitalising cities through music tourism and much more.

The day kicked off with opening remarks from Billy Nowell, Mayor of the City of Cleveland as well as representatives from Music Cities Events, the State of Mississippi and Visit Mississippi. During the opening remarks, Steve Azar, hit singer/songwriter/producer and the day's M.C., performed his original song "One Mississippi", the official state song of Mississippi. At the end of the first day, attendees spent the afternoon at Dockery Farms, enjoying a concert by Keith Johnson "The Prince of Blues".



**SHORT AND TO THE POINT! TWO DAYS WAS PERFECT TIMING. BOTH THE SPEAKER PANELS AND THE PRESENTATIONS WERE VERY INFORMATIVE. THE FRIDAY TOUR WAS EXCELLENT AS IT GAVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE REGION AND LISTEN TO LOCAL MUSICIANS FIRST HAND.**

Marjorie Fort-Dees, Founder,  
Black Soul Rhythms Travel



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## Using tourism to strengthen the music scene

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**On Thursday, 13 April, attendees returned to the Gin for another day of talks and presentations. The day was kicked off by the M.C. Tricia Walker, a GRAMMY Award winner, playing a tribute to Delta Blues on her guitar**

The day was finished by two special roundtable sessions which allowed delegates to interact amongst themselves and come up with concrete action plans for their own music related projects. The closing remarks saw Craig Ray, Director of Visit Mississippi handing over the Music Tourism Convention to its next host, Cape Breton Island, represented by Terry Smith, CEO of Destination Cape Breton.



Once talks, presentations and roundtables were over and before the beginning of the Closing Reception, delegates had the opportunity to visit the Delta Music Institute at Delta University and to tour the GRAMMY Museum Mississippi.

During the evening, delegates and the general public were catered with a live concert that included performances from Mississippi's Chapel Hart and Cape Breton Island's Gordie Sampson.



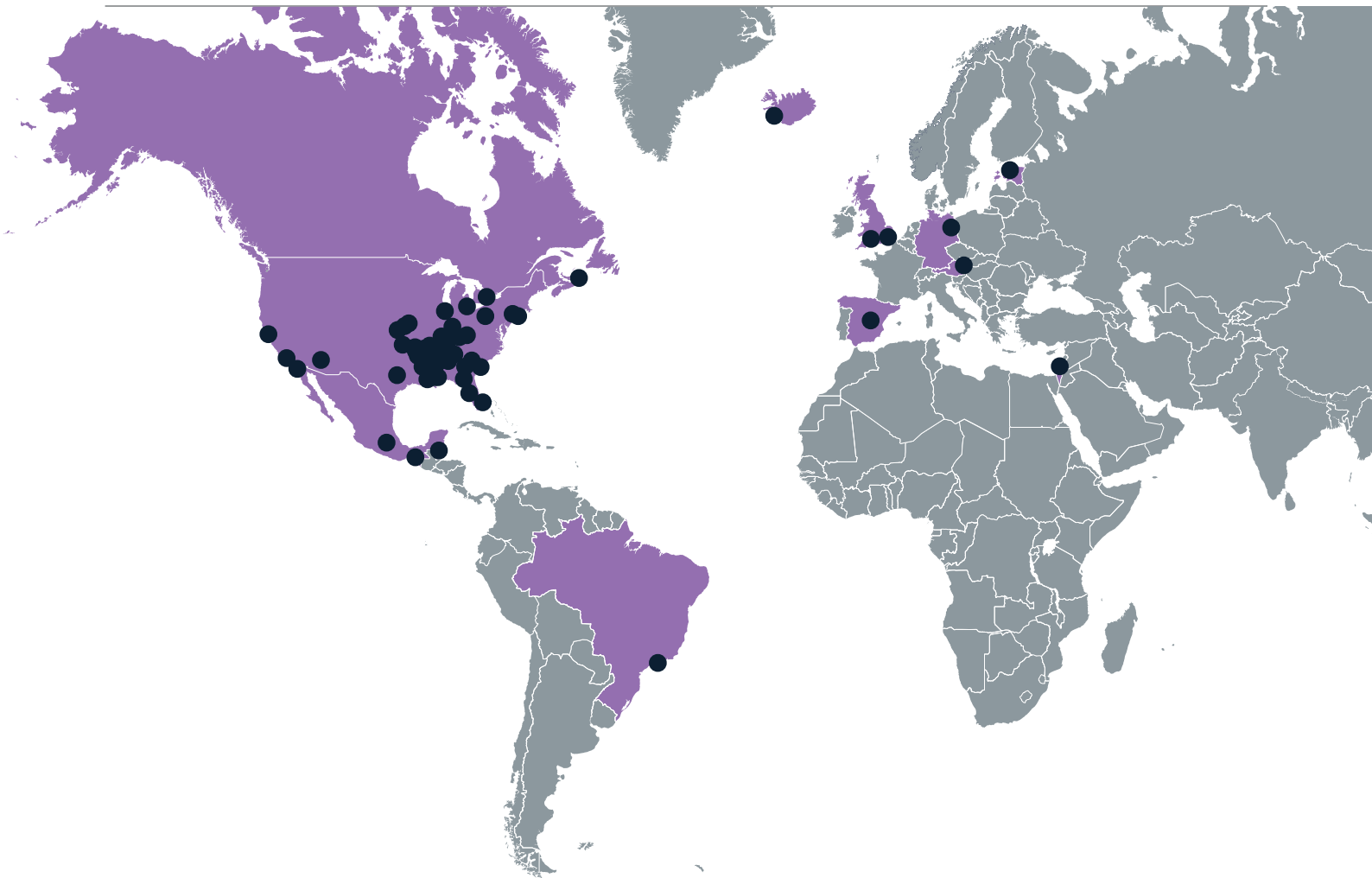
**LAST WEEK, WE ROCKED THE MUSIC TOURISM CONVENTION IN CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI! IT WAS AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS, LEARN ABOUT THE LATEST TRENDS, AND DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO CREATE UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES FOR OUR CLIENTS.**

Stephanie Riley, Founder, B3 Creative Agency

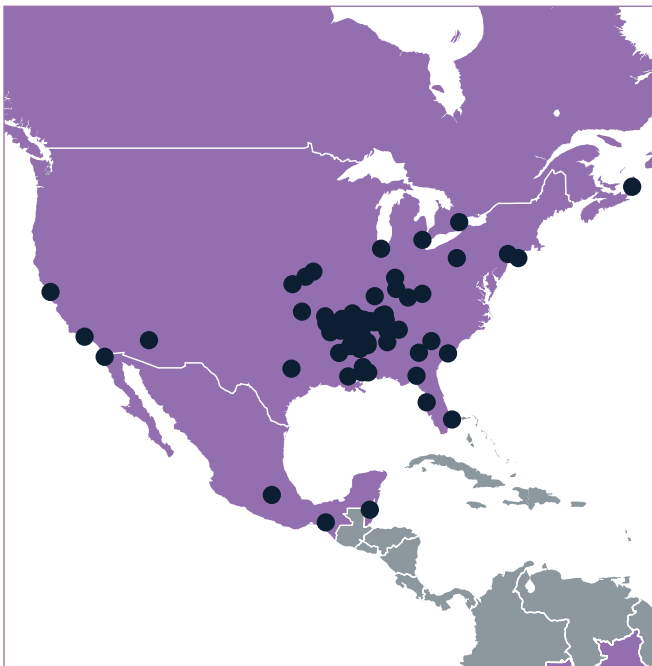
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## Cities & Countries Represented

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North America in focus



**SO GRATEFUL FOR THIS EVENT THAT BROUGHT TOGETHER SO MUCH OF WHAT I LOVE (ALL IN MY HOME STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, WHILE DOING SOMETHING I AM HONORED TO DO — SHARING THE MANY REASONS TO DISCOVER MY SECOND HOME, ATLANTA).**

Sheretha Bell, Vice President, Brand, Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau | Discover Atlanta

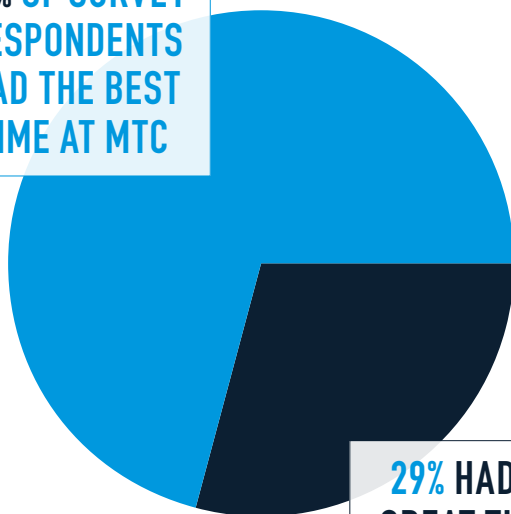
## Topics covered at the Cleveland MS Convention

- **Blending Heritage With Living Culture** – The Perfect Recipe For An Attractive Music Destination
- **Deep South** – Collaborating With Artists
- **Festivals As Part Of A Tourism Strategy**
- **Key Steps To Create Your Own Music Trail**
- **Music Museums** – How To Ensure They're Successful
- **Music Tourism In Belize** – Strengthening The Music Sector To Turn it Into A Tourism Attraction
- **Music Tourism's Role In Creating Audiences For Music Scenes**
- **Revitalising Your City Through Music Tourism**
- **Rock N' Roll Island** – The Birthplace Of Blues Across The Pond
- **Sustainability Roadmap For Music Festivals And Music Tourism Projects**
- **The Future Of Music Tourism**
- **The Legacy Of Dockery Farms & Its Inspiration On Roots Musicians Today**



**100% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS WOULD RECOMMEND THE EVENT TO A FRIEND**

**71% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS HAD THE BEST TIME AT MTC**



**29% HAD A GREAT TIME**



IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE SO MANY PEOPLE FROM THE WORLD OVER COMING TO THIS SMALL TOWN IN MISSISSIPPI WITH THE GOAL OF HELPING CONNECT TOURISTS TO MUSIC SCENES. IT'S A WORTHY ENDEAVOR THAT NOT ONLY HELPS PEOPLE APPRECIATE HARD-WORKING MUSICIANS, BUT FEEDS ENTIRE ECONOMIES AND THE SOUL.

Emily Hingle, Events Editor, Whereyat.com



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# Our Speakers & Panelists

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**Álvaro Bolaños**, Production Manager,  
Jazz & Rhythms Wknd Festival (MEX)

**Amber Hamilton**, Executive Director,  
Memphis Music Initiative (TN, USA)

**Anneliese Martinez**, Senior Director, The Pop  
District / The Warhol Museum (PA, USA)

**Asa Dyradottir**, Director & Project  
Manager, Reykjavik Music City (ISL)

**Aubrey Preston**, Founder, Americana  
Music Triangle (TN, USA)

**Beatriz De La Guardia Casanova**,  
Communications and Marketing Director,  
Planet Events @ Live Nation (ESP)

**Billy Nowell**, Mayor, City of Cleveland (MS, USA)

**Cheryl Robson**, Director, Aurora Metro (UK)

**Craig Ray**, Director, Visit Mississippi (MS, USA)

**Deana McCloud**, Co-Founder,  
Museum Collective (OK, USA)

**Emily Havens**, Executive Director, GRAMMY  
Museum Mississippi (MS, USA)

**Jaime Garza**, Artistic Director; Mole  
de Mayo Festival (IL, USA)

**Jill Hamlin**, Founder, Appalachian Arts  
& Entertainment Awards (LY, USA)

**Kamel King**, Bureau Manager  
Visit Mississippi (MS, USA)

**Lisa D. Alexis**, Director, Office of Cultural  
Economy New Orleans (LA, USA)

**Lisa La Rocca**, Director of Operations,  
Sonic Unyon Records (CAN)

**Lucilo Alcocer**, Industry Development  
Consultant, Belize Tourism Board (BLZ)



**Lutz Henke**, Director of Culture, visitBerlin  
(Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH) (GER)

**Malika Polk-Lee**, Executive Director, B.B. King  
Museum and Delta Interpretive Center (MS, USA)

**Marjorie Fort-Dees**, Founder & Principal Travel  
Advisor, Black Soul Rhythms Travel (NY, USA)

**Pat Mitchell Worley**, CEO, Soulsville  
Foundation (TN, USA)

**Rachel Knox**, Senior Program Officer  
for Thriving Arts and Culture Program,  
Hyde Family Foundation (TN, USA)

**Roger Stolle**, Owner, Cathead Delta  
Blues & Folk Art (MS, USA)

**Rolando Herts**, Director of The Delta Center for  
Culture and Learning, Delta State University (MS, USA)

**Scott Barretta**, Blues Trail Scholar (MS, USA)

**Sean Johnson**, Director of Tourism, Visit Cleveland

**Shelley Ritter**, Director, Delta  
Blues Museum (MS, USA)

**Sheretha Bell**, Vice President, Brand, Atlanta  
CVB & Discover Atlanta (GA, USA)

**Steve Azar**, Hit Songwriter, Recording  
Artist & Music Producer (MS, USA)

**Terry Smith**, CEO, Destination Cape Breton (CAN)

**Tricia Walker**, Music Ambassador, Big  
Front Porch Productions (MS, USA)

**Will Pech**, Business Development  
Manager, Belize Tourism Board (BLZ)

**Willie Simmons**, Transportation Commissioner,  
State of Mississippi (MS, USA)





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## Event Partners

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A huge thanks to all the organisations that made the Cleveland Mississippi Music Tourism Convention possible.

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### Host organisations



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### Supporting partners



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### Sponsors



## The Event In Numbers

Cleveland Mississippi Music Tourism  
Convention website pages received:

**7351**  
PAGE VIEWS



**125+**  
POSTS ACROSS SOCIAL  
MEDIA PLATFORMS WITH A  
COMBINED AUDIENCE OF  
**295K**  
FOLLOWERS

## Earned Media & Press Mentions

**15** DIGITAL MEDIA ARTICLES,  
WITH A COMBINED  
MONTHLY REACH OF  
**6.59M** VISITORS

### Highlights:

Where Y'At  
WJTV  
Mississippi Today  
No Depression  
Journal Newsletter  
Ruta 66 (printed  
publication)

Country Roads  
Magazine  
Offbeat Magazine  
Supertalk FM  
Groover

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# Contact Us

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Feel free to get in touch with us regarding any Music Cities Events inquiries.

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**"EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT! WHAT A GREAT JOB YOU GUYS AND YOUR TEAM DID AGAIN THIS YEAR! CLEVELAND WAS GREAT. PANELS WERE INFORMATIVE AND SPOT ON. ALWAYS SEEMS TO RECHARGE MY "PRO-MUSIC" BATTERIES AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME... SENDING ME HOME WITH A LONG LIST OF THINGS TO DO, TO DO BETTER, OR TO RESEARCH AND EXPLORE... IN ADDITION TO GREAT NEW CONTACTS AND RESOURCES."**

John Doyle, Executive Director, Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum

