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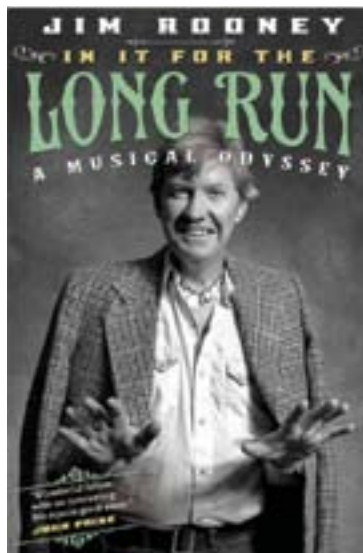
Down Moses” channeling Cab Calloway and Ray Charles while the band howls along with a bluesy Dixieland swagger, and Coffin seals the deal with a cage rattling baritone sax solo.

As the title suggests, “Little Brown Church In The Bayou” is a Louisiana flavored romp featuring Kummer, trumpeter Rod McGaha, Mark Douthit on alto sax and Roy Agee on trombone, all giving up the grease. “Gimme Dat!” is a playful take on “Give Me That Old Time Religion” with Jim Williamson’s trumpet and Doug Moffet’s tenor tearing the roof off.

“Were You There” sports a funky groove driven by Nelson’s thumbed electric bass, Paul Brannon’s wah-wah guitar, Williamson’s drumming, with interweaving trumpet and baritone sax. The album closes with “Holy, Holy, Holy,” with the traditional melody being stretched out rhythmically and harmonically almost to the breaking point, and a sassiness to the phrasing. Pat Coil’s piano and Douthit’s sax transport the listener to a time and place far from the cathedral or the country church, but definitely “in the spirit.”

*No Pews Required* is a kaleidoscopic view of the intersection between gospel and jazz and the impressive results showcase McDonald’s arranging prowess and use of space, as well as his ability to write to the strengths of the excellent musicians he has chosen to interpret these tunes.

— Roy Montana



**JIM ROONEY**  
**In It For The Long Run | University of Illinois Press**

As a performer, songwriter, booking agent, author, producer, and publisher, Jim Rooney has had a pretty amazing life and career, and *In It For The Long Run* captures his unique story in his own words, as only he could tell it.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Rooney was a participant in the genesis of the Boston folk scene, and his passion for music led this Harvard educated renaissance man down a long and winding road that went through the Cambridge folk scene, the Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals, New Orleans, Woodstock, Ireland and Texas, as well as Nashville. His stories of the early days of folk, blues, country and bluegrass music paint a vivid picture of the stylistic and social convergence of the musicians, writers and performers who created what is now known as Americana Music.

Rooney’s musical odyssey brought him to Nashville in the mid-1970s, an interesting and unique time in Music City’s history. Through his long association with the creative circle surrounding the mercurial Cowboy Jack Clement, Rooney evolved from a songwriter and performer into a recording engineer and producer, and eventually became a partner with Allen Reynolds, Mark Miller and Terrell Tye in Forerunner Music, one of the most successful independent publishing companies in Nashville history.

The story of the rise, success and eventual sale of the company at the best possible time is worth the price of admission alone. But the Forerunner days are only one aspect of Rooney’s life and career, and through his eyes, the reader also gets to experience the deep personal and musical relationships Rooney forged with the many artists he has produced; including Hal Ketchum, Iris DeMent, and Local 257 members John Prine and Nanci Griffith. He has also been a mentor to many successful singer/songwriter/musicians including Local 257 members Pat Alger, Shawn Camp, and Pete Wasner.

*In It For The Long Run* is a story of a man who freely admits the mistakes he made along the way and embraces the seemingly random series of left turns and unexpected events that led him to Nashville and beyond. By the time one gets to the end of the book, it’s hard not to feel that you are traveling along with him. The ‘Life of Rooney’ is a fascinating tale with a hard-earned happy ending, and is a journey well worth taking.

— Roy Montana

**HARP HEAVEN** Live review

A euphoric celebration of the harmonica took place at 3rd and Lindsley on May 27. The full room held an appreciative audience enjoying four of Local 257’s finest proponents of the instrument showcasing their virtuosity and versatility.

Kirk “Jelly Roll” Johnson, known both for his work as a session player and as a popular live performer around town, opened the show with a set of tunes mostly from his solo CD, *Songs From The Record World*. His set included “Key To The Highway,” “Please Send Me Someone To Love,” and the jazz classic “Moanin’.” He closed his portion of the show with a funky version of “Walkin’ After Midnight,” featuring his precise melodic phrasing, tasteful bends and killer tone.

Pat Bergeson was up next and opened his set with a stunning duo version of “I’m In The Mood For Love” with Chris Nole on piano. Bergeson’s long extended high note at the end brought the crowd to its feet. Bergeson is also known as one of Nashville’s top guitarists, and strapped it on to play a funky 4/4 version of “Tennessee Waltz.” He returned to the harp for a rubato interpretation of “Mona Lisa,” and wrapped things up with a sweet version of “Georgia On My Mind.”

Tim Gonzalez, who organized the show along with master of ceremonies John Haring, played a wide range of mostly original material touching on his diverse cultural roots. “Ruth’s Serenade” had a Latin groove with Gonzalez’ South American accordion-style playing providing a unique flavor, and the band ef-



PAT BERGESON, CHARLIE MCCOY, TIM GONZALEZ, AND KIRK “JELLY ROLL” JOHNSON BACKSTAGE AT 3RD AND LINDSLEY BEFORE THE SHOW.

PHOTO: KEN GRAY

fortlessly slipped into a montuno groove reminiscent of Santana.

“Straight From The Heart,” a shuffle tune dedicated to his late brother, found Gonzalez’ playing emotional melodic lines with some funky vocalizations in the breakdown sections. He ended his segment with a beautiful solo version of “Amazing Grace.”

Closing the show was the one and only Charlie McCoy, who has probably played harmonica on more records than anyone in music history. The ageless McCoy was typically modest and self-effacing, and his hilarious intro to “Always On My Mind” had the crowd in stitches. Hank Williams’ “Cold, Cold, Heart” was given a soulful treatment with McCoy executing a breathtaking dive bomb at the end of the tune.

“Chattanooga Choo Choo” had a smoking arrangement, and “The Water

Is Wide” was beautifully played by all concerned. McCoy’s rendition of “Orange Blossom Special” demonstrated his legendary technique and showmanship, including switching harps during the chorus and expertly conducting the band through the dizzying tempo acceleration.

A show-closing jam included guitarist Jack Pearson and Mickey Raphael, longtime harmonica player for Willie Nelson, teaming up with Johnson, Bergeson, Gonzalez and McCoy for a five-harp summit that rocked the house from top to bottom. Harp Heaven definitely achieved its goal of demonstrating the versatility and sheer musical expressiveness of this often overlooked instrument. The four amazing performers covered a wide range of styles, techniques and sounds, and left no note unplayed. Hats off to all concerned.

— Roy Montana

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