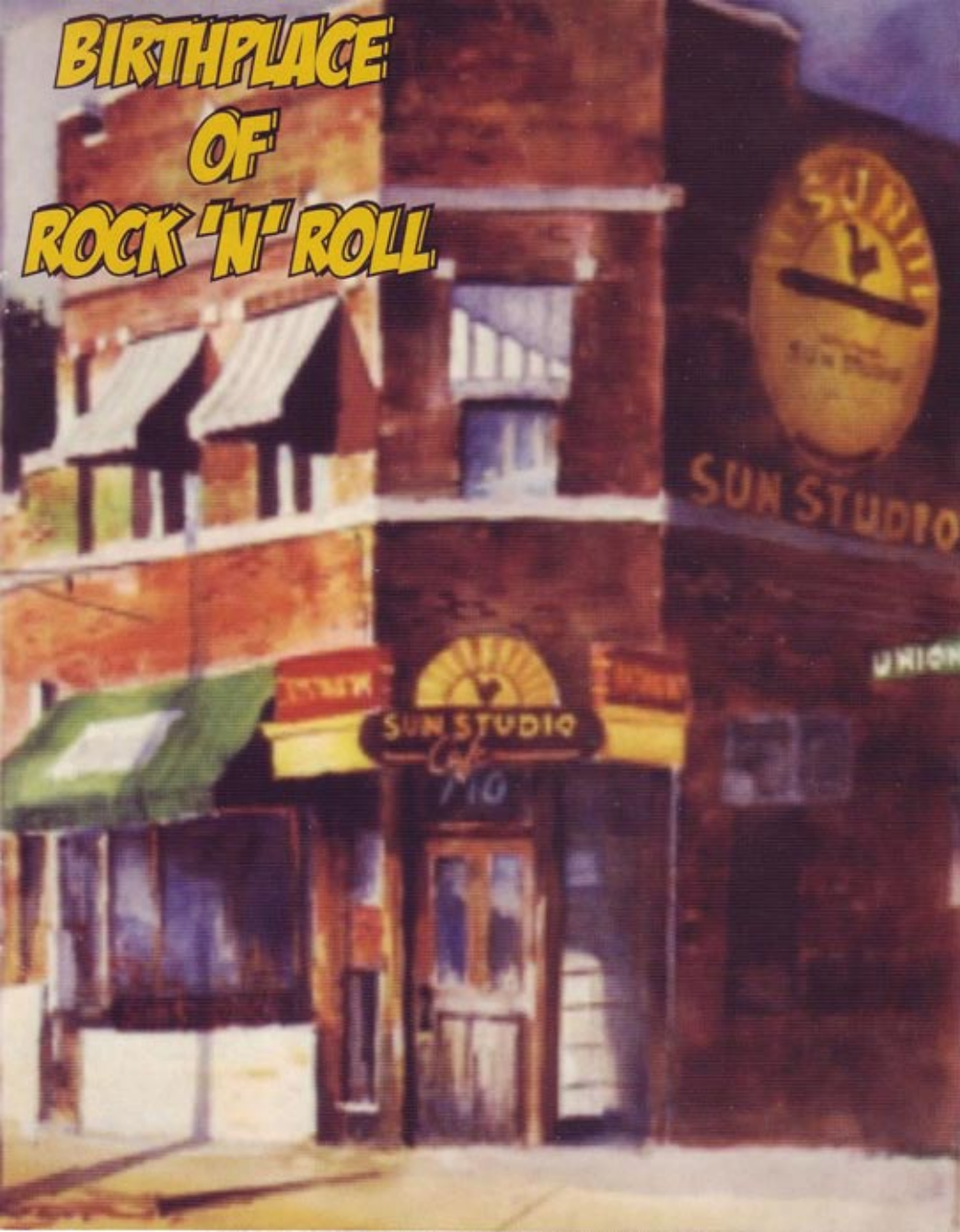


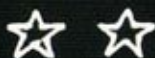
**BIRTHPLACE
OF
ROCK 'N' ROLL**



LIVE!
IN
PERSON!
#



SESSIONS



IF MUSIC WERE A RELIGION
THEN MEMPHIS WOULD BE
JERUSALEM AND SUN
STUDIO ITS MOST
SACRED SHRINE



RED
HOT
ROCK
&
ROLL!

56



Elvis got his start here & Johnny, Carl & Jerry Lee.
Bono got the chills!
Ringo called us Ground Zero Bob Dylan kissed the floor!

♫
"THEY ROCK & ROLL!"

Inspiration

This is a story of hope and impossible achievement, the realization of impossible dreams by impossible people. It is a timeless story about breaking the rules, shaking the world, and... getting away with it all!

And it's a true story!

At Sun Studio, we are blessed to have known each of these impossible heroes, and be entrusted to bring you their story, which continues to inspire new musicians everywhere. Thank you for being here with us.

Now YOU are a part of the story - it lives on with you!

Pain, Misery & Music

The Southern Delta had plenty of pain... black slaves and white sharecroppers alike. Cotton was a brutal life. The music helped.

Whites had their music - melodic celtic folk music that began the evolution to country music. Blacks brought a rhythmic, beat driven music of "field hollers" - a call and response where one voice sings the lead, and is answered by the rest in chorus.

It was in the black churches where the first blending of call and response with white music began to take place - African tradition interwove music and worship. Anglican hymns took on totally new and different African rhythm.

Beale Street

In the Delta, all roads, steamboats and railways led directly to Memphis - and brought the music along with them. First written on paper by a black musician, W.C.Handy, he called it "The Blues" - and it happened on Beale Street in 1909.

Beale Street became the hub of the black community in the South. The Blues were everywhere! Every night club, dance hall, gambling place and den of iniquity had a stage with music - every night. Every street corner had a jug band that played for pennies. The Street was coursing with energy!

It was alive!

To a Bluesman, Beale Street was like New York's Broadway for an actor. If you could make it here - you could make it anywhere! And, if you hadn't played Beale - who were you!

And others were listening too.

If Your Momma Didn't Like It ... All The Better!

Radio went from huge cabinets in the family's living room to small, transistorized sets in teenager's bedrooms.

Radio stations like WSM, played only country music and broadcast the Grand Ole Opry across the South. WDIA in Memphis played only black music, called "race music" in the old South. For the first time, "Blues" were heard by a huge white audience - mostly teenagers listening secretly to avoid the complaint of their parents.

Radio let the music genie out of the bottle!

“ Tell ‘Em Phillips Sencha !”

The dreaded race mix was happening! Bands like Bill Haley and the Comets began to do Blues tunes they heard on WDIA. Chuck Berry and Bo Diddly began to borrow melodies they heard on the Grand Ole Opry.

The walls came tumbling down - it was like a fusion!
A completely new sound blended from the old ones.

Dewey Phillips was the first of the wild-man DJ's. “Tell ‘em Phillips sencha!” he screamed in wildness from his radio show Red Hot and Blue in Memphis - screaming to teenagers!

Dewey was an icon among Memphis teens... and in a few years, he would be the first DJ in the world to play a song just recorded up the street at Sun Studio - by an unknown teenager named Elvis Presley!

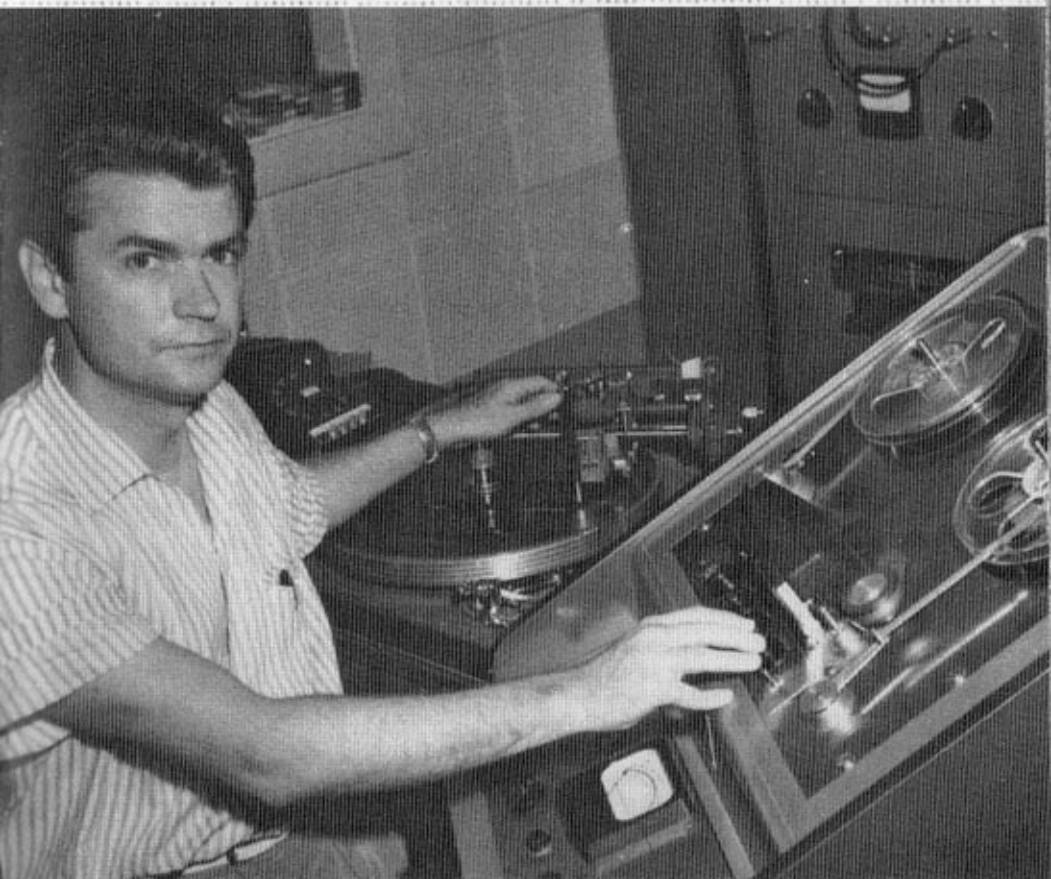
The Birth Of Rock N Roll

Sam Phillips loved Beale Street and the sound of the Blues. In starting Sun Studio, called Memphis Recording Service in 1950, He said "My aim was to try and record the Blues and other music I liked. I knew this music wasn't going to be available, in a pure sense, forever." And, for the next four years, Sam recorded the sounds of Beale Street Blues like nobody before him... or since.

Sam opened Sun Studio to capture all that pure, raw energy on records. He was self taught... and didn't care about the rules.

He didn't care he wasn't supposed to use so much echo that a three piece band sounded like an all night party. He didn't care that he shouldn't crank up the amp so high it distorted. He didn't care there were rules against blending musical styles. He knew music should be sheer fun!

Sam created Sun Studio - because he thought the love and fun of music was bigger than the rules!



“I Don’t Sound Like Nobody”

As a teenager, Elvis hung out on Beale Street, listened to the Grand Ole Opry with his parents, and “Red, Hot and Blue” with his friends. When Elvis first walked into Sun Studio, he was asked who he sounded like. He said “I don’t sound like nobody.”

A nervous and shy teenager, Elvis paid \$4 to record a song, with hopes of being invited back. It took a year, and after playing with the Studio band for a couple of hours, Sam hadn’t heard anything he liked. So he gave them a break and left the room.

Then it happened!

They were just playing, having fun. Then, Sam said “What’s that!” Elvis said “We were just messing around.” Start it over!
Sam shouted - and the tape was rolling!

Elvis sang “That’s All Right” like no Blues song Sam had ever heard before. It had all the power and honesty of the Blues mixed with the wildness and exuberance of an all night party.

It jumped right up in your face and said “Like it or not, this is me and I’m not going away.” It said “Lock up your daughters!”

Rock N Roll Was Born!

Giant Voice!

Dressed In Black

One day in the Fall of 1954, Johnny Cash was sitting on the steps of Sun Studio when Sam came to work. He stood up and said "I'm John Cash, and I want you to hear me play."

With a voice like Johnny's - how could Sam have said no!

Sam listened to Johnny sing. He loved his voice and invited him back, but he said "write me an uptempo weeper love song."

"Cry! Cry! Cry" was Johnny's answer, released the next year.

Sparse and pure, it would break barriers between the pop and country music, setting him on a long career where his music would remain one of a kind, raw and unpolished

Johnny stuck a folded dollar bill under his guitar strings to get the raspy sound. Hey Sam, "listen to this!" Sam liked it!

One night after a show, "We got to talking about our wives and guys running around and so forth. I had a brand new baby and I said not me buddy - "I walk the line." That's where the song came from - Johnny wrote it that night. His fame just skyrocketed with the release of "I Walk The Line" changing all the rules.

Potato Sack Poet

“GO CAT GO!”

He was 22 years old, married, living in a government project, working as a farmhand, kids on the way... and poor as dirt.

Playing the bars at night with his brothers, Carl Perkin's music was born in the honkytonks of the South, with one-of-a-kind rhythm licks on the bass strings of his guitar

It wasn't long before Carl heard somebody named Elvis on the radio “The first singer I ever heard who sang a lot like me.”

It didn't take a week for Carl to pack up the Perkins brothers band in his old Hudson, with drums on the roof, and arrive at Sun Studio, begging Sam for a chance to play.

During a show, Carl saw a dancer in the crowd trying to keep his girlfriend from stepping on his blue suede shoes. So he wakes up at 3 o'clock in the morning and writes the song in pencil on the only thing he has - an empty potato sack. Three months later, Sun released the song on New Years Day, and Carl shoots to the TOP of all the music charts.

And changes his life forever!

21 Years Old Twice Married, Born Entertainer

ROCKS ORIGINAL BAD BOY!

Jerry Lee Lewis heard Elvis on the radio too. Jerry Lee thought his own wild kind of music might be liked a lot at Sun Studio, so he and his daddy sold 13 dozen eggs to pay for his trip to Memphis.

Jerry Lee signed on as a session player to make a little money, and spent lots of nights on Beale Street. Pounding on the ivories like a wild man, playing with his feet when he felt the messianic urges, playing so violently with his left hand - it sounded like a drummer!

Then it happened!

“Whole Lot A Shakin” hit the charts in 1957, followed six months later by “Great Balls Of Fire!” And Jerry Lee was setting pianos afire on national television, scaring parents everywhere, and in all aspects of his life - earning all of Rock’s first Bad Boy reputation.

“Hey Guys! Whatcha Doin”

They were all friends here. Elvis was the ringleader. He was the first, the one the others heard on the radio, the magnet that drew them to Sun Studio.

It was just a regular day in Sun Studio. Carl Perkins was in the Studio recording the song “Matchbox”. Jerry Lee was sitting in on the session piano. Elvis had signed with RCA a year earlier and came by just to say hello to his old friends. Johnny came by and all four just naturally did what they did when they get together - they broke out in a jam session!

Sam recorded the whole thing, of course. The newspaper ran the story and picture titled “The Million Dollar Quartet”.

Impossible! Each of them, dirt poor to impossibly successful in two or three years. From a nobody, with no chance at all - to fame, and millions of fans! All at number one on the charts!

All of them from a nothing little one-man recording Studio in an unremarkable - until then - Southern town. Just Impossible!

But True!



MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

Tuesday, December 4, 1956

"The only thing predictable about Elvis is that he's unpredictable. Yesterday, Carl (Blue Suede Shoes) Perkins was cutting some new records at Sun on Union. Elvis dropped in. So did Johnny Cash. Jerry Lee was already there. Elvis headed for the piano, and an old fashioned barrel house session with barber shop harmony resulted. In the picture are Sun's new discovery, Jerry Lee Lewis at the left, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, and the virtuoso at the little 88 is Elvis."

MEMPHIS PRESS SIMITAR

STILL ROCKIN!

**BRINGING WONDERFUL NEW
ARTISTS TO FANS EVERY WEEK
WITH SUN STUDIO SESSIONS
ON PBS AND WEB TV - RECORDED
RIGHT WHERE YOU STOOD
IN THE LEGENDARY STUDIO!**



SUN

