



## HANDY NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## W.C. HANDY MUSIC FESTIVAL

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### ALL IN: MAC McANALLY AND THE MUSCLE SHOALS REEFERS

Florence AL... For the first time in Handy Festival history, the Music Preservation Society, the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, and the Muscle Shoals Music Association have joined forces to present the headliner concert, **ALL IN: Mac McAnally and the Muscle Shoals Reefers**. This W.C. Handy Music Festival concert is at 7:30 pm on Saturday July 31, 2010, at Norton Auditorium on the University of North Alabama campus. Doors open at 6:30 pm. As of July 6, tickets will be available on-line at [www.TicketLeap.com](http://www.TicketLeap.com). Beginning July 14, tickets can also be purchased at the Handy Festival Headquarters (Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts Annex), located at 217 E. Tuscaloosa Street, Florence, AL; office hours are 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Monday thru Saturday. Tickets will also be available the night of the concert at the Norton Auditorium Box Office. Prices are as follows and include sales tax and fees - credit card fees are added, all sections are open seating: \$25, \$30, \$35. VIP tickets are available by advance purchase only – the price is \$250 and includes two reserved seats, a Meet & Greet Reception with Mac McAnally and a photo. For additional information, call 256-764-7642.

**Mac McAnally** has already established his place in music history as a celebrated songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, producer and recording artist, but you've never heard him in performance as he'll appear in his upcoming Handy Concert. Usually performing solo, Mac will be joined by an "all-star" band consisting of two members of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band (with whom he tours), and a dream line-up of much-admired musicians and back-up singers who all hold claim to the "roots of Muscle Shoals" music – this band is **The Muscle Shoals Reefers**. The show will be a retrospective of McAnally's career, covering the hits he has written as well as highlights from his solo albums. The title of the concert **ALL IN** reflects on his long and diverse career. This isn't just any concert; it's a celebration of Mac McAnally, The Shoals' music, and the many musicians who brought that to light.

A native of Red Bay, AL, Mac McAnally grew up in Belmont, MS. He was a guitar and piano prodigy who performed in clubs at 13, wrote his first song at 15 and in 1976 at the age of 19, moved to The Shoals and began pursuing a career in the music industry. Mac signed on as a song writer and artist with Wishbone Production and Publishing companies. At 19, he had his first record deal with Ariola which launched two singles to moderate success on the Billboard Hot AC chart. "It's A Crazy World" was in the Top 10 at and "Minimum Love" was in the Top 40.

His songwriting drew the attention of Jimmy Buffett and Hank Williams, Jr., both of whom cut McAnally songs. Alabama took his "Old Flame" to No. 1 in 1981. The song cemented his status as a hit maker, a reputation that continues to this day. Over the course of his career he's built an enviable treasure-trove of credits for an array of artists

that includes Roy Orbison, Hank Williams, Jr., Amy Grant, Jimmy Buffett, Travis Tritt, Linda Ronstadt, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Dolly Parton and many more. His guitar and vocal skills weren't confined to the studio as he joined Buffett's touring Coral Reefer band, an association that continues to this day. McAnally has also produced several of Buffett's albums and written many of his songs.

McAnally recently signed to Show Dog Universal Music, the young but immensely successful independent launched by Toby Keith. "There's nobody more respected, at least when it comes to musicians and people who really know this business, than Mac McAnally," Keith said of bringing McAnally to the company. "Getting to be a part of whatever Mac wants to do is an honor for me, and for everyone at the label." The release of his new self-penned album 'Down by the River', his signing to a prominent Nashville label and a recent No. 1 single – as a writer and an artist – are all significant pieces of this unexpected new image. And even though Mac McAnally doesn't really need these new colors on his already breathtaking career canvas, their seemingly unassailable emergence might indicate something else. Maybe, just maybe, the music needs him.

Another admirer of Mac and his music is Kenny Chesney. The man who had already recorded McAnally's "Back Where I Come From" asked for a little help when he decided to cut Mac's "Down The Road." Powered by vocals from both artists, the song reached the No. 1 spot in the spring of 2009 and was nominated in the ACM Vocal Event category. "I am really happy about having a No. 1 with my very good friend, and frankly, one of my songwriting heroes," Chesney said at the time.

His accomplishments are now beginning to be fully recognized. In 2007, McAnally was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. The following year, the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame followed suit, while the Country Music Association named him Musician of the Year. In March, 2010 Mac was given the first-ever "Jerry Wexler Award" by the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. Mac continues to maintain his roots in The Shoals, where he owns and operates his own recording studio.

The triumvirate presenting this once-in-a-lifetime concert experience expressed their thoughts on working together:

"The Music Preservation Society is proud to partner with The Alabama Music Hall of Fame and the Muscle Shoals Music Association for the first time in jointly presenting our Handy Festival concert headliner, Mac McAnally. We join together as part of the MPS mission to preserve, promote, and present the musical heritage of Northwest Alabama in honoring Florence native William Christopher Handy." Selwyn Jones, President of the Board of Directors, Music Preservation Society.

John Briggs, Chairman of the Board of The Alabama Music Hall of Fame states, "The Alabama Hall of Fame is excited about the new partnership between the Music Preservation Society and the Muscle Shoals Music Association in presenting the Mac McAnally concert this year at the W.C. Handy Music Festival. We are proud to be involved in the growth of the area and in assisting in the expansion of the Handy Festival with this concert."

"We are thrilled to be working together (for the first time) with the Music Preservation Society and The Alabama Music Hall of Fame towards the same goals in presenting Mac McAnally in concert at the Handy Festival. Mac is a "favorite son" in The Shoals; I've always been impressed by him, and even more so at this point in his career." David Hood, President of the Muscle Shoals Music Association.

### **The Muscle Shoals Reefers**

Joining Mac on bass is **Jim Mayer**, a member of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band. The son of a minister, he was born and spent an early part of his life in India before relocating to Missouri. Mayer, who currently resides in Nashville, TN, has played with legends such as James Taylor, Ringo Starr, and Joni Mitchell through the years, and is also an award-winning children's artist.

Drummer **Roger Guth** (aka "Scotch"), is also a member of Buffett's Coral Reefer Band and tours with the Peter Mayer Group. He has released two solo albums in addition to co-writing scores of Jimmy Buffet releases. Guth's writing credits include Vanessa Williams' "Moonlight Over Paris" and PM's Top 10 hit, "Piece of Paradise". Guth, who hails from the St. Louis area, is currently based in Nashville.

**Steve Nathan** is a much in demand session player lending his keyboard excellence to a “Who’s Who” of the music industry. Nathan has recorded for a number of artists including Levon Helm, Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, Dobie Gray, Brooks and Dunn, and Alan Jackson. The Buffalo, New York native moved to Muscle Shoals in 1977 and began recording for Rick Hall at Fame Studios; Nathan relocated in 1991 to Nashville where he began a new phase in an already illustrious recording career.

Playing electric guitar is singer, songwriter, studio musician, and producer **Jack Pearson**, who has worked and recorded with artists such as Gregg Allman, Jimmy Buffett, Bobby “Blue” Bland, and Govt. Mule. The Nashville, Tenn. native has also released four solo albums.

**Duncan Cameron**, formerly of The Amazing Rhythm Aces and Sawyer Brown, joins Mac on electric guitar. Cameron, who was born in Utica, New York, has recorded with a variety of artists over the years, including Toby Keith, Glen Frey, Bobby “Blue” Bland, Levon Helm, Little Feat, and McAnally.

On background vocals:

**Cindy Richardson Walker**. The Dyersburg, TN native’s vocals have been featured on a number of recordings – she was an integral part of a trio of background vocalists included in the early Muscle Shoals recordings. Cindy has worked with artists such as Shania Twain, Etta James, Gregg Allman, and George Jones.

**Rachel Wilson** has spent much of her career as a professional singer, travelling all over the U.S., Africa and Asia singing with artists Lenny LeBlanc, Don Moen, and Michael W. Smith, to name a few. She is well-known to The Shoals recording studios and has added her background vocals on music for Mac McAnally, Jimmy Buffett, Randy Travis, Teddy Gentry, and numerous others.

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