



# SHRIMP BOAT SOUND

ECHOES FROM THE EDGE

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

DIRECTED BY MICHAEL J. KIRK

# VINYLL

STUDIOS



**JOHN ESPOSITO**

CEO/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
PRODUCER



**LIZ ROSE**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
PRODUCER



**MICHAEL J. KIRK**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
PRODUCER  
DIRECTOR

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On the southernmost edge of the United States lies a weathered recording studio perched over turquoise waters. “Shrimp Boat Sound” has quietly birthed some of the most iconic music of the last four decades. This documentary dives into the soul of the studio, by its creator Jimmy Buffett, and the creative legends drawn to Key West’s salty mystique.



# SYNOPSIS

Nestled against the sun-bleached docks of Key West, Florida, Shrimp Boat Sound isn't your typical world-class recording studio. It's off the grid, both literally and creatively—a place where musicians escape to reconnect with their muse. Built by Jimmy Buffett as a sonic hideaway, Shrimp Boat Sound is a testament to the power of location, mood, and ocean air in the creative process.

“Shrimp Boat Sound: Echoes from the Edge” explores the studio's origin, its deep connection to Buffett's "Gulf & Western" sound, and its draw for artists like Zac Brown Band, Kenny Chesney, Alan Jackson, and many others who found magic in the laid-back island lifestyle.

Blending archival footage, intimate interviews, and never-before-seen sessions, the film captures the music, madness, and magic that only happens when creativity is given room to drift with the tide. From tales of late-night jam sessions to stories of songwriting over conch fritters and cold beer, this is the untold story of one of America's most unusual—and beloved—recording spaces.





# STRUCTURE

## Act I – Origins of an Island Sound

- We briefly look at Jimmy Buffett's history to understand the inspiration for the studio
- We explore the conception and construction of Shrimp Boat Sound in the late 80s
- We discover how they established a studio that breaks every rule—no sterile rooms, no clocks, no pressure

## Act II – The Studio That Shouldn't Work, But Does

- The film looks at the technical uniqueness of the space
- We hear from producers, engineers, and musicians who recorded there
- They tell stories behind notable albums: *License to Chill*, *The Road and the Rodeo*, *Be As You Are*
- We are immersed in anecdotes of wild nights, hurricane threats, and songs born from the sea breeze.

## Act III – Echoes and Legacy

- We highlight Buffett's lasting influence on the studio and Key West
- We show how the studio fostered a new genre hybrid: saltwater country, beach rock, and trop rock
- Finally, we cement the soul of the studio as a metaphor for artistic freedom in an overproduced world

# VISION AND TONE

- Warm, sun-drenched cinematography with soft pastels and maritime textures
- Archival Super 8 footage mixed with crisp modern interviews
- Music-led transitions using raw session audio and acoustic demos
- A rhythmic, meditative pace—letting the island life breathe through the storytelling



# THEMES

CREATIVITY VS. COMMERCIALIZATION

ESCAPISM AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

THE BOND BETWEEN MUSIC AND PLACE

JIMMY BUFFETT'S CULTURAL FOOTPRINT

FINDING PEACE THROUGH PROCESS, NOT PRODUCT

# KEY INTERVIEWS

- Mac McAnally - producer, longtime Buffett collaborator
- George Strait
- Members of Zac Brown Band
- Kenny Chesney
- Alan Jackson
- Sound engineers and studio managers from Shrimp Boat Sound
- Key West locals
- Jimmy Buffett archival interviews



# TARGET AUDIENCE

- Music lovers and documentary fans
- Fans of Jimmy Buffett, country, and coastal Americana
- Viewers of music docs like Sound City, Echo in the Canyon, or Muscle Shoals
- Distribution: Netflix, HBO Docs, Amazon Prime, or indie film circuits



# LOCAL IMPACT

## FILM & TOURISM

While Key West already has a strong and steady relationship with tourism, films like *Shrimp Boat Sound* have been shown to propel large and steady growth for smaller communities.

In 2013, the film *Muscle Shoals* was released. It was a feature length documentary that focused on the history and impacts of small studios and communities that grew from them in Northern Alabama.

Since the release of the film, the surrounding areas have experienced a boom in tourism that continues to grow now, more than 10 years after the release .

Support for this film could easily be returned in increased tourism and travel spending for the Key West area.

## ***MUSCLE SHOALS* IMPACT ON COLBERT AND LAUDERDALE COUNTIES IN ALABAMA**

“The Alabama Tourism Department released a report showing travelers spent \$210 million in Lauderdale County last year, and they were responsible for more than 2,500 jobs. Stanfield said with such a demand, the hospitality here continues to grow to meet those demands...Tourism played a bigger role this year in the Lauderdale County economy by about seven percent. Tourism leaders don't expect that to slow down any time soon.” 2015

**TOURISM CONTINUES TO SOAR IN LAUDERDALE COUNTY - APR 13, 2015**

“After the documentary,” Hall says, “we were basically forced to start giving tours [at FAME Studios], because people just started showing up to, you know, see where all this went down. We had the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, and it had always struggled because it was kind of a standalone situation here. Now we've got thousands of people a year coming through here [FAME] and Muscle Shoals Sound, and the hall of fame is doing better than it's ever done.”

**HOW THE 'MUSCLE SHOALS' DOCUMENTARY CHANGED MUSCLE SHOALS MUSIC'S FUTURE - APR 21, 2023**

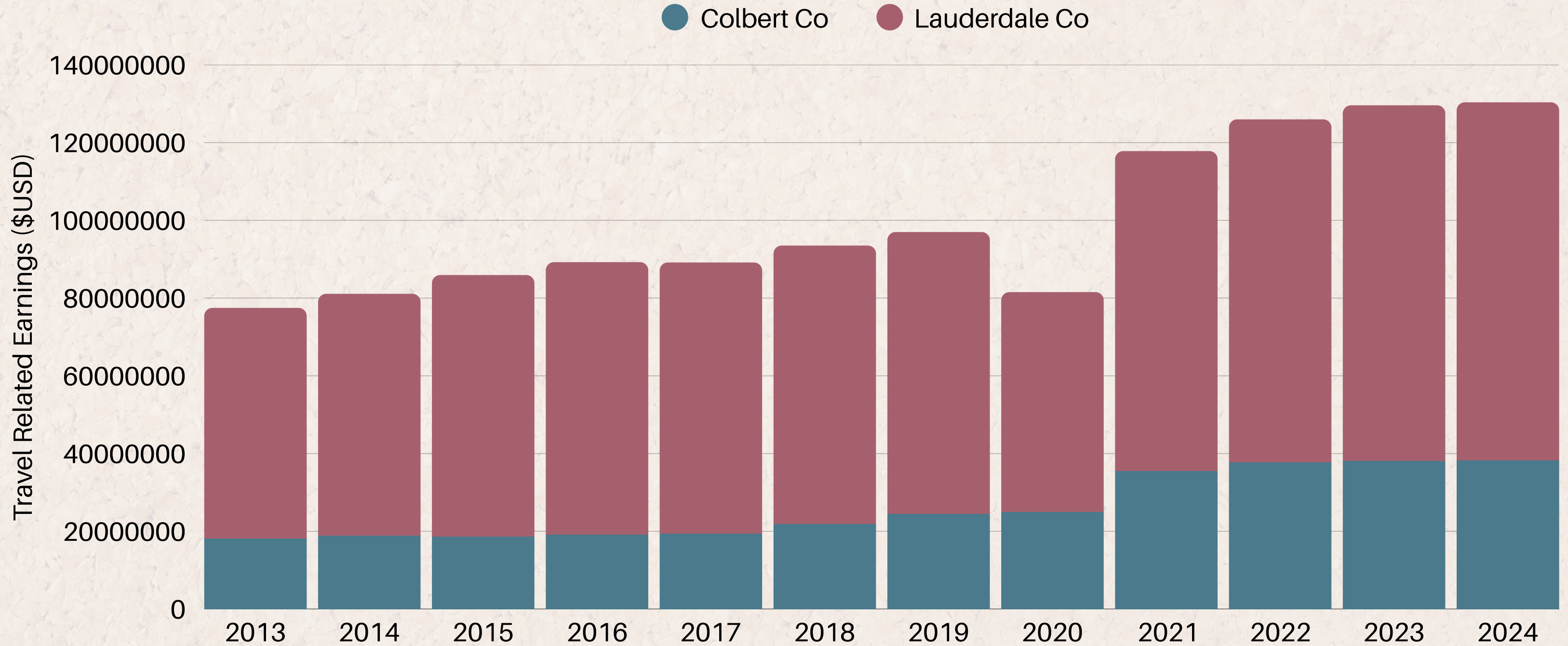
“Colbert County saw a big win last year, raking in over \$115 million in tourism revenue.”

**COLBERT COUNTY SEES SURGE IN TOURISM REVENUE - MAY 19, 2025**

“North Alabama Tourism Expenditures Set New Record: Tourists visited North Alabama's attractions, campgrounds, state parks, and hotels in record numbers in 2024 spending a record \$4.9 billion last year, with the trend on pace for even greater growth during the current year. In total, visitors in North Alabama spent \$4,923,556,642, increasing by \$615,969,195 since 2023 and growing by rate of 3.9%. Direct jobs within the industry grew to 34,705 in 2024, continuing to increase at a rate of 2%. The total impact of the travel and tourism industry on North Alabama's earnings in 2024 is estimated to be \$1.4 billion, up 3.6% from the previous year's estimates of \$1.35 billion.”

**AMLA 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW**

# *MUSCLE SHOALS* IMPACT ON COLBERT AND LAUDERDALE COUNTIES IN ALABAMA



<https://tourism.alabama.gov/about-us/reports-hub>



**VINYLL Studios, LLC is a pioneering, music-centric production company dedicated to creating and distributing compelling music content.**

**Our mission is to deepen the connection between the song, the listener, the artist, and the fan, shining a light on the profound impact of songwriters through storytelling.**

**We celebrate the entire creative journey, from the raw beginnings with songwriters, to the breathtaking final masterpieces with artists.**



**[vinyllstudios.com](http://vinyllstudios.com)**



## **JOHN ESPOSITO**

### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER | PRODUCER**

Former Chairman and CEO of Warner Music Nashville  
Chairman, Board of Trustees | T.J. Martell Foundation

John Esposito led Warner Music Nashville for 15 years. In that role, he oversaw a period of historic growth, during which time WMN quadrupled its market share. Throughout his tenure, its artists earned over 80 chart-topping singles, dozens of gold and platinum sales certifications, and GRAMMY, CMA, ACM, Billboard, AMA, and People's Choice awards ranging from New Artist to Entertainer of the Year. The Music Row powerhouse includes Blake Shelton, Kenny Chesney, Zac Brown Band, Dan + Shay, Brett Eldredge, Cole Swindell, Ashley McBryde, Cody Johnson, and a group of young artists who represent the genre's next generation like Ingrid Andress, Gabby Barrett, and Bailey Zimmerman, to name a few. Esposito was appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the T.J. Martell Foundation in January 2023.

A native of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Espo is a lifelong musician who attended Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He soaked in music from all angles, from spinning records at his campus radio station to playing in bands, while he earned a B.A. in journalism. Espo began his music industry career with retail chain The Wiz as COO of its Music and Movies division. He went on to executive roles at Polygram's Polymedia Division and Island Def Jam Music Group. Espo's Warner career began with a stint as president/CEO of WEA, WMG's sales and marketing division, before being named to the post at WMN in 2009.

The industry staple has been chairman of the board of the Country Music Association, governor of the Nashville Chapter Board of NARAS, and an Executive Committee board member of the Country Radio Broadcasters Association. Other leadership roles include the Leadership Music, board director for the Nashville Convention & Visitor's Bureau, and executive board member of Senator Bill Frist's Nashville Health board. Esposito created WMN's environmental campaign, for which he was awarded Music Biz's Green Award for Environmental Responsibility and the Natural Resources Defense Council's "Forces for Nature" honor. He also served on Warner Music Group's global ERG board, helping guide large-scale corporate social responsibility efforts. Additional achievements span the Presidential Award for Outstanding Executive Achievement (Music Biz), the Innovator of the Year Award (Innovation in Music Awards), and an honorary doctorate of music from Monmouth University.



**LIZ ROSE**  
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER | PRODUCER**

Liz Rose, Co-Producer, is a Songwriter Hall of Fame inductee, multiple GRAMMY Award-winning songwriter, founder of Liz Rose Music publishing company, and Texas Heritage Songwriter Hall of Fame inductee.

A frequent collaborator of Taylor Swift, she also won Song Of The Year at the Country Music Association awards and GRAMMY Best Country Song for the Little Big Town smash, "Girl Crush". She has also penned songs for Miranda Lambert, Tim McGraw, Dan + Shay, Parker McCollum, Vince Gill, Blake Shelton, Kenny Chesney, Chris Young, and more.

She is a dedicated contributor to the Nashville songwriting community, serving on the boards of NSAI and CMA and, most recently, as one of only two songwriters on the board of NMPA.



**MICHAEL J. KIRK**  
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER | PRODUCER | DIRECTOR**

Kirk is an Emmy Award-winning independent filmmaker who has directed, produced, and written over 140 projects in the past 27 years.

His projects have aired on public, commercial, and streaming platforms, including PBS, History Channel, A&E, The Weather Channel, Amazon Prime Video, and Apple TV.

Michael is the director and writer of "Find Your Groove," which won best documentary at Bruce Springsteen's Asbury Park Film Festival and Community Award.

Kirk also directed, produced, and wrote "Mr. Nelson on the North Side," a film about the musician Prince.



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