



**William Semmes “Bleu” Evans (May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1950)  
Recording Engineer/Producer and Recording Studio  
Acoustic Designer. Member of The Louisiana Music  
Hall of Fame.**

William S. Evans (known as “Bleu” Evans in the entertainment industry) is a recording engineer, producer, and studio acoustic designer and builder, who is a Louisiana Native. He designed and built Studio in the Country (the third studio he built, one of the world’s most famous and productive studios ever) in Bogalusa, Louisiana at the age of 21. He began drawing the plans for the design at age 16, started construction in 1972, and completed the studio, with the help of his father, R.S. “Smokey” Evans. The studio opened to the public on July 7, 1973. His creation has attracted many famous artists and producers who recorded albums producing sales of over 170 million units. Over 62 Gold and Platinum Albums have been recorded, mixed, or been partially recorded at Studio in the Country (United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia). Many of these albums were also engineered and/or produced by Evans.

These artists represent numerous multi-platinum records that were produced at Studio in the Country. They include classic platinum albums by Kansas: “Masque”, “Leftoverture”, and “Point of Know Return”. “Leftoverture” and “Point of Know Return” contained the gold-certified hits: "Carry On Wayward Son" and "Dust in the Wind". Other Gold and Platinum albums from Studio in the Country include “Stevie Wonder's Journey



Through the Secret Life of Plants”, “Stevie Wonder's Original Musiquarium, Vol. 1”, Stevie’s “At the Close of a Century”, and “Song Review”, “Save His Soul” by Blues Traveler, “Smells Like Children” by Marilyn Manson, “Boats, Beaches, Bars and Ballads” by Jimmy Buffett, “Heartbreak Station” by Cinderella, "Inspiration", certified-gold, by Maze, Featuring Frankie Beverly, and the 11 times platinum “Dirty Dancing” soundtrack album.

Additional work done at Studio in the Country includes “The Hungry Years” by Willie Nelson was recorded here by Evans and many additional tracks by Willie Nelson which appear in the movie “On the Road Again” and 2 additional albums, the Jack Nitzsche-produced The Neville Brothers, “Fiyo On The Bayou” by The Neville Brothers, “Louis Prima Meets Robin Hood” by Louis Prima (Disney Pictures), The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's certified-gold “An American Dream”, the certified-gold “Inspiration” by Frankie Beverly and Maze, Thunderhead's self-titled first album (produced by Johnny Winter and Bleu Evans), Zebra's certified-gold self-titled debut album “Zebra”, “Rock'n'Roll Gumbo” by Professor Longhair, Pete Fountain's “Alive in New Orleans”, The Wild Magnolias “They Call Us Wild” by The Wild Magnolias, Peter Yarrow's “That's Enough For Me”, numerous albums by Louisiana's Le Roux (including the hit single "New Orleans Ladies"), “Lonesome Road” by Doc Watson, Betty Davis' “Is It Love Or Desire”, “High Life” by Frankie Miller, "Spanish Doors" from the “Adorata” EP by The Gutter Twins, “American Patchwork” by Anders



Osborne, and “My Feet Can't Fail Me Now” by The Dirty Dozen Brass Band.

Albums including Grammy Award winner “I'm Here”, “Frenchin' the Boogie”, and the Grammy Hall of Fame Inductee along with Studio in the Country, “Bogalusa Boogie” by Clifton Chenier were recorded here and numerous albums by Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, including “Blackjack” and the Grammy-winning “Alright Again” were also recorded and mixed at Studio in the Country.

Other artists who have used the studio include Ani DiFranco, Johnny Winter, Edger Winter, The Mills Brothers, Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros, Greg Dulli, Gregg Wright, Potliquor, Phil Harris, The Twilight Singers, Perry Como, L'il Queenie and the Percolators, Wilson Turbinton (Willie Tee), Johnny Nash, Ronnie Kole, Dr. John, Leslie Uggams, Dick Van Dyke, Mandrill, Memphis Slim, Dick Rivers (The French Elvis), Tony Joe White, Zachary Richard, Wayne Newton, Melanie, The Scoundrels (UK), C.C. Adcock and Revolution Mother (whose lead singer is professional skateboarder Mike Vallely), Allen Toussaint, Linda Ronstadt, John D. Loudermilk, Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys, Revolution Mother, Supagroup, and The Iguanas.

Evans also recorded and mixed or was a consultant for many motion picture sound tracks with Jack Nitzsche producing including “Cruising” with Al Pacino, “The



Exorcist”, “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”, “King of the Mountain” with Deborah Van Valkenburgh, and “Officer and A Gentleman” with Richard Gere. Evans also engineered work in motion pictures for Dennis Hopper.

He has also recorded in other studios around the world with artists including Sammy Davis, Jr.’s “Now” album, which includes the Number 1 hit record “Candy Man”. The “Now” album was Sammy’s and Bleu’s first Gold Certified Album. Eric Burdon and War, Lou Rawls, John Hiatt, Buddy Miles, Tanya Tucker, Hank Cochran, Emmylou Harris, Willy Nelson, Judy Collins, Rodney Crowell, George Jones, Buddy Guy, Michael Sembello (of “Manic” fame), Doug Kershaw at Studio in the Country and Hollywood, Glen Campbell, The Osmonds, Artie Butler, The Cripples, Willy “Mink” DeVille, Judy Collins, The Germs, Teenage News, Ronnie Kole (recorded Ronnie’s album “Live at Carnegie Hall”), Rick Nelson (recorded Rick’s last album, “Playing To Win”, before his unfortunate death in a plane crash), Governor Jimmy Davis’ “Live” album at the First Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, LA., The Los Angeles Philharmonic at Capitol Records in Hollywood, CA., and recorded the London Philharmonic Orchestra and mixed Le Roux’s album “Keep the Fire Burning” album at George Martin’s (Producer of the Beatles) Air Studios in London. Evans was infamous for accidentally breaking the Beatles' Producer, George Martin's leg in a limousine accident at Air Studios London. The limousine had bullet proof doors and Evans did not see George getting out on Bleu's side and Bleu slammed the door unknowingly.



Evans was also instrumental in bringing a “Recording Engineering Degree Program” before the LSU Board of Regents who later made it a reality. He has also shared his recording theories, knowledge of acoustics, and his “Mountain and Valley Equalization System” with a great group of engineers and producers who he employed at Studio in the Country. These include Lynn and Lee Peterzell (Tim McGraw, Eddie Rabbit, Clint Black and many more), David Farrell (Gatemouth Brown, James Booker, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Dr. John, Irma Thomas, Jacques Higelin, and too many others to mention), Steven Hodge (Boston, Janet Jackson) Edwin Hobgood (Chris Isaak), Jimmy Stroud, (Jimmy Buffett, Clint Black), Paul Black (several artists), Ray Black (Kansas and others), and Bruce Irving (several artists).

After selling the studio Evans bought his father’s wholesale distribution company, “The Evans Tobacco Company” (later changed to “The Evans Distribution Group”. The company distributed to convenience stores in 7 states. This company was sold to John Georges, C.E.O. of Georges Enterprises and is now called “Imperial Trading Co.” Evans also owned a chain of convenience stores in 5 states.

Evans also started a new software company, “Creative Data Research, Inc”. CDR developed the most used software system in the wholesale distribution industry in the United States. The CDR “DAC System” (Distributor-Analysis-Control) is used by distributors in all 50 states.





Evans is also considered by many to be the “Father of Pay at the Pump Technology”. Evans created the “Encompos” touch screen point of sale system which is found in almost every convenience store in the U.S. and worldwide. His idea was to not only allow a customer to pay at the pump but more important was his design of a system which would take the three main discrete systems that were in use at the time: point of sale register, electronic pump controller, and credit card verification systems. Evans moved them to a touch screen PC combining the three systems in to one totally integrated platform by replacing hardware with custom written software code. This is The CDR Encompos Retail Point of Sale System. The Encompos system was sold to Gillbarco, a division of Exxon.

Evans has produced concerts for charities; his favorite is St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, TN, who saved the life of his daughter, Kimberly Allison Evans. Bleu has 6 children: Dawn, a housewife in Covington, LA., Kimberly Allison Evans (deceased), Christopher S. Evans, a construction engineer with degrees in Constuction Engineering and Business, (LSU), Kate E. Evans, an entertainment, motion picture and television attorney as well involved in production, (LSU, Loyola University, NOLA), Lizzie E. Evans, a software analyst, (LSU), and Patrick J.S. Evans who graduated in 2017 with a degree in International Studies from LSU. Patrick is bilingual and can be found in many Central and South American Countries studying, performing Spanish Language interpretation, and teaching English.



Bleu Evans is an alumnus of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge (LSU, Business Administration), The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA, General Physics), and Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (BYU, Acoustical Physics).

*Mike Shepherd stated, "Bleu Evans is truly one of the most influential people in the history of Louisiana Music". "Bleu Evans is completely deserving of a place in the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame".*

***This is a compilation of the Board of Directors of The Louisiana Music Hall of Fame, Mike Shepherd, President and Director. Dell Moon is a Board Member and Co-Founder of the organization.***