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JUKE-JOINT SONGWRITER KEVIN GORDON TURNS TO FOLK ART FOR INSPIRATION, AS ON NPR'S WORLD CAFE SPINS NEW TUNES DUE SEPTEMBER 4, 2015, GORDON'S SPLIT ACOUSTIC/ELECTRIC RECORD IMMERSSED IN SOUTHERN CULTURE

Songwriter Kevin Gordon fills his newest album, 'Long Gone Time,' with the sounds and stories of the American South, pulling heavily from his own upbringing in Louisiana — as well as his acclaimed collection of folk art — for inspiration.

Called a "juke-joint professor emeritus" by Rolling Stone, Gordon has spent the past twenty years making swampy, bluesy music that bridges the gap between old and new, with one foot planted in his influences and the other inching toward something new. At the same time, he's also boosted his connection to the culture through his work as a folk art collector.

For Gordon, those two passions — making music and collecting folk art — have gone hand in hand. Released September 4th, 'Long Gone Time' continues his immersion in southern culture. The album was produced by Joe V. McMahan, features guitar by Bo Ramsey, and was recorded live, with Gordon splitting the album into an even mix of acoustic tracks and full-band performances.

Gordon has served as curator of the Nashville-based Gordon Gallery for years. Three months before the release of 'Long Gone Time,' he also staged an art show at the nearby Riverwood Mansion in Nashville. The exhibit, which was previewed in an article by 'Nashville Arts,' included selections from his folk art collection, as well as live performances from Gordon himself. "[I was reading] a survey of folk art from the South from 1930 to 1980, and I was fascinated. There were short biographies of all the artists, and I just got eaten up," Gordon says in the article, adding that he began cultivating personal relationships with a few of the folk artists who made appearances in the book.

Although folk art has always been a strong muse for the Americana/rock & roll songwriter, Gordon's own has inspired other artists, too, with musicians like Levon Helm, Keith Richards, Todd Snider, and Irma Thomas all recording his songs. Last week, NPR World Cafe broadcasted "GTO" and "Crowville" from the new album on its national show.

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