

This Baton Rouge concert venue might be closing this summer

By Dillon Lowe

[Red Dragon Listening Room](#), an intimate nonprofit concert venue on Florida Boulevard, is closing this summer after 24 years in business—unless its owners can find a buyer interested in carrying the torch.

Chris Maxwell, who owns the venue with his wife Liz, tells *Daily Report* that the decision to close was made because he and his wife are retiring.

“We’re just getting old,” he says. “It’s not a bankruptcy or anything crazy. I just turned 65 and it just seems like a good time to retire.”

Red Dragon Listening Room’s final concert is scheduled for June 5, though the Maxwells will continue to host their Red Dragon Songwriter Series at downtown’s [Manship Theatre](#) through the end of the year.

In the meantime, the husband-and-wife duo will seek a buyer interested in keeping the venue alive, though Chris says it’s unlikely that it would remain a nonprofit under new ownership.

“My wife and I own the building, and most years, we end up forgiving 10 or 11 months’ worth of rent,” he says. “A nonprofit isn’t going to be able to afford any kind of rent, really. And we always made sure the artists got paid extremely well, which is how we got such fine artists. I would think that anybody who wants to go into this would have to go into it as a for-profit business.”

Red Dragon Listening Room opened its doors in 2001 and has hosted hundreds of local and touring acts in the time since.

The venue is notable for its intimacy. Inside of the small and unassuming white-brick building, the Maxwells have crafted an ambience more reminiscent of a cozy living room than a concert hall, complete with an eclectic setup of donated chairs, couches and theater seats.

As a nonprofit, nothing is sold at any of the venue's shows—patrons are encouraged to bring their own food, ice chests and even well-behaved dogs—and every cent of ticket proceeds goes directly to the artists performing.

"Looking back, I guess I'm most proud of 24 years and 1,316 concerts," Chris says.

Two potential buyers have already shown interest in the business, though a sale is far from set in stone. Interested buyers can reach Chris at cmaxwell@premier.net.

URL: <https://www.businessreport.com/business/this-baton-rouge-concert-venue-might-be-closing-this-summer>