

THIRD DAY'S NEW DVD | DC TALK'S MICHAEL TAIT SCORES ★★★★★

CCM

MUSIC TO CHANGE your WORLD

PFR

Rises Again

PLUS ONE

Live in Concert

CeCe Winans

What This Woman Wants

ALL ACCESS

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The mission of CCM MAGAZINE is to rock your world with the transforming power of the gospel as seen through the lives and music of today's best Christian artists.

And It's Surely To Their Credit

It's our birthday! In 1977 CCM MAGAZINE began emerging as a publication of record for Christian music. Neither we, nor Christian music, could be here today without inspiring guidance. This issue highlights some of that leadership.

Longtime columnist John Fischer is one of the best observers of Christian music and culture and delivers a pointed challenge to us on page 74. Moreover, we're proud to report John was honored in May at this year's Evangelical Press Association convention in San Diego, taking home the Higher Goals award for a standing column. John, thank you for your discernment, challenging us to think different about life and faith.

The second installment of our new On the Record editorial lands this month (p. 14). Debuting in May, this column did exactly what we intended: It stirred your minds and, through your letters, started a new discussion forum among readers. (Look for that to occur on the Web, too, at ccmmagazine.com.) The crossfire heats up this month with a top industry leader, guest columnist Frank Breeden, president of the Gospel Music Association, who argues the Dove Awards are an asset to Christian music. Discussion threads online, plus your letters about our Dove coverage, suggest some of you will disagree with Mr. Breeden. Read his opinion and let us know what you think.

Our main story profiles one of Christian music's most visible leaders. First appearing on our cover in February 1989 (with her brother, BeBe), CeCe Winans spoke about the duo's mission: "A lot of young people don't listen to gospel music or go out and buy it because they don't feel it relates to them and don't feel the freedom to be young and express themselves. We like to have fun in our performances and get the point across that living for Jesus, living a clean life, doesn't mean living a boring life." Extending that invitation to discover God countless times through the many songs, public appearances and outreach programs she's been involved with has made Winans one of the most respected and passionate Christian leaders. For her contributions, and for the first time as a solo artist on our cover, we honor CeCe with this story.

Regretfully, this month we must extend best wishes to outgoing CCM MAGAZINE Editor April Hefner. During her editorship she brought a smart but accessible sophistication to the magazine, pounding into the heads of her staff that we are here to serve you, the reader, not our personal agendas. Few of us like to be told what to think, and April refrained from that. With traditional journalism as her rod and reel, and like teaching someone to fish instead of just giving them food, she served platters of ideas by tackling risky stories—like the issue of AIDS—through the experiences of Christian artists. With occasional special reports, she inspired extensive inquiries into hot-button issues—celebrity image v. Christian ministry; the state of Christian music in the face of corporate buyouts; the purpose of Christian music. April, on behalf of the staff of CCM Communications, it has been our honor to work with you. Thank you for your leadership. We're excited for you about what's next.

Leadership... it's a precious commodity. Draw now from the leaders in this issue. Read the news. Become informed. Aspire to lead.



Gregory Rumburg



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SOLO SUPPORTERS

I just finished reading the May issue articles on dc talk's Toby McKeehan, Michael Tait and Kevin Max. Thanks so much for not just writing a fluffy, scratch-the-surface type article, but one that really delved into what the guys have been going through emotionally and spiritually.

Linda Cifuentes
Garland, TX

I was extremely touched by the May issue of CCM MAGAZINE. I was finally able to see the individuals of dc talk. Reading the interview with Michael Tait really inspired me at heart. I thank God for using these guys in such a powerful way. I thank CCM for being one of God's many messengers.

Travis Browning
Starke, FL

REDESIGN STRIKES CHORD

I subscribed to CCM MAGAZINE in the summer of 1999 and have received an issue each month since. Today I received the May 2001 issue, and I was surprised to see a completely new design. I found it lively and fresh, and I really like the new tag line. Overall I found this issue centered on Christ more than I've seen in other issues.

Justin Hanna
Street, MD

IDOL JUDGEMENT

I was moved by Gregory Rumburg's "On the Record" column in the May issue. It made me realize that Christian singers are just as human as we are, and we cannot expect them to be perfect. We help friends and family when they make mistakes but point fingers and fume with disgust when Christian music artists, our esteemed role models, slip. We put too much of our faith and adoration in them when we should be putting it in God.

Marty Pendleton
Fort Mill, SC



CREDIT TO BAKKER

Thank you so much for writing the article on Jay Bakker [May 2001]. Some people are so closed minded and think hard rock styles of music cannot reach people. As we see in his story that's obviously not true.

People need to not be so quick to judge others by appearance and personality, just because it doesn't appeal to them.

Hannah Krakauer
Sun City, CA

HIP-HOP NOT HAPPENIN'

Thank you very much for the article "Music Without Walls" [May 2001]. I really like rap and hip-hop music, and I'm glad to see a magazine which is addressing the issue of why urban music doesn't get Christian radio and Christian bookstore coverage. Also, thank you for not ignoring urban music in your coverage, interviews and articles.

Brian Chau
Vancouver, WA



The answer to your question of why urban music does not get the same exposure as other Christian music genres is less sinister than your article suggests. Despite your magazine's generous rating system, the reality is that the music is not as original or as good as its general market competition. Urban music has led the industry in breaking down walls and stereotypes, but Christian artists tend to feel dated and out of touch.

Steve Woodside
Portland, OR

NEEDING HONEST REVIEWS

I feel I must respond to the Feedback letter in your April issue which states: "If you continue to slam artists' new albums with negative reviews, how do you expect your readers to buy this type of music?" Well, because I am forced to buy Christian music off the Internet in expensive U.S. dollars and face long shipping times and the fact that if I do not like the CD I cannot return it or sell it, I find the reviews helpful in making

my mind up as to what I buy. Of course, I do not just rely only on the reviews from CCM MAGAZINE, but it helps me get a broader picture of what the album is like. Please realize that there are people who, for whatever reason, rely on CCM's CD reviews.

Ben Kinnear
Victoria, Australia

Correction: Stereotype Be is the correct title of the upcoming solo record from Kevin Max.

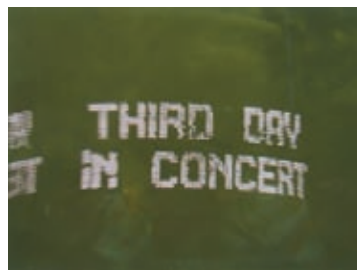
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CHRISTIAN MUSIC NEWS & HAPPENINGS



Scenes from *The Offerings Experience*

NOTHIN' BUT NET

THIRD DAY OFFERS ITS FIRST DVD EXCLUSIVELY ON THE WEB

For those who just can't get enough of Third Day, the men from Atlanta have released their first-ever DVD, *The Offerings Experience*. But don't plan on running out to your neighborhood Christian bookstore to get the tome because it's available exclusively at Thirdday.com,

marking one of the first times a top-selling Christian act has taken its wares straight to its fans via the Internet.

"They wanted to push the envelope about this," said Third Day manager David Huffman. "What this says about them is that they're willing to listen to what people's needs are."

A collaboration between Third Day and the band's

Creative Trust management, *The Offerings Experience* features footage from a sold-out March 31 "Offerings" tour concert at HiFi Buys Amphitheater in Atlanta. The four-hour DVD includes band members' commentary on the concert. A 78-minute VHS version is also available. By taking *The Offerings Experience* straight to the consumer June 4, fans can

purchase the DVD for a lower price than the probable \$26 retail cost.

Huffman said the straight-to-Internet approach was called for because fans of youth-oriented acts like Third Day aren't used to buying concert videos from retail. A Bill Gaither Southern gospel Homecoming video may sell well in stores, he said, but not a rocking concert for kids.



1



2

(1) Mark Lee; (2) Anderson; (3) Mac Powell; (4) Brad Avery and (5) David Carr (on drums)



3



4



5

Recent studies show that Internet shopping continues on an upward trend, growing 66 percent in 2000, according to a study by the Boston Consulting Group, plus a recent ABC.com poll shows that young adults are among the least nervous about privacy issues when shopping online. So it seems a good time for Third Day to take this chance.

“The last few years with the Internet, everybody knows it’s this great valuable thing,” said Third Day bass player Tai Anderson. “How do you turn that, in the business sense, into something that’s profitable? We can’t ignore the potential that the Web has.”

Seizing the Web’s potential means Third Day did this video without the marketing muscle of its label, Essential. Thus the new venture seems to potentially hold more personal risk for the band, whose main promotion for the product has been through its Web site.

As of the week of May 20, still two weeks from the video’s release, almost 2,000 pre-orders had been placed, with 60 percent of those shoppers spending an additional \$13 to have the video shipped to them overnight. “In light of that we feel really good about the 2,000 number,” Huffman commented.

But despite the success or failure of Third Day’s experiment, don’t expect the band’s next album, releasing in November, to appear first on the Internet. Fans will still find it in the usual retail outlets. And after its initial run on the Internet, the group may eventually take its DVD/VHS to retail too, though no definite dates had been set at press time.

For now Anderson said he’s thrilled with the straight-to-Internet project and eager to try it again. Next time, Anderson added, he’d love to use more behind-the-scenes footage, because in a world where fans want to hear, see and know all about their Christian music favorites, he believes there’s nothing like letting them click on a Web site and order up the band one-two-three. “I’d like to kick one of these out once a year,” Anderson said. “Fans just love this kind of stuff.”

—Ken Garfield



Add to that the fact that many retailers still don’t carry large numbers of DVDs (possibly only ordering two to three copies of a new title), making the release potentially hard to find if Third Day would have taken the more traditional route.

SURFTHIS WEB SITES TO EXPLORE

www.jamsline.com/festivals.htm

Worn the pages out on CCM’s Summer Festival Preview Guide [April 2001] and still need help keeping track of the plethora of Christian music festivals remaining this summer? Then click on Jamsline’s summer festivals listing. With more than 50 direct links to festival Web sites, Jamsline is sure to help you locate a festival near you.



www.coralcastle.com

Fans of Andrew Peterson’s *Carried Along* might recognize the name of this Web site as the title to one of his songs. Ever wonder what “Coral Castle” was about? Check out the man and his creation that inspired the song. It’s a sad story, but an amazing hunk of art.



www.1christian.net/guitar/

Check out Rockin’ With the Cross’ catalog of Christian music tablature, featuring song chords from everyone from Adam Again to Sonicflood. The Web site boasts a search engine and an alphabetized listing for guitar, bass and horn players.



—Adam Woodroof

TEN QUESTIONS

WITH CINDY MORGAN

1. If you could have any other profession, what would it be? I would have to pick something creative. Gardening or landscaping or interior decorating sounds like fun.

2. What do you value most in your friends? I value honesty the most. I think it's really important to have people tell you the truth in all situations, even if the truth is hard.... If a friend isn't willing to be honest and challenge you, it can be dangerous because you can go through life never thinking you're wrong or at fault in any situation.

3. What's the most meaningful present you've ever received? Without a doubt the green bike that my dad gave me for my ninth or 10th birthday. He was a mechanic who didn't make much money, trying to keep six children afloat. During his spare time, he found spare parts and built the bike from scratch. He would work 14-hour days and then spend extra time putting it together and then painting and polishing it.

4. If you had to pick one song to be your theme song, what would it be? "Good Day Sunshine" by The Beatles. I hope that my attitude is more appreciative every day and that I'm on a path where life gets better, instead of worse, as it goes on.

5. What's your favorite old hymn? Even though it's everyone's favorite, mine is "Amazing Grace."

6. What's your favorite story from the Bible and why? The story of the hemorrhaging woman. In Jesus' time, it was so unclean to be bleeding and no one would go near a person like that. The woman heard about this man and barely had enough strength to crawl through the crowd to touch Him. I wonder what happened to her after Jesus healed her.

7. If you could ask God one question right now, what would it be? What is heaven really like?

8. What are you afraid of? Death. I know we are to be assured of greater things to come, it's just a complete unknown. It's hard to imagine going through the death process.

9. If you were president for a day, what would you do first? Banish abortion. I know a lot of people would say, "How could you take that [choice] away?" but I really am pro choice: Am I going to have sex or not? Am I going to use birth control or not?

10. What's the most relied upon spiritual truth in your life? Probably the Scripture that says "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." In times when we just don't think we can go on, God is there to carry us.

—Andy Argyrakis

No Compromise on Keith Green Tribute

The Keith Green catalog got a musical makeover recently when BEC Records released *Start Right Here: Remembering the Life of Keith Green*, a new tribute album featuring Green's songs reinterpreted by bands like MxPx, Starflyer 59, Joy Electric, Bleach and others.

According to BEC/Tooth & Nail President Brandon Ebel, the tribute album is a dream fulfilled. Green, who died in a plane crash 19 years ago this month, made an indelible mark on Christian music during his career, and his legacy continues to challenge and inspire even the youngest crop of alternative musicians. Ebel told CCM MAGAZINE, "I know that a lot of my artists like Keith Green and listen to Keith Green and know his songs. He was someone who crossed a lot of boundaries. He just made people excited about Christ and their relationship with God."

All of the artists featured on *Start Right Here* were allowed to select the Green song of their choice, and the liner notes include written tributes from the bands. Kimmy Tenberg, lead singer for Flight 180, wrote, "I grew up listening to Keith Green while earning \$1 an hour babysitting. The song 'He'll Take Care of the Rest' is an encouragement to Flight 180 and has literally been the theme of our musical journey." Punk rock group The Dingees delivers its rendition of "Dear John Letter (to the Devil)." Vocalist Matthew "Pegleg" Roberts explains, "Keith Green's music was an obsession at an early point of my faith. It's like a sigh of relief when I listen to his words and enjoy his music."

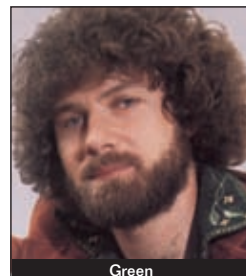
The record is largely successful executing a difficult balancing act. Each cut is no doubt a modern interpretation, yet the artists maintain commendable integrity toward Green's unparalleled passion and energy. Cadet delivers "You Are the One" with dreamy surf music vocals and distorted guitar, yet the song is easily recognizable. Joy Electric captures the tenderness of Keith Green's delivery on "Make My Life a Prayer to You" to the pulsing beat of

electronic pop—it's a gem! "You Put This Love in My Heart," performed by MxPx, becomes... well, something Green could never have imagined, but it works in the hands of these capable players. MG! The Visionary takes the prize for "My Eyes Are Dry." Shakers and female background vocals prop the reggae-style



reinterpretation. It's wrapped around a mid-song rhyme skillfully delivered, making a 23-year-old song accessible today

—Steve Knight and Gregory Rumburg



Green



Morgan

ON THE RECORD

OPINIONS FROM EDITORS, INSIDERS & FANS

Throughout history humans have found ways to mark mileposts, recognize achievements, celebrate culture and mark the passing of time. Rituals and celebrations like holidays, local festivals, even birthday parties are important ways we recognize these moments. The Dove Awards, established in 1969 as a peer-recognition event, is a valuable, annual celebration of the Christian music community.

Over the years, several other benefits have arisen, too. Most notably, the awards have helped raise the awareness of Christian music worldwide. Nearly 7,000 retailers participate in

“The Dove Awards, established in 1969 as a peer-recognition event, is a valuable, annual celebration ritual of the Christian music community.”

promotional campaigns. Newswires and all types of media cover our nominations and award ceremonies, giving us an opportunity to attract interest in and attention to Christian

music. This year, a congressional delegation joined us for the evening to witness our contribution to culture.

More people hear about the Dove Awards than actually watch it on television, but those who do watch it have a chance to sample the diversity and size of Christian music. Those unaware of Christian music can hopefully discover something they like by watching and pursue their interest further. Television stations and advertisers are also sampling our artists and music. If they have a positive experience with this show, they will deepen their support of what we do.

Of course, the awards themselves provide a credential that can help to distinguish an artist. When the phrase “Dove Award Winner” precedes their name, it can help attract attention in the same way “*New York Times* Bestseller” attracts more readers to a book. An award also encourages those who receive it. When our award recipients stand before their peers, they are appropriately grateful for the honor and encouraged by the support of their community.

The people of God have long held rituals and celebrations. There are times for laughing, singing and dancing. There are times for reflection, weeping, mourning. In all of these times, we are to be the people God would have us to be.

—Frank Breeden

Breeden is the president of the Gospel Music Association. Share your opinion online at CCMmagazine.com or write us at Feedback, CCM MAGAZINE, 104 Woodmont Blvd., Third Floor, Nashville, TN 37205.



Oak Ridge Boys Revisits Gospel

A quarter century after breaking out on the country music scene, The Oak Ridge Boys reclaims its legacy with *From the Heart*, an 11-song disc that signals the vocal quartet’s return to Southern gospel music. Released in May by Spring Hill, the album marks another chapter in a lineage that’s one of the most historic in Southern gospel music.

“I really believe in my heart that it’s something the Lord wanted us to do,” tenor Joe Bonsall says of the album, “because gospel music is our first love, and we hadn’t done it in years. It’s where our heritage resides.”

That heritage dates back to the World War II era, the hills of East Tennessee and a vocal group called the Oak Ridge Quartet, which garnered enough fans that, by 1945, it was playing the Grand Ole Opry. While lineup changes were frequent, the group continued to establish itself as a premiere gospel attraction.

Although its pop edge cut through in the ‘60s, the group never left Southern gospel behind—Bonsall says their 160 shows a year always have included a few gospel tunes. But *From the Heart*, the group’s first gospel album since the mid-’70s, cements The Oak Ridge Boys’ status as forefathers of the genre. Four distinct voices and impeccable harmonies grace songs, ranging from standards to more contemporary cuts like Bill and Gloria Gaither’s “Loving God, Loving Each Other.”

“I think the entity itself is bigger than the individual parts,” Bonsall says of the group, a statement affirmed last October when Oak Ridge Boys’ members past and present were inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.



The Oak Ridge Boys



—Anthony DeBarros

Spin control

VELASQUEZ RELEASES SECOND SPANISH ALBUM Following up her 1999 Spanish-language debut, *Llegar a Ti*, pop sensation **Jaci Velasquez** released *Mi Corazon* (Sony Discos) in May. And as if that weren't enough, she recently finished recording her first Christmas album (in English), which is due out this fall. Velasquez says she enjoys balancing her careers in the Christian and Latin pop industries. In press materials Jaci states, "It's as if I were carrying on a double life with one audience that only speaks English, on the one hand, and on the other, one that only speaks Spanish. But with both I share the same beliefs and experiences."

INDIE BAND POISED FOR LIMELIGHT

Milwaukee's **Jacobstone** turned in one of the most impassioned and inspired performances at this year's Gospel Music week. The group's sophomore effort for True Tunes follows some incredible accolades, including being singled out for recognition by **Jerry Harrison** (Talking Heads) on his Garageband.com Web site. On *Chambers and Volumes*, which was recorded mostly live in the studio by bassist **Dan Spransy's** father **Matt Spransy** (formerly of pioneer Christian rock group Servant), the band builds ambient atmosphere and poetic energy reminiscent of early Choir and Violet Burning. With summer appearances at One Fest in Memphis and Cornerstone in Illinois, and an impending fall tour, the scoop on this buzz band won't be a secret much longer.



ANOTHER CITY, ANOTHER HILL We sat down and caught up with **Steve Hindalong** (The Choir) who produced the award-winning *City on a Hill* album. Steve was all too happy to give CCM MAGAZINE the skinny on the next city on the next hill. Subtitled *All Creatures of Our God and King*, the upcoming album will feature **Jennifer Knapp**, **Nichole Nordeman**, **Bebo Norman**, as well as new songs from previous *Hill* climbers **Third Day**, **Caedmon's Call** and **FFH**, among others. "This album will have a real sense of continuity to it," Hindalong says. "The first album ends with chiming the melody of 'All Creatures of Our God and King,' and the new album starts with a pipe organ doing the same song... I was very happy with the first album, but with this album, we hope to do an even better job. The first one was deep, and I expect this one to be just as good." Meanwhile Hindalong, along with his Choir boys—whose indie album *Flap Your Wings* released a few months ago—will be playing select festivals this summer.

ORTEGA'S HOOKED ON CLASSICS On the heels of his second Dove Award (Inspirational Album of the Year for *Home*), **Fernando Ortega** has been one busy composer. This year, not only has he released his first Spanish-language album, *Camino Largo*, but he has begun work on the follow-up to *Home*, set for February 2002. "So far, it's a lot of hymns," Ortega tells CCM MAGAZINE, "probably about five hymns and seven original songs. The stuff we have on tape now has a very sparse sound to it, similar to *Camino Largo* that just came out. I'm very excited about it." For all of us hymn-huggers, Ortega is rearranging/putting his own little spin on such classics as "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent," "Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy," "Jesus Paid It All" and "Farther Along," along with one other that he simply couldn't recall on the spot. He did mention his new dog, Luna, who "just graduated from obedience school." Sadly, he says, "her intestines have not obeyed. She totally destroyed our car last week."

ROCK ROCKS GOSPEL WORLD July is the month **Woody Rock**, former member of the popular multi-platinum R&B group **Dru Hill**, makes both his solo and gospel debut through the release of *Soul Music*. A number of special guests dropped by to lend their talents to the project, including **BB Jay**, **Dru Hill**, **Men of Standard**, **Case**, **Ruff Endz**, **Mary Mary**, **Natalie Wilson** and the **S.O.P. Chorale** and **DJ Tony Boston**. The project features a remake of **The Winans'** classic "The Question Is," which teams Rock with Men of Standard.



BY MELISSA RIDDLE (POP), TIM A. SMITH (URBAN) AND JOHN J. THOMPSON (ROCK)



THE SMITHS GO TO DANIELLAND Anyone who says alternative music is dead has not heard **The Danielson Famile. Dan Smith** and his real life siblings have been chirping, gurgling, yodeling, howling, plunking, plinking and crooning their way into the hearts of thousands since the mid-'90s. The Smiths have parlayed their underground buzz into their own indie label called Soundsfamilyre. That label, in conjunction with Secretly Canadian, has now released *Deep Calls to Deep*, which the Smith family refers to as a "holy rounder." It's the first recorded effort of Smith family patriarch **Lenny Smith** since his breakthrough world-wide smash praise & worship classic "Our God Reigns" was released in the early '70s. The album also features artwork, instrumentation and production by Danielson Famile, which just released its fifth record, *Fetch the Compass Kids*, also on Secretly Canadian. It's clear that the creative apples didn't fall far from the tree.

RAY BOLTZ BACKS ROCK BAND Though not previously known for his rock 'n' roll sensibilities, balladeer **Ray Boltz** is poised to shake up the Christian music scene with his new rock label, Spindust, and his first signing, **GS Megaphone**. The band was formed around the youth evangelism efforts of **Victor Rowell** and includes brothers **Benjamin** and **Randy Shreve** (whose grandfather founded the Christian Motorcycle Association). Boltz (an avid biker who plans to ride his Harley 4,000 miles from Muncie, Ind., to Alaska this summer) discovered the band at a CMA Rally and was inspired finally to launch the label he had long been thinking about. GS Megaphone has been touring as a band for over five years already, honing their hard rock sound which shows influences of Creed, Grammatrain, King's X and Pearl Jam. Look for the group's debut recording, *Out of My Mind*, to be in stores soon.

NEW SIXPENCE ON THE WAY This fall **Sixpence None the Richer** should be releasing the long anticipated follow-up to its 1997 self-titled breakthrough album. The bulk of the recording was finished last summer, but the release has been held up due to behind the scenes business wranglings. Word is out that this new, as yet untitled, album is well worth the wait. Meanwhile **Delirium's** dance hit "Innocente" (with lyrics, melody and vocals by **Leigh Nash**) continues to take off at clubs with numerous high profile DJs creating custom remixes and a new video and radio promotion underway. Former Sixpence drummer **Dale Baker** is also staying busy touring with **Over the Rhine**.

NOSTALGIA GETS THE BEST OF THEM For those children of the late '70s, early '80s who indulge in the synth-orchestral pop fusion of the **Electric Light Orchestra**—admit it, you know who you are—a **Jeff Lynne** tribute album is in the works for fall 2001. Included on the album will be **PFR's** version of "Livin' Thing," as well as other Lynne-inspired covers by **Sixpence None the Richer, Matthew Sweet, Fleming & John** and **The Hollies**. In the meantime, PFR's sixth album, *Disappear*, lands July 3 (see our feature story), and you can find 'em on the summer festival circuit at Ohio's Alive Festival and Lifestef in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



PFR

MUSIC THAT MATTERS

I was a DJ at a local radio station in Arizona when my sister and I were able to interview Tony Terusa from The Supertones. It was over the phone, but they were coming in concert the next day so we arranged with their manager to meet them. We were to pick up the backstage passes at will call, but the guest list for The Supertones never arrived. We were very disappointed, but we decided to just enjoy the show

"With The Supertones, we realized that what you see is what you get."

and be glad that we were able to interview Tony.... On our way out of the arena we noticed some kids peering over the balcony. Of course, we decided to take a look, too. To our surprise it was The Supertones guys getting into their tour van. We wandered over to the van and saw Daniel Spencer. Tony was not around, so my sister told Daniel our story.

He was very sincere and apologetic toward the situation. Finally, Tony arrived. Daniel went over and quietly whispered to him if he knew of two girls who had interviewed him. Tony remembered and greeted us. This occurrence reminds me of the kindness and sincerity that I appreciate in them as Christian artists.... To be real today is very rare, and with The Supertones we realized that what you see is what you get.

Tamaralisa Hernandez
North Richland Hills, TX



What's your story? How has Christian music changed your world? E-mail us at tellccm@ccmmagazine.com with a letter (300 words or less) that tells how a song, an album or an artist has impacted your life. Submissions must include your full name, address and phone number to be considered for publication.

SELAH RELEASES SOPHOMORE ALBUM

Like its 1999 Dove Award-winning debut, *Be Still My Soul*, **Selah's** sophomore release, *Press On* (Curb), sticks with the tried and true—primarily featuring new arrangements of old hymns. The album, which released June 12, includes favorites like “Amazing Grace,” “How Great Thou Art” and “Were You There,” on which **Russ Taff** joins the threesome. Also on the album is a cover of The Beatles’ “In My Life” and the original tune “Timeless.” You can catch Selah performing songs from the new disc when the group headlines a 35-city tour this fall.

TANKARD OFFERS NEW LOVE SONGS

And the subject is love, which easily classifies as the theme of instrumentalist **Ben Tankard's** new release, *Song of Solomon*. The biblical book of the same name inspired the project, which is slated to drop July 10. The theme of love and romance is woven through each of the album's 13 tracks featuring a mixture of instrumental and light vocals filtered into the urban/jazz setting. Included are original songs such as “Minstrel of Romance,” “Allaboutluv,” “I'm Keyed N2U,” a song dedicated to his new bride titled “Thou Art Fair,” along with a special arrangement of the **Stevie Wonder** classic “Ribbon in the Sky.”

CHRISTMAS CANDI

R&B diva turned gospel artist **Candi Staton** is in the studio working on her first Christmas project, *Christmas in My Heart*. The album, which encompasses a smooth jazz, urban adult contemporary sound, will feature four standards, along with a number of new tracks. Look for it this fall.

SIZZLING SUMMER MUSIC

The temperature will not be the only thing heating up the summer months. There will also be some scorching music filling the atmosphere, one project being *Gospel Remix 2001* from EMI Gospel. The project will feature never before released remixes, as well as some remixed jewels from the vaults of artists such as **Darwin Hobbs, Tri-City Singers, Ricky Dillard and New G, The Sounds of Blackness, BeBe Winans, Tramaine Hawkins, Brent Jones and the TP Mobb and Londa Larmond**. Also keep your eyes open for the debut EMI Gospel/Dexterity Sounds release from **Beverly Crawford**. The disc is scheduled to drop July 31. Crawford will also be busy on the road the next few months performing music from her new disc. This month you'll be able to check her out at the Full Gospel Baptist Convention in Detroit, Manpower in Dallas, Atlanta's New Birth Cathedral and in August at Bishop T.D. Jakes' Woman Thou Art Loosed conference in New Orleans where she'll be joined by labelmate **Shirley Murdock**.

SUNDAY'S CHILDREN

Worship leader **Darlene Zschech** and videographer husband **Mark** welcomed their third daughter, **Zoe Jewel Zschech**, to the world on April 29. Look for Zschech's next album of Christmas praise & worship songs to hit in October. Coincidentally, **Twila Paris** and her husband **Jack Wright** also said hello to their first child, **Jack Paris Wright**, on the exact same day. Paris, whose *Bedtime Prayers, Lullabies and Peaceful Worship* released on March 27, will deliver a greatest hits album next month.



Zschech

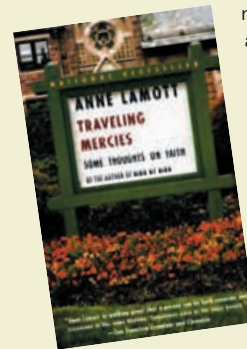
CHANGES AFFECT GOSPEL LABEL

Atlanta International Records a.k.a. AIR Gospel, a label recognized in the marketplace as the home of **Dottie Peoples** and for its prowess in the area of traditional gospel music, has been making an about face. First, they've signed **Witness** lead vocalist **Lisa Page**, who recently released her debut project for the label. Word has it that the label has also inked **Maurette Brown Clark** to a recording contract.

PAGETURNERS

WHAT YOUR FAVORITE ARTISTS ARE READING

I think it was a couple of years ago I heard one of my favorite writers say she was reading Anne Lamott's *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith* (Anchor Books), and thoroughly enjoying the

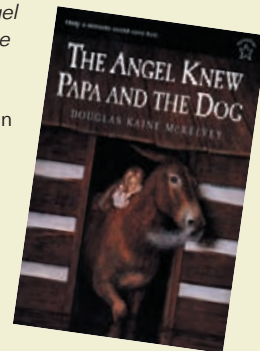


dysfunction and redemption of this autobiography. Kathleen Norris is incentive enough to go out and read whatever she says is good, but for the book to be described as gratifyingly dysfunctional and redemptive—well, I can relate to

that. Anne Lamott tells

the story of her encounter with the mystery of a God who loves her through “hell and high water” into the glorious freedom of grace and forgiveness. Lamott's *Operating Instructions* (Fawcett Books), a journal of her son's first year, and *Bird by Bird* (Anchor Books), a book on writing, are also very good.

A second writer I've found myself reading again is Douglas Kaine McKelvey. Known for writing songs for artists such as Avalon, All Star United and Charlie Peacock, McKelvey has a profound and whimsical gift for telling a good story. In 1996, Philomel Books published *The Angel Knew Papa and the Dog*, a sparkling good children's story along the vein of a George MacDonald or Lewis Carroll tale. McKelvey endows the potentially ethereal and abstract with a remarkable earthiness: “There, just beyond the porch railing, the angel hovered and glowed, wonderful beyond imagining, shedding light far across the water, like stars spilling from the cupped hands of God.”



—Sarah Masen



Masen released her third album, *The Dreamlife of Angels*, in March.

STORY BEHIND THE SONG

MARY MARY: "SHACKLES (PRAISE YOU)"

For even the most brilliant wordsmiths, the frustrating phenomena of writer's block can bring the creative process to a halt. But for Erica and Tina Atkins of Mary Mary, an encounter with writer's block didn't prove to be detrimental. In fact, with a little patience and persistence, their bout led to the soulful sounds of their 2001 Dove signature song "Shackles (Praise You)" from their Grammy Award-winning album *Thankful*.

Producer Warryn Campbell's studio was "kind of like a little side room connected to the house directly next to the garage," Tina recalls, "and we were trying to write and trying to write, and nothing was coming." So after a couple of hours with no ideas translating from pen to paper, Campbell left to take a shower, and the girls retreated to another part of the house. When Campbell returned to the makeshift studio, he had an epiphany of sorts and began to sing the harmonies that eventually became "Shackles."

While the song, a modern-day account of the children of Israel in bondage but set free, was originally written for *The Prince of Egypt* soundtrack, the duo liked it so much they decided to keep it for their own album. Tina says the tune relates the Exodus story in a contemporary way, addressing bondage people have in their lives—whether it's bad relationships or the stresses of family and work.

"Take the shackles off my feet so I can dance/I just wanna praise Ya, just wanna praise You/You broke the chains, now I can lift my hands/And I'm gonna praise Ya, I'm gonna praise You."

It's a theme to which people seem to relate. A young girl in Alaska was paralyzed from the legs down and confined to a wheelchair. She told Erica and Tina that when she listened to their CD and "Shackles" came on, her foot began tapping and starting to move for the first time. After hearing her story Tina says, "If this song can motivate somebody or encourage and uplift somebody to the point where it's making a leg function that's not functioning, then God is really great. Although I don't really know how the incident happened, I do know that healing can come through music—and I was thrilled that Mary Mary's song could be a part of it."

—Christa Farris



Mary Mary



Rundman

THE BEST OF INDIES INDEPENDENT MUSIC BY JERRY CHAMBERLAIN

Perhaps one of the most unique and unusual offerings to come 'round the indie bend in a while is **Jonathan Rundman's** massive *Sound Theology*. Rundman has shared the stage with such diverse personalities as Desmond Tutu, Aimee Mann, Jennifer Knapp and Kirk Franklin and has songs on various compilation CDs. This concept album deposits 52 songs on two discs, tracing the seasons of the church's liturgical calendar from Advent through Pentecost. The project is described on the CD cover as "perspectives on faith and rock & roll from a Finnish-American Midwestern Generation X Lutheran at the turn of the millennium." Rundman's quirky organic approach to the music is further enhanced by the fact that nothing on the album was recorded in the studio proper. Instead, every track was laid down in warehouses, basements and bedrooms on a digital 4-track recorder, allowing the rough edges to freely bleed through.

Jonathan's a dandy of a songwriter, packing in powerful words of wisdom and things we need to hear into two- and three-minute flashes of brilliance. *Sound Theology* can be listened to like any other double album, or by listening to one song a week as a spiritual lesson. The exhaustive liner notes include track-by-track credits, commentary and a thought-provoking question for each song. The music itself is an edgy strain of Midwestern alt-folk/rock with bits of pop, bluegrass and garage rock stirred into its rootsy framework. The songwriter crafted 40 of the 52 songs and played most of the instruments, with several guests contributing.

Rundman has a five-song EP of new material that may be out by the time you read this and is also one-third of the basement-rock band **The Muckrakers**. All in all, this Chicago man is not a slacker. For order info about *Sound Theology* and all other Jonathan Rundman CDs, e-mail saltlady@saltlady.com or surf to www.saltlady.com/jonathan.htm. You may send \$24 total (\$12 for each disc, shipping included) to: Salt Lady Records, 1549 Monroe Ave. #3, River Forest, IL 60305. (Please make checks payable to Jonathan Rundman.)

Jerry Chamberlain is a freelance writer/musician/poet, co-founder of Daniel Amos and Boy-O-Boy, and a member of Swirling Eddies.



OPENINGACTS

Get to know Ben Glover

d.o.b. June 1, 1978 **hometown** Loveland, Colorado **current digs** Franklin, Tennessee **first spins** Keith Green's *For Him Who Has Ears to Hear* **new album** *26 Letters* (Word), released May 1 **favorite cut** "Stolen by Mercy" Says Glover, "If you want to know who I am as an artist, that is probably the song that would best fit who I am, aesthetically speaking." **influences** Describing his sound as deep pop rock with a lyrical tinge of folk, Ben explains his music, "If Steven Curtis Chapman, Jars of Clay and Jonatha Brooke had a kid, it might sound like me." **what's different?** "I try to fight 'Christianese.' There is a whole huge universe out there of things to say, and this is a big God. We don't have to use the same sentences every time to talk about Him." **backstory** Ben always assumed he would be making music for the rest of his life. A self-described "band geek" in high school, after college Ben booked himself at area churches. Determined to get signed, he drove to Nashville only to discover a problem. "I found out my engine was about to blow a rod. The repairs meant I had to stay two weeks instead of two days. Because of that, I was able to meet with Brad O'Donnell [director of A & R at Word Records]... Not long after that, Word signed me." **on the road** After summer festivals, Glover hits the road this fall opening for Mark Schultz. **lessons learned** "People think, 'If I could just talk to him for five minutes, he would have all the answers because he is singing Christian music.' What they don't understand," Ben explains, "is that I sing about the Lord because I have to—if I didn't sing about Him, I would explode. But what I am singing about is the same grace that everyone knows." **role models** "My dad is my hero. He lived what he believed... in such a real way that I couldn't deny the existence of God." **goal** "I wish that when somebody listened to my record they'd go, 'Man, he painted a picture of God in such a new, fresh way that it inspired my walk with God.'"

—Rhonda Owens



Lippmann, Gaddis, Roe and Barton (l-r)

OPENINGACTS

Get to know True Vibe

band 411 Jason Barton (26, from Gilbert, La.); Nathan Gaddis (22, from Campbellsville, Ky.); Jonathan Lippmann (28, from Cincinnati, Ohio); Jordan Roe (19, from Evansville, Ind.) **current digs** Nashville, TN **new album** *True Vibe* (Essential) released May 15. **favorite cuts** Lippmann co-wrote "I Live for You," "Sweet Jesus" and "Give You More." "It would be weird to say the ones I wrote are my favorites because every song packs in a lot of tight harmonies," he says. **influences** The current pop scene, including Boyz II Men, Brian McKnight and Take 6. "People will call us a boy band on the first release and that's fine," Lippmann admits. "But this disc has something for everyone. Some are straight pop songs, some upbeat dance cuts, some ballads and some have a *cappella* singing." **backstory** Lippmann worked with an early incarnation of 98° prior to its record deal. He then left the group and acted on the TV show "Sweet Valley High." "I moved to Nashville last February with intentions to start a new vocal group," Lippmann says. **on the road** Summer festivals and a summer tour with Aaron Carter **lessons learned** "We have to work twice as hard to take our message into the mainstream," Lippmann says. "A lot of people will hear how we sound and enjoy it, but when they find out we are a Christian group, they get turned off. Our lyrics may reflect that [we're a Christian group], but at the same time we strive not to have people put our music in a box." **goal** "There are a lot of hurting kids who are growing up during a time when values are not all that clear through the eyes of pop culture," Lippmann says. "We want our music to speak to those kids and be something that they will like and their parents won't have to worry about."

—Andy Argyrakis





**SHE'S WELL ON HER
WAY TO LEGEND
STATUS IN CHRISTIAN
AND GOSPEL MUSIC.
CECE WINANS
DOESN'T CARE.
SHE'S GOT A MUCH
BIGGER VISION TO
SHARE AND A PLAN
TO CHANGE THE
WORLD.**

“my goal is to reach the world with this CD.”
What you’ve just read is a relatively short sentence pulled completely out of context by a music journalist trying to grab the reader’s attention with a bold statement from his subject *du jour*.

Having confessed that to you, CeCe Winans will probably not object, as she is prone to making such audacious statements—albeit in a less sensationalistic way. And as lofty as the goal sounds, Winans says it with an earnestness that makes one believe she just might do it. Heaven knows, she’s accomplished more in her 37 years than many in the music business, with nine Doves, eight Grammys, five Stellers, three NAACP Image Awards, two Motor City Music Awards and one Soul Train Music Award.

“I want to reach people I haven’t reached before,” Winans says, “then I want to reach the world. You have to come in with sounds that are capable of accomplishing that.”

This, of course, sounds like the goal of a crossover hit on the general market pop charts, but Winans insists that’s not exactly the goal she’s envisioning. “My number one goal is to please God in everything I do. My prayer is not that I’m a crossover artist. I just really feel like I’ve got to tell the world about Jesus. I want to reach the world being exactly who He called me to be and sing songs that will bring Him glory.”

aimhigh

crafting a new sound

The vehicle CeCe is currently choosing to help accomplish those goals is her new self-titled album. With such far-reaching ambitions, a new approach was necessary, including bringing in industry veteran Brown Bannister for the first time to produce.

“This album is probably different than any other I’ve ever made, with a lot of different musical styles—some I’ve never done before,” Winans explains. “Some pop sounds, some R&B, some praise & worship—and the challenge in recording it was to do all of that in a way that sounds cohesive as a whole... I’ve been an admirer of Brown for years. He has a great heart and a great ear for listening to artists and helping them go where they want to go. Talking to him was very easy, and he realized that some of these tunes he would produce himself and some of them he would bring people in. On ‘Get Out My House,’ he said, ‘Let’s bring Tommy [Sims] in on this’ because he knew it needed a certain kind of attitude.”

Attitude. Maybe that’s what seems different about CeCe as a solo artist in comparison to her years singing with brother BeBe. The quiet determination sensed during this interview is no coincidence, as she explains the above-mentioned song and her new approach to life and music.

“I wrote this song when I was going through a rough, rough time, and it’s like the Holy Spirit said, ‘Why are you taking this?’ So many times as Christians we’re so passive, and we allow the enemy to come in and knock us over because we forget the authority we have in Jesus Christ. I did a big turnaround and said, ‘Devil, you’re going to leave me alone, you’re going to leave my family alone, my

and pray because I’m not in a hurry to sign every talent that I hear. I want those people that God wants me to have. I’m in a hurry to do just exactly what God wants me to do.”

Though reluctant to share specific details about her vision for Wellspring, CeCe explains, “Being an artist, I went through a lot with people not understanding the ministry aspects of what I do or not understanding that even though I sang this particular song, that doesn’t mean you should put me in this box over here. I have been fortunate to be on a lot of platforms that a lot of Christian artists don’t get to be on, and we have a lot of great people in Christian and gospel music who haven’t really had the opportunity to be heard because they are at the mercy of non-Christians to allow them to have a timeslot in their programs. It’s time for us to have our own media and really build the kingdom of God in the entertainment industry, and I pray that this will be a company that can do that. People ask me, ‘Aren’t you afraid you’ll compromise?’ Listen, I don’t want what’s ‘out there.’ I’ve already got what I want. I just think I’m supposed to *be* a gatekeeper instead of being at the mercy of other gatekeepers.”

Even after teasing her about the notion of

“God created us all, and whether people admit it or not, there’s a God-space there in all of us, and

children alone’—and that experience inspired me to write this song. I knew it had to have the same attitude I was feeling.”

becoming a gatekeeper

Her new attitude has fostered not only increased self-confidence but a strong vision for the future and her impact on culture. About three years ago, CeCe and her husband Alvin Love started their own business endeavor, CW Wellspring Entertainment, which includes the Wellspring Gospel record label, home to CeCe’s two most recent albums. But considering that most artists are generally not great business people, it seems natural to question how she thinks her company will fare in the long run.

“First of all, I recognize my strengths and my weaknesses,” Winans says. “Being a businessperson is not my strength really, though if I do have strength in that area it’s recognizing I need good people to do the work that has to be done. I know enough to stay out of the way,” she laughs. “I also know my limitations of time. I can’t be at the office every day—I’m a wife and a mom, and that takes a lot of time at this stage of my life with two teenagers.”

With Alvin, 16, and Ashley, 13, still at home, why get involved with something potentially so time consuming? Winans says matter-of-factly, “Because it’s a vision that God gave me to spearhead. And my response to God on this was like it is with everything else: ‘You want me to do this, You’re going to have to work it out.’ And because of the wonderful people He is bringing into my life to take care of this business, I believe it’s going to work. My most important function in this adventure will be to stay on my knees

becoming “Oprah Winans,” CeCe continues in her explanation of why she thinks a venture in “godly entertainment” can be successful. “The biggest songs on radio are quite often inspirational songs,” she explains. “God created us all, and whether people admit it or not, there’s a God-space there in all of us, and God knows how to reach everyone. That’s not our job. Our job is to serve Him and not be afraid to be who we are. That doesn’t mean you go in and hit people over the head with a Bible, but you live a life in front of them that is in the presence of the Lord. God’s Spirit does the rest.”

sharing her vision

Living her life in front of the world doesn’t stop for CeCe Winans when she steps offstage. In fact, her involvement with the teen and young adult support group My Sister’s Keeper (beginning in 1995) led her to establish Sharing the Vision, a non-profit organization that serves as an awareness and



fund-raising ministry for established charities Winans feels strongly about supporting—like suicide prevention and counseling.

“When I learned the statistics of suicides increasing most dramatically in young people age 10-19 today, I was shocked that so many kids are feeling such a strong sense of hopelessness, and I knew I had to get involved... I wrote a song for the new album called ‘It’s Gonna Get Better’ because so many people—especially in the church—are ashamed or embarrassed to talk about this. We have to get it out of the closet and out in the open. We just taped a special for PBS with a studio full of kids talking about these issues, and I hope and pray it will reach many people and maybe even save a life or two.”

As passionate about her charitable work as her other life priorities, CeCe says the organization is in a time of transition, but one that she is thoroughly

excited about. As she explains, “Right now we are going under the umbrella of the YMCA because they looked at what we were about and saw a connection there. For example, they have mentoring for girls, and they saw our work with My Sister’s Keeper, and our involvement with their teen day camp was the basis for Camp CeCe [see sidebar], which they loved. So they’re going to take Sharing the Vision up under their arm because they believe in the things we do, and we can make more noise together than we can apart.”

It seems appropriate to wonder just what else CeCe Winans could possibly do, with all of the activities of a musical career, her own business and work with charities. Still... there is an answer. Perhaps her most important work and ministry of all, her role as parent to Alvin and Ashley. CeCe’s face lit up at the end of the long interview when asked about them, and it was clear that this artist’s priorities are well in order.

“My son [she smiles]... it seems as if he has always been singing, dancing, acting, you name it. He’ll probably end up producing. Both of them, their hearts are totally in the arts. But where are they gonna go? I don’t want to tell them they are limited. I encourage them all the time by telling them, ‘Just love the Lord. He’ll direct you. And don’t ever compromise in order to do what you love to do.’ I tell them, ‘If you love God with all of your heart, soul and mind, there is no limit to where you can go. You don’t have to be afraid to go out there, ‘cause God can keep you.’ But I would love to see more positive things available to them, and if we have to do it ourselves, we’ll do it. But you’re gonna hear from them. You can count on that.” **ccm**

“God knows how to reach everyone. That’s not our job. Our job is to serve Him....” —CeCe Winans

Camp CeCe and the Boy Who Would Be President

Speaking to someone like 12-year-old Harold Simmons Jr., it’s not hard to understand what motivates CeCe Winans to get involved with projects like Camp CeCe, a two-week day camp held at the YMCA’s Camp Widjiwagan overlooking Percy Priest Lake in the Nashville area. Harold first learned about the camp from fliers posted at his home church (also CeCe’s). Particularly interested in the drama activities offered at the camp, he first attended in 1999 at age 11, returning a year later. Remarkably articulate for his age, Harold spoke for the Camp CeCe gala benefit at Opryland Hotel last year, and his words now speak volumes regarding the benefits of programs like this.

CCM: What were the highlights of Camp CeCe for you?

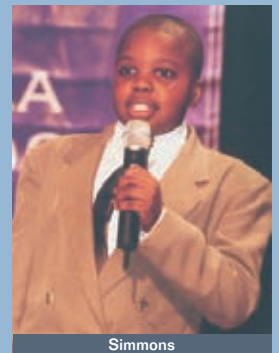
Harold Simmons Jr.: Definitely the Alpine Tower, which is a 50 ft. tall tower you climb. I had never experienced such high altitudes before, and climbing it helped me to conquer my fear of heights. I realized that it was not as high as I thought it was, and people around would encourage me to keep going. Once I got up there, the view was awesome and made for an excellent experience... I love all the sports—basketball, football, fishing. I also loved archery, though I haven’t mastered it yet. Last year they opened a new water park, which I loved, and I performed the lead role in the play they did the first year at camp.

What kind of things did you learn at camp?

One thing I learned was bravery—that no matter how hard or tough the obstacle may seem, I can accomplish it. I learned teamwork. I learned that encouragement was so important, and how it can help others achieve their highest potential.

What do you think you will take with you from camp long into your future?

To always strive for new experiences, to expand and set goals for myself, and then try to accomplish them to the fullest. I also made many new friends that I hope I can keep in touch with.



I know you’re still a young man, but do you have any thoughts as to what you might want to do with your adult life?

One lifelong goal that I have set is to become the president of the United States. I have a plan to attend a college such as Harvard or Princeton, major in political science, then to become a senator and later run for president. I’ve always been interested in the election process and known that I would love to be involved in it.

What would you do if you were president?

I would try to unify the nation more, to bring people together. I don’t know how people will begin to realize this, but they need to understand that different cultures shouldn’t matter. We are all citizens, including immigrants, and we are all equal, and no matter how they look, how poor they are, they are all important and have a role in society that could affect the future of this nation.

—T.G.



already tomorrow

Singer/songwriter **Jill Phillips** and husband Andy Gullahorn venture off the beaten path, excited by freedom, accompanied by hope.

Life is full of unexpected surprises, moments that weren't anticipated, detours that you didn't plan and could never control. For some people, fear of such unknowns can be paralyzing, causing them to retreat from any possibility of failure. For others, like singer/songwriter Jill Phillips and husband/musician Andy Gullahorn, uncertainty promises a unique freedom.

In 1999, Phillips was fresh out of college, a music major who had managed the unusual, to say the least. She and Gullahorn, newlyweds whose love of music played no small part in their romance, signed a publishing deal and planned to make their living doing what they loved: writing songs. Even better, Jill was offered an album contract with Word Records, an opportunity to record her songs and to find a listening audience. Her self-titled debut released to strong

by Melissa Riddle

reviews in August that same year, and she hit the fall touring circuit with Caedmon's Call.

The opportunities should have spelled success. But when she returned home, something didn't feel quite right. "I started to get a real anxious feeling," she says in retrospect. "I had no idea where it was coming from, but I was just not happy."

Adding to her stress was the fact that sales of the album weren't as healthy as expected. After discussing their options, Phillips and Gullahorn began to pray about what to do. Within a few weeks, they'd made the decision to get out of their deal. Ultimately, Jill says, the decision to leave Word was mutual. "It wasn't some horrible, bitter thing... We wanted out of our record deal, and we knew it would be a good thing for them as well... Maybe we didn't sell as many records as they'd hoped the first time out, but we really didn't care about that. It really wasn't a sales decision, it was a vision decision."

Gullahorn adds, "There was a certain degree of comfort with a record label. Aside from providing financial security, the 'label' status sadly seems to legitimize you as an artist. People almost immediately start treating you differently when you get that record deal, like all of a sudden you should deserve and expect more than other people. That attitude kind of threw both of us off. Sure, we wanted the songs to be recognized, but the quasi-celebrity status was not what we were looking for."

“Our struggle is really no different from those we all face. We all struggle with ‘God and money’ and how to handle the in between.” —*Jill Phillips*

Rather, Phillips and Gullahorn wanted to get their music out to the people and, once there, to build a grassroots following.

"There's such a thing as artistic development that people don't seem to believe in as much anymore," says Phillips. "They expect you to have a big hit first record and then you're out there and you kind of disappear. But we were aiming for the long term."

Not long after the record deal had been undone, Phillips' publishing company laid off most of its staff writers, meaning the couple's cash flow soon became a trickle. Once the realization of "we are totally unemployed" set in, Jill and Andy began to contemplate the possibilities of trying to record and sell an independent album, a project they could tackle on their own terms. With their savings and a limited budget in hand, the duo sat down and talked with producer/friend Matt Stanfield. Soon, the songs and the players—including Jars of Clay's Steve Mason, The Normals' Andy Osenga and Bebo Norman—all began to fall into place. The result is *God & Money*, a very personal look at how one couple's life is changing.

"With this record," Phillips says, "we just had a real feeling of 'OK, everything is gone, and we're starting over again with nothing.' It was almost a great feeling, the thought that because we're coming upon some difficulties at this time in our lives, maybe there's something real here."

Gone were the days when, in awe of the privilege and the process of recording, decisions were left up to executive decision-makers. This time around, the stakes were higher and more personal. This time around, Jill and Andy were invested in every possible way in the making of the album.

Jill says, "Knowing that we were doing this because we had something to say was like a fire that kept us going. We were still here, we had songs that we were proud of, and we were excited that we could do it on our own. Even though people might have thought we were washed up at 21," she laughs as she says it, "that feeling of independence is amazing. It's like, 'Yeah, I can say this!'"

And say it they do. With this album, available online at www.jillphillips.com, the couple doesn't mince words, addressing issues often thought too sticky for joyful Christians, such as the futility of trying to serve two masters ("God & Money") and the church's poor response to divorce and homosexuality ("You Don't Belong Here"). But despite the potential controversies, Jill says

those are the exact songs listeners respond to the most.

"Ultimately, we were just honest and true to ourselves... These songs are different vignettes. It's my life. I would just hope one of the songs would speak to somebody, that someone would be able to say, 'I see myself in that, she must be like me, so maybe there's hope for me as well.' I really hope these songs show God's love for people. God believes in you, that thread of hope running through everything, even the dark things."

Charles Schultz, creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip, wrote in his series one day, "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia." It's a message Jill Phillips has learned to embrace even as she and Andy face an unexpected future.

"When you go from doing something for the fun of it or for the art of it to doing it as a moneymaking thing, as a career, there is a real sense of keeping a balance there, keeping your priorities straight," Jill says. "I don't think it's something you wake up one day and have a handle on. You just have to keep checking yourself, asking, 'Why am I doing this? Why is this important to me?'"

Coming to terms with the changes in their professional lives hasn't been a picnic, she says, but "our struggle is really no different from those we all face. We all struggle with 'God and money' and how to handle the in between."

"If anything," Andy adds, "our experiences in the past two years have helped us realize where to find our worth. We know that Jill's success is not defined by how many records are sold or how high the songs climb on the chart. The past year and a half have reinforced the fact that we are worthy in God's eyes. I like to think of the songs on this record as an offering back to Him."

And if history is any indication, the future promises more surprises, more uncertainty, more unexpected detours. But this couple is learning at a young age to rely on something far bigger than themselves—God's faithfulness. "I'll be honest with you," Jill says. "It's not like we've got it all figured out. But just from looking at examples in the past... a lot of things that have happened, I never dreamed would happen to us, but they did. God has just been so merciful and compassionate to us and has opened the door to so many things we never expected. So I just know we're going to be alright."

"It feels great to let go." **ccm**

CHILDREN OF DESTINY



Jesse, Sam, John, Joe and James Katina (l-r)

It's Wednesday night in Nashville and the five brothers who make up funky R&B-flavored pop act The Katinas are taking the stage at a renovated church that's been transformed into an intimate concert venue.

AFTER TRAVELING A LONG ROAD, THE KATINAS SHARE WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED ON THE JOURNEY TO THEIR DESTINY.

BY MARCIA BARTENHAGEN

The Katina siblings appear at this late April show with their sophomore CD, *Destiny* (Gotee), in the can, ready to hit store shelves in May, seemingly a perfect opportunity to lay down a few new tracks, start a buzz, begin the marketing hype. But the five brothers quickly recognize the short attention span of the full-to-capacity crowd, and they focus their set time on providing an atmosphere of praise & worship. Tailoring their music to an audience's needs is a long-practiced gift for these brothers who grew up in a church in which their father, Moses, directed the choir on the South Pacific island of American Samoa.

Fast-forward one week later. Sam, Joe, James, John and Jesse Katina are once again performing, but this time there is no audience. The group now inhabits a Nashville practice room to rehearse for an upcoming promotional tour. Black curtains line the wall, duct work hangs from the ceiling, and the dim light bulbs barely make the rehearsal area visible. Despite the dark setting, today's conversation revolves around a hopeful topic—the theme of *Destiny*.

“The question is not ‘Do you have a destiny?’ because everyone does,” says Joe, the group's drummer. “The question is ‘Will you fulfill the destiny that God has for you?’”

“You can live your life by design or default, the choice is yours,” he explains. “A lot of times in my life, because of not being obedient to God and doing my own thing, I was just flying by the seat of my pants. Everything was happening by accident because there was no purpose.”

Though as kids they were more interested in participating in sports, Moses Katina required all 12 of his children to sing and play instruments. It was a parenting move that paid off, leading five of the brothers to move to the United States to start a professional musical career. Unfortunately, the group's first major step proved to be a miscalculation as The Katinas signed an eight-album contract with a general market record company only to discover it wasn't what they wanted after all.

“When we signed to Arista, the Katinas as brothers had a lot to learn about where God wanted us,” says Sam, the keyboardist. “They wanted us to sing songs like ‘Sleeping With an Angel.’ That kind of message never set well in our hearts.”

The group knew they needed out of the deal, but the lucrative contract was already in place, and advisors offered little hope of a way out.

“We prayed and fasted, and it was a God-thing,” says Joe. “The head of Arista Records said, ‘You tell those boys I'll release them and if they ever need a home that our door is always open.’ That's the testimony of God's grace.”

As The Katinas continued to sing in churches for the next three years without a label, the group learned more about God's sovereignty. “God had to teach us that our ministry was not a valid ministry because of a record deal,” says

Joe. “He validates us. [If] my last name wasn't ‘Katina,’ if I wasn't Samoan, if I didn't do music, who would I be? I'm a son of God.”

With that identity serving as the foundation for their lives, the group signed a deal with a Christian-based record label. But even with a record company's support secure and exciting career possibilities in store, The Katinas are united in maintaining their first order of business: Family. “That's our first priority,” bassist James says. “If we don't have a hold on that, then everything else is in vain.”

According to the five men, their commitment to family aligns with their overall mission. “Our ministry is simply to be a follower of Jesus Christ,” says Jesse, who shares lead vocal responsibilities with John. “When you do that, everything else comes into place to the person who has a relationship with the Lord.”

James adds, “Our mission statement is to encourage the body of believers, then to go out beyond the four walls of the church to compel people to come to know Christ.”

A recent tour stop at a Grand Rapids, Mich., nightclub provided just such an opportunity. “A church sponsored this event, and the emphasis was an evangelistic outreach,” says James. “For every Christian teenager, there was a [non-Christian] friend, which is incredible. This is something we prayed about before we went on, just realizing who we are going to be in front of and asking God to give us wisdom in how to share His gospel with these people who never darken the doors of a church.”

John says, “The very essence of ministry to me is whatever the need is. I hope that I can be looking around and seeing the need, whether it's people on the street who are hungry or at a festival in Mt. Union, Penn., where 65,000 people want to know how to usher into the presence [of God].”

Joe is quick to point out that he and his brothers don't think they have all the answers—they simply want to offer up what God is teaching them to anyone who will listen. “People struggle with the same things we struggle with. People sometimes look at us on stage and think, ‘Man, if I could do that,’ but don't understand how insecure we are... It's not like we've been doing everything right. God has just really graced us.”

“To be a blessing is good,” Sam adds. “But God wants us to not only be a blessing but be builders of God's kingdom and establish what's going to be around long after we're gone.” **ccm**

Andrew, Nash and Hanson (l-r)



by Beau Black

Wonder Why

After a four-year absence **PJR** reappears with renewed energy to make great music.

In 1992, three dark-haired men from Minnesota courted Christian music with a debut album full of infectious, Beatlesque melodies, hope-laden lyrics and an overall attitude that music could be fun again. Forget early '90s grunge rock. Pray for Rain quickly became Christian music's answer to pop-rock favorites like The Rembrandts and Crowded House.

Though the band changed its name to PFR before the release of *Goldie's Last Day* in 1993, the trio's popularity was already secure, in part due to consistently solid live performances. But unexpectedly in 1996, PFR confounded music fans by announcing the band's breakup just before releasing its fourth and most popular album, *Them*.

And perhaps just as surprising was news last year that PFR's Joel Hanson, Mark Nash and Patrick Andrew were regrouping to record the song "Kingdom Come" for Squint Entertainment's *Roaring Lambs* project. Then came even better news: The band was coming back, this time with a new studio project, *Disappear*.

So why did they disappear—and why reappear now?

"Collectively we felt like we were running out," says singer/guitarist Hanson of the burn-out the band felt from the draining cycle of touring and making albums. Drummer Nash adds, "That can happen over time. We all had families. It was different for everybody, but we all came to the same place."

Bassist/vocalist Pat Andrew says, "We were all thinking the same thing at the same time. We actually came to the decision one night and said, 'Let's pray about this for a week.'" But the next morning, all three knew the answer. They made *Them* and then a farewell greatest hits record, *The Late Great PFR*.

From there, the three long-time friends went in separate directions. Andrew started another band, Eager, before moving on to a new role as a worship leader at a church in Phoenix. He also expanded his family, which now includes a 4-year-old daughter and 4-month-old son, and began developing local acts. "I didn't realize it at the time," he says, "but I think I went through a small depression not knowing what it was about. And now that I'm over it, we're starting up again."

As for Hanson, after the group disbanded, he and his wife moved to Nashville. "I came down here as a songwriter for a couple of years then moved back to Minnesota in the fall of '98 as a worship leader for a church."

Nash, who lives in Nashville with his wife

Leigh (lead singer of Sixpence None the Richer), began working as a producer, helming independent demos and a couple of projects for Benson Records. "About a year ago I started working A&R for Squint," says Nash, whose credits include working on the L. A. Symphony debut. "When I started [at Squint], we were in the beginning stages of the *Roaring Lambs* project... We had a slot open on the *Lambs* record, and I asked [Squint label chief Steve] Taylor if he'd want us to do a song."

But getting PFR back together to record "Kingdom Come" would lead to far more than one song.

"Like a week and a half later, we had the song recorded—it happened really quickly," says Nash, adding that the band had so much fun doing the track that the members began to talk about other possibilities. "We had a really good vibe, the chemistry was still there, and Jimmie Lee Sloas, our producer, was like, 'There's no reason not to do another record.' So we just had a lot of conversations while we were recording and thought this might be something we'd want to do."

He found a more-than-willing co-conspirator in Taylor. "Steve and I had breakfast, and I talked to him more to just let him know that we were talking about this and how could I work this out with my job. It wasn't like a 'We want to be on Squint' thing—it was like 'You're my boss, and I need to let you know I may be doing this other thing.'"

"The conversation went like this: 'Well, Joel, Pat and I have been talking about doing another record...' and he was like, 'I'll do it! Whatever it takes, I'll do it!' That's as far as I got. We started talking, and it happened pretty naturally."

The result is *Disappear*, an album that is clearly the PFR fans remember well, but one that also represents the musical growth each member's experienced in recent years. Says Andrew, "I lead worship. I really put [my bass] aside, and I think putting my

"We tried to unload songs of Christianese to allow other people to tap into what we do."
—Joel Hanson

instrument down made me a better bass player. I approached playing differently."

"For me," says Nash, "when we stopped the band, I put the drums away for a while and learned some other things—guitar, piano. When I revisited the drums again, having picked those up really helped."

Their time off also brought some changes in their writing process. "We made it very hard on ourselves as far as really wanting this to be great—we re-wrote a lot of stuff," says Andrew, as Hanson adds, "We made really good songs, really great ones."

"I'm thankful that Pat would let me in on a song that I know is very personal to him," Hanson continues, referring to "Amsterdam," *Disappear*'s first track. Says Andrew, "I was at a time in my life when I didn't feel like I knew what my purpose was. I was looking for who I was and where I was headed."

"There's an ocean between who I am and who I was/ Walking in Amsterdam/Now I run/ Every one of my days has become/A pursuit of what I once had/ Can I get it back?"

"We tried to unload songs of Christianese to allow other people to tap into what we do," says Hanson. The band hopes that may translate into some action in the general market, noting tracks "Gone," "Missing Love" and "Me" as potential singles.

In the immediate future, the trio will have to figure out how to work as a band while living on opposite ends of the country—Andrew in Arizona, Hanson in Minnesota, and Nash in, well, Nashville. "It's gonna take planning," says Hanson. "We're real united in wanting it to be stellar... that every time we step on a stage somewhere, when we're done, people say, 'Man, I'm so glad I got to hear them.'" **CCM**

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by Kent Morris

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One to Watch



Empty

Tait (ForeFront)

Rock is rife with musicians who, even after reaching enviable band success, went solo with the zest of a prisoner loosed from shackles. Peter Gabriel “walked right out of the machinery” of Genesis; David Byrne left Talking Heads and never looked back; George Harrison exploded from the Fab Four with a triple album (featuring many songs rejected by John and Paul). Perhaps the last example best fits dc talker Michael Tait. For all those gold records and packed arenas, he has long labored under the shadow of bandmate Toby McKeehan. So it’s little surprise that he’s the first of the dc talk three to release a solo album, *Empty*. How sweet this liberation must be for Mr. Tait, even if it’s temporary shore leave before returning to the dc talk mothership. For on *Empty*, Tait pours out intensity and musical blood-sweat until the cup runs over—and he is left, true to the title, a vessel spent.

Empty is a solid, enjoyable album with forgivable flaws tempered by Tait’s enthusiasm and charismatic artistry. With Pete Stewart on guitar and the Chapin brothers, Chad and Lonnie, on drums and bass, Tait’s band creates taut arrangements that allow him to showcase his sing-along melodies. Tait wears his musical influences (Lenny Kravitz, Seal) proudly at some junctures, while mixing up his grunge, pop and funk wardrobe at others. “Bonded” is one Kravitz salute that works well, segueing from a drum machine and power chord kickoff into heavy sunshine pop that dissolves in a whirlpool of guitar rumble and feedback. Alas, on “Tell Me Why,” the homage to Lenny is too obvious; the chorus strings and verse groove sound lifted from “It Ain’t Over ‘Til It’s Over.”

Earnest and plainspoken, Tait’s lyrics don’t break much new ground, though some songs rise above. The mock-James Bond tune “Spy” riffs on suspicion deliciously, while “American Tragedy” explores prejudice like a minor-key flipside to dc talk’s “Colored People”: “The questions in you are the questions in me/I’m no closer to answers than you are to me.”

From the supple title track, to the pale “Looking for You,” to the tender piano ballad “Unglued” (a natural concert closer), *Empty* shows amazing versatility. Tait



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says dc talk will be back, but it's hard to imagine him sitting on the creative sidelines after crafting a disc like this. If the title weren't taken already, you could call it *Free at Last*.

—Lou Carlozo

Disappear

PFR (Squint)



It was a cruel joke back in 1997 when the men of PFR decided to check themselves out of the music business for awhile, at least as a rock band. Oh sure, they were kind enough to

leave a little something on the table, a best-of compilation cruelly titled *The Late, Great PFR*. A title like that was salt in the wound, boys. Salt in the wound.

All that aside, now that four years have passed, forgiveness is not out of the question. But since we're only human, a little penance is required. So serve it up, gentlemen... what do ya have?

Produced by Jimmie Lee Sloas, this offering takes the best of what made PFR pointedly original back in the day and de-constructs it, framing the group's storytelling lyrics in a more organic, intriguing wall of sound.

Disappear does not disappoint. It's The Beatles in a Crowded House with a little Toad (the Wet Sprocket, that is). It's three men who know how to grind a mean ax, who understand the meaning of a solid hook. And Joel Hanson's voice has never sounded better.

The songs themselves reflect a coming of age tale of love and loss, of regret and shame in the scope of grace—gritty, human stuff we all need to be reminded of. Of particular note is the rock ballad "Missing Love" and the staggering simplicity of "You" that says more about Jesus in 70 words than in any given sermon: "Every scar You endured, every bit of pain has left its mark on me."

And so, we'll consider *Disappear* more than enough penance for the absence. You are even excused for the title-tease. As if Elvis re-entered the building, PFR is back. The rain is falling once again. And the people say, "Amen."

—Melissa Riddle

CeCe Winans

CeCe Winans (Wellspring Gospel)

CeCe Winans' solo projects have run the gamut from light inspirational pop to funky urban styling



and everything in between. Her fifth aims to please everyone and largely succeeds.

On the urban tip, Winans belts out the funky call to intercession for our country in "Anybody Wanna Pray." She's assisted, as her voice bobs and weaves though the stompin' jam, by Tommy Sims' bass pops and Grits' programming and rap. Her attempt at a Destiny's Child-style cut, "Out My House," is far less successful. Its radical syncopation and too-heavy track are ill-suited to Winans' sweet voice.

The too, too poppy "Say a Prayer" sounds like it was left off of an Avalon album. She also swings and misses with the syrup-heavy "More Than What I Wanted." The prettily orchestrated Diane Warren-ish big ballads, "No One" and "Looking Back at You," redeem those missteps, placing Winans' creamy vocals in a setting best suited to showcase them.

She teams up with another famous brother—Marvin—who helps bring his "Let's Bring Back the Days of Yea & Nay" to a boil. For straight-up pop tunes, Winans has included the upbeat "Better Place" and a shuffling version of Special Gift's "More Than a Friend," which needed a little more oomph.

She returns to the praise & worship ground covered on *Alone in His Presence* and *Alabaster Box* with the breezy "Heavenly Father" and Babbie Mason's lovely, reverent "Holy Spirit Come Fill This Place." The balance of the album deals in hopeful, encouraging—if rather generic—messages. Still, this is a broad offering with potential hits in several arenas that should appeal to Winans' diverse musical following.

—Beau Black

Fetch the Compass Kids

Danielson Famile (Secretly Canadian)



There is not enough space in this review—or this magazine—to adequately describe the history and "uniqueness" of Danielson Famile. Suffice to say:

They're completely different.

Led by "Brother Daniel" Smith, the group's latest, *Fetch the Compass Kids*, continues in the vein of the group's previous works such as *Tri-Danielson!* Utilizing guitars, bells, drums, flute, violin, banjo, bass, trombone and organ, this music might best be described as the Little Rascals on speed. Smith's falsetto vocals and beyond-obtuse lyrics ("We who have lips happy and sad gonna sing the wide and long and high and deep oh Lord" from "Singers Go First") bring to mind what one might expect if frat-house comedian Adam Sandler—composer of "The Chanukah Song" and "Red Hooded Sweatshirt"—were to get saved.

The topics of *Fetch the Compass Kids* seem to include the stability of focusing on Jesus

("Fetch the Compass Kids"), the need to pursue humility ("Rallying the Dominoes") and the fruit of the Holy Spirit ("Fathom the Nine Fruits Pie"). But with other song titles that include "Who the Hello" and "Good News for the Pus Pickers," it is a safe bet that Danielson Famile may be happy to leave interpretations up to the individual.

—Derek Wesley Selby

Stronger

Natalie Grant (Pamplin)



It wasn't long ago that Natalie Grant arrived on the Christian music scene amidst much talk that she was poised as a pop diva *a la* Celine Dion. But despite some success at

radio, the buzz about Grant never quite translated into a high profile career.

Two years later, Grant is aligned with a new label, a new outlook and a new album titled *Stronger*. Stronger indeed. The album is just that in nearly every way over its predecessor, showcasing Grant's powerhouse vocals, which are indeed reminiscent of the aforementioned Dion, as well as Crystal Lewis.

Grant wrote or co-wrote five of the 11 tracks featured, including "Whenever You Need Somebody," a soulful bring-the-house-down duet with immensely popular Plus One. Although she occasionally ventures into dance territory, Grant is at her strongest on from-the-gut pop songs like "If the World Lost All Its Love." Other highlights are the first single, "Keep on Shining," as well as the emotional "I Love to Praise." But Grant most transparently shows her depth as an artist on the album's closer, "Finally Home," co-written with Cindy Morgan. The song is a gorgeous six-minute epic ballad that moves from a place of tears to a place of joy and eternal hope.

Stronger hangs together impressively well. When Natalie Grant wraps herself around a great song she is easily in the upper echelon of female vocalists in the Christian music community.

—Michael TenBrink

Full Plates: The Mix Tape, Vol. 2

DJ Maj (Gotee)

DJ Maj's mix tape credo—concocting a seamless flow of stylistically diverse tracks by different hip-hop artists that sound like an hour-long song—could prove a



double-edged sword for his newest album.

On one hand, pulling together more than 20 personalities and coaxing them to rap over 19 tracks while ending up with a collection that hangs together, is an artistic coup only a visionary could score. Yet with no standout track, listeners who can't digest the legion of intricacies on such a massive album could miss Maj's eclectic, kitchen-sink vision.

For pure star appeal, *Full Plates* has something for just about every hip-hop fan. Among the heavies who rock the mic are Pigeon John, Flynn and Joey the Jerk (of L.A. Symphony), Sup the Chemist, Grits, Knowdaverbs—even Out of Eden represents via a remix ("Spirit Moves").

The guest MCs offer consistently excellent, witty, social and spiritual commentary. And there's a ton of storytelling in the grooves. What's more, the melodies are tasteful, inventive and often deliciously minor key—which should attract the attention of alternative music fans. But because *Full Plates* sports a somewhat plodding mid-tempo rhythm from track to track, things get a bit too languid after 67 minutes.

DJ Maj displays many strengths on *Full Plates*. But he'd make a quantum leap forward if he got as diverse with his beats as he already is with his melodies and orchestration.

—Dave Urbanski

Green Room Blues

The Deluxtone Rockets (Tooth & Nail)



On its sophomore release, *Green Room Blues*, the now four-man band Deluxtone Rockets leapfrogs from a swing-inflected panache into full-scale rockabilly. Produced by the

late Gene Eugene and Chris Colbert, the result approximates Johnny Cash head butting with Buddy Holly.

As the album unfurls, frontman John Brown weighs in with his tight, swaggering vocals, while his bandmates provide steady instrumentation. From bouncy opener "Broken Heart" to contemplative track "Judgement Day," the arrangements here are pleasant enough—yet unsatisfying. The ambitious remake of The Cure's "Love Song" and instrumental pearl "Costa Mesa" make for some memorable moments. However, tunes like "Redemption" and "Open Road" lack personality and play like the hackneyed theme to "Walker, Texas Ranger."

While this disc's occasional flourishes grab the ear, *Green Room Blues* just doesn't measure up to the sonic intensity of The Deluxtone Rockets' debut.

—David McCreary

Dwell in the House

Ron Kenoly (Hosanna!/Integrity)



Ron Kenoly retains the largely God-focused lyrical thrust of his praise & worship hits, such as "Lift Him Up!" on *Dwell in the House*. But this time out, he

infuses some of it with deeper grooves and soul rhythms than Ron went for on his previous albums recorded at live worship events. Some of the time the instinct for urban sounds works for him. At other times, as on the title track, overly sweet background choruses and other production elements blunt the effectiveness and authenticity of Kenoly's aim.

With Bill Withers' "Grandma's Hands," Kenoly finds a classic, moody slow jam to effect a break from the set's more "churchy" numbers. It works. So does the best of the more traditionally praise & worship repertoire on the album. From the up-tempo side, that means "Praise Him," where it sounds like The GAP Band's horn section joined Kenoly and guest vocalist Chris Rodriguez on a disco-funk jam. "You Are" partners Ron with Darlene Zschech in a dramatic ballad that stands among his and her best.

—Jamie Lee Rake

Melodies of My Heart

Angie Winans (Against the Flow)



Half of the duo Angie & Debbie, Angie Winans steps out to create this smooth jazz/gospel solo record. Producers Cedric and Victor Caldwell, whom also play many of

the album's instruments, pepper the album with a street vibe on tracks like "Let 'Em Go" and "Mack Avenue."

Those cuts aside, Winans leans toward a gentle ballad style, as with her version of "The Lord's Prayer," "He Loves Me" and "Roses Again." Two straightforward gospel numbers, "Spirit Lullaby" and "Tribute to Lady Wisdom," feature Winans talking or reading Scripture. Winans also steps up to the piano on a selection of originals, revealing jazz-lite chops and soulful R&B influences, while handling lead vocals. Other parts of this project embrace a subdued, laid-back style of lounge jazz that sounds as if it could be 20 years old, essentially timeless. Celebrated saxophonist Kirk Whalum provides some choice soloing—a

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Steve Turner is a poet and writer living in London. His books include *Conversations With Eric Clapton, U2: Rattle and Hum* and *Van Morrison: Too Late to Stop Now*.



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good touch.

This variety causes *Melodies of My Heart* to feel scattered. Here and there Winans expresses a lively spirit, yet track-to-track falls short in delivering a consistent artistic presence. Certainly the experiences of the human heart are a variety of melodies. While that leads to a fulfilling life, on a record it leads to a sonic experience lacking a sense of focus.

—Brian Quincy Newcomb

Leave Here a Stranger

Starflyer 59 (Tooth & Nail)



With five full-length projects, three EPs, two vinyls and a box set released in eight years, it wouldn't be a crime if the prolific Jason Martin simply ran out of innovative musical ideas. Yet

Leave Here a Stranger finds Martin drawing inspiration from yet another seminal source—the vintage surf rock of The Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* album.

Like *Pet Sounds*, the album's carefree timbres conjure up thoughts of life at the beach. While listening, one can easily imagine the sand, smell the ocean's salty scent and watch surfers bravely coasting the waves. But like life itself, a day at the beach isn't always sunny, and one of this disc's greatest strengths is its ability to evoke a mood. Through varied percussion tinkering and jangly guitar riffs combined with Martin's expressive vocals on "Give Up the War" and "This I Don't Need," the songs' sentiments range from whimsical to melancholy.

While all the tracks play at a mid-tempo pace, there are a few that more distinctly stand out. With an interesting march beat mixed with a spacey rock sound, "I Like Your Photographs" adds an unusual, but enjoyable, flair. And ending the record on an endearing note is the lighthearted ditty "Your Company," more evidence that there's plenty of ink left in Martin's songwriting pen.

—Christa Farris

Rhythms of Remembrance

Apt.Core (Rocketown)

Here's something completely different. Apt.Core, the brainchild of producer Will Hunt, is one of the more left-field recordings to come out of Christian music this year, but its sense of risk-taking makes it one of the most exciting. Along with a cadre of



supporting players, Hunt has set spoken-word and sung Scripture to a bed of ambient/electronic music, making for an album that's meditative, didactic and challenging all at once. Think Chemical Brothers with an overt Christian message or Peter Gabriel in his quieter, contemplative moments. Neither comparison truly captures what's here, but you get the idea.

"Creed" launches the works with a Middle Eastern vibe, as a pulsing track of percussion loops and what sounds like a sitar-backed reading of the Apostle's Creed. Moments later, that segues seamlessly into a reading of John 14:6 ("The Way") that features a melodic chorus. The album unfolds thusly, with songs bleeding into one another and vocalists (including Ginny Owens) trading readings and singing. A version of U2's "40" isn't as sublime as the original, but that's about the only blemish. *Rhythms of Remembrance* is different indeed, but most welcome.

—Anthony DeBarros

Face the Crowd

SpinAround (Pamplin)



This debut from duo Jason McKinney and Alan Moore sports enough power-packed guitar pop to qualify it as one of those great "driving in the car" discs, but that's not the best part. What is? These

guys are natural storytellers, the kind whose tales ring with authenticity. Check out the story of the most popular girl in high school whose life takes a sharp downturn before she finds redemption ("Girl She Used to Be"), or the guy whose acute case of unrequited love for the homecoming queen ultimately leads him closer to God ("Boy Meets Girl"). Both paint youthful angst so well it's easy to find yourself in the scene.

Behind the words is a solid, if eclectic, musical direction. The evangelistic "Face the Crowd" dips into rap-metal, and "Boy Meets Girl" spins its tale through a hip-hop influence. "Forgiveness" and "Sweet Lullabye," both ballads, exhibit SpinAround's quiet side, while "Undeserving" is a raw slice of pop rock.

Throughout, the album relies largely on well-recorded guitars and well-timed bits of piano and synthesizer. Everything's compact, nothing's extraneous. An above-average debut.

—Anthony DeBarros

Over Under Everything

Circadian Rhythm (40)

A quintet of gentleman formed Circadian Rhythm in 1996 while



at Liberty University. From tracks one to 11 there is a fairly uncomplicated theme to the group's message—praise & worship. Musically, the band sounds influenced by U2 and Counting Crows.

And I do mean *influenced*.

Tracks one through five sound as if the band had just been listening to *The Joshua Tree* (not that there's anything wrong with that).

"Beautiful Savior" kicks off the record, a rhythm-based harmonic rock tune with guitar nuances and a fade-in/fade-out that brings to mind U2's "Where the Streets Have No Name." The song "We Are Hungry" contains a deliberate even-paced, singable chorus that will hearken the mind to "With or Without You." And as if the Bono-like tenor vocals of Will Pavone on "Something Glorious" weren't enough, Circadian Rhythm pays its own homage to Ireland's premier musical export with a rousing and satisfying cover of U2's "Gloria," capped by an effective children's choir close.

The balance of the tracks favor Counting Crows, with "Raise," a hook-laden pop/rock melody with a moody and effective synth/vocal bridge that's wonderful.

The record, produced by dc talk bassist Otto Price, makes effective use of vocal harmony and simple, singable melodies in an organic rock-influenced praise & worship setting. While the record is uneven at times ("More Like You" and "Sounds of a Revolution" are plodding), the overall tone of Circadian Rhythm's *Over Under Everything* is one that should win over a legion of fans in the modern worship style.

—Mike Fernandez

Love Sweet Love

Allen & Allen (Allen & Allen Music Group)



Scan the FM dial in any major city and it is a safe bet that you will find a lone smooth jazz station couched in the middle of the usual youth-oriented cacophony. It's one of the few

constants on radio for hip grown-ups. Since most of the songs on those stations are instrumental, most people looking for "Christian" smooth jazz haven't been able to easily identify Christian artists, save a few.

Joining friend and Christian, mainstream radio smooth jazz vet, Kirk Whalum, Allen & Allen continues to bridge its past "inspirational jazz" recordings into more polished, mainstream smooth jazz with *Love Sweet Love*.

Honing its skills of turning hymns, classic and contemporary gospel into jazzy muzak, Allen & Allen uses piano and sax melodies to also weave some original tapestries into its classic hit list. From its ode to the late, essential jazz artist Grover Washington to its covers of the Burt Bacharach classic "What

the World Needs Now" and Fred Hammond's "When You Praise." Allen & Allen generously give homage to many of its influences and favorites. Not veering too far from what has made them Stellar Award winners, Allen & Allen flavor a few tracks with the vocal talents of Mark and Joey Kibble of Take 6.

With *Love Sweet Love* Allen & Allen doesn't break terribly new ground, but it does continue to blend smooth jazz, R&B and gospel into something that feels uniquely joyful and familiar.

—Anthony Barr-Jeffrey

Business as Usual

Buck Enterprises (Galaxy 21 Music)



Buck Enterprises (formerly known as Buck) debuted a few years back as one of many ska bands catching a wave, but on *Business as Usual* the group takes its

sound and songs to a new level.

A few songs flirt with ska's upbeat form, but overall the band has transcended the rut that ska can be. On the wrenching "Silent Ruin" the band rocks hard and desperate, aptly offsetting its often light-hearted vibe. "I Want to Know You" swaggers with equal parts high-school jazz band, burlesque soundtrack and grand arena rock. The disc ends with the closest Buck Enterprises gets to a ballad, a prodigal son tune called "The Return." The high water mark, though, comes from the band's commanding cover of The Beatles' "Got to Get You Into My Life" which boasts Lenny Kravitz-like wailing and blistering horn arrangements, yet stays true to the original direction of the tune. For those so inclined, copping that risky subject exchange from a girl to God actually works well with this song and the whole thing soars.

Strong songs and a post-ska ability to use brass in all the right ways should keep Buck Enterprises afloat over the next several musical waves.

—John J. Thompson

On Broadway

Mark Lowry (Spring House)



They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway. So is this video from the man who gets paid to make you laugh, Mark Lowry.

Among the video releases from Lowry, this ranks among his best. The concept has Lowry hosting his own show on Broadway (actually filmed at the

Beacon Theatre in New York City). For some, a little of Lowry's style goes a long way, hence the problem in other ventures: You can tire of his material rather quickly. This concept works because it allows Lowry to do what he does best—act as an emcee for some of Christian music's most familiar (Gaither Vocal Band, Sandi Patty) and rising talents (the soulful Southern gospel of Annie and Kelly McRae).

Woven between brief comedy monologues and song parodies ("I Could Have Danced All Night" is reworked into the totally hilarious "I Cannot Dance All Night—Because I'm

Southern Baptist"), Lowry shines the spotlight on his fellow performers. Among the highlights are the unique piano medley from Anthony Burger, featuring "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" and "Great Balls of Fire," Patty's and GVB's David Phelps' (one of the best tenors on the planet) rendition of Disney's "A Whole New World" and Lowry's moving harmonic version of his self-penned classic "Mary Did You Know." There's rarely a bump in the road in this 90-minute video.

—Mike Fernandez

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Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts

Steve Turner (InterVarsity Press)



Steve Turner, a London-based poet and writer, gained a bit of acclaim a few years back for penning *Being There: A Vision for Christianity and the Arts*, a booklet Steve Taylor loved and published through Squint Entertainment. *Imagine* is an expansion of that booklet.

Despite *Imagine's* subtitle, it deals much more with the way things *are* for Christian artists than the way things *could be*. That's not a negative. I resonated with just about every observation with regard to the church's view on art and artists, as well as how Christian artists fit (or don't fit) into the church and how their art is received by the church and culture.

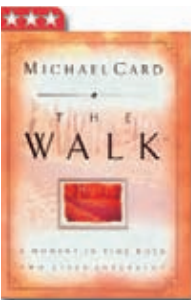
The "vision" part of the book doesn't really surface in force until the final two chapters. Here Turner traces U2's career as an example of how Christian artists can speak into culture with a significant voice (The Witness) and offers practical suggestions for Christian artists who want to maintain spiritual health and be true to their calling (The Life).

Imagine is a valuable summary of the varied concerns of today's Christian artists and will surely spark debate and lead to deeper visions for the future of the church and the arts.

—Dave Urbanski

The Walk: A Moment in Time When Two Lives Intersect

Michael Card (Thomas Nelson)



With a writing style like a personal journal and thematic elements similar to the 1997 bestseller, *Tuesdays With Morrie*, veteran singer/songwriter Michael Card opens his heart wide in a vulnerable

tribute to his friend and mentor, the late pastor Bill Lane, in *The Walk: A Moment in Time When Two Lives Intersect*.

The most noticeable strength in this short book—even from the first few pages—is Card's ability to seamlessly weave candid storytelling and practical

application. Rather than just telling how Lane had a significant impact on Card's life through their shared experiences, readers are challenged to seek spiritual growth for themselves through discipleship, prayer and learning about other faiths.

While *The Walk* would be considered a short read for most at a mere 137 pages, the content in the book doesn't lend itself to be skimmed over quickly. Between the lessons Card learned in seminary and the heart-wrenching account of Lane's death, it's the kind of subject matter you could learn from and enjoy with repeated readings.

—Christa Farris

We Remember C.S. Lewis: Essays & Memoirs

David Graham, Editor
(Broadman & Holman)

Editor David Graham, a contributing editor to the *Canadian C.S. Lewis Journal*, has purposefully selected a diverse group



of previously published essays to bring to readers a reasoned understanding about C.S. Lewis the man and the writer. Each selection provides a glimpse into the character of the Oxford and Cambridge professor who was also the highly acclaimed author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Four Loves* and *A Grief Observed*, among others. While many C.S. Lewis fans were enlightened by Anthony Hopkins' convincing portrayal of the author in the 1993 movie *Shadowlands*, readers of this work are treated to even more "insiders only" tidbits of the personal habits and idiosyncrasies which made Lewis either well-loved by fans (Americans especially) or scorned by his fellow scholars.

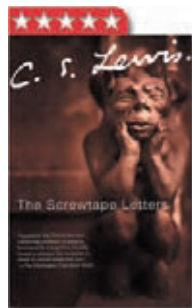
Included in these memoirs are poignant moments shared by his former students, his friends and those who corresponded with Lewis through the years. Some of the more well-known writers who expound on Lewis' literary and private bent are Philip Yancey, J.I. Packer, Charles Colson and James Houston. This text is rich reading for avid followers of Lewis, and newcomers to his timeless work will delightedly partake of this honest tribute finding themselves intrigued and challenged by the real-life goings-on of this man whose life and work marked him for God.

—Michele Howe ccm

EDITOR'S PICK

The Screwtape Letters

C.S. Lewis (HarperSanFrancisco)



Behind some of history's greatest wartime victories has been the spy—the one lurking behind enemy lines, trying to get the goods on the adversary's next move. In the spiritual war that we Christians fight, what if we had our enemy's playbook, so to speak? Enter C.S. Lewis' classic, *The Screwtape Letters*.

The book, recently reissued by HarperSanFrancisco, is composed of correspondence from an experienced demon, Uncle Screwtape, to his apprentice and nephew, Wormwood. We read as Screwtape advises his young mentor on how to handle a new convert, a.k.a. "the patient"—moving him from pride and judgement to cowardice and lust to fear of the future or an unhealthy desire for it. However, the tempter is always cognizant that the enemy (a.k.a. God) is constantly wooing the patient back to Himself, along the path of life.

While quick to read, there's a lot to digest in this book. But what makes it a classic is Lewis' ability to make these letters from a devil so enjoyable, while never glossing over very real human struggles. Page by page the patient lives the joys and trials of a life on earth, but Lewis makes a point to shine the light past the edge of the mundane to show the spiritual reality inherent in our everyday thoughts, attitudes and experiences.

—Sarah Aldridge McNeece

Editor's Note: HarperSanFrancisco is releasing new editions of several C.S. Lewis classics, all with a more contemporary design and featuring new forewords by such writers as Kathleen Norris and Madeleine L'Engle. Titles available include Mere Christianity, A Grief Observed, The Great Divorce, The Problem of Pain and Miracles.



Plus One/Stacie Orrico/ Rachael Lampa/DJ Maj Concordia University St. Paul, Minnesota

by Steve Knight

Plus One wowed around 2,000 screaming fans with its tightly choreographed, highly theatrical show, replete with three costume changes, several “get-to-know-us” interludes with individual members (Nate Cole, Nathan Walters, Gabe Combs, Jason Perry and Jeremy Mhire) and a surprisingly articulate message of faith and hope. And they did it all on a school night!

From the beginning, the sparsely decorated stage and minimal lighting gave the distinct impression that this is a boy band on a budget. But these teen sensations deserve credit for neatly blending their Christian pop songs with high-energy performances and encouraging, if lightweight, testimonies. For example, Perry, one of three pastors’ kids in the group, shared his faith as well as a prayer. However, both included a healthy dose of charismatic verbiage which may have been hard for the uninitiated (i.e. unchurched kids) to understand. The real prayer was followed by a simulated one (complete with kneeling in front of plastic chairs) during “I Need a Miracle,” before Walters brought things back down to earth with a brief Michael Jackson impersonation.

Other than a little harmless self-promotion—namely encouraging fans to watch the group’s performance on “Live With Regis and Kelly” the next morning—it was all pretty tame. Cole (Plus One’s answer to Justin Timberlake) spoke humbly about “making the band,” as well as about the group’s recent media appearances. He encouraged the crowd, “If you have dreams, I say, ‘Go for it!’ God promises to take care of you”—which was a smooth segue into the title track from Plus One’s debut album, *The Promise*.

Despite portraying juvenile delinquents on an episode of CBS’ “Touched by an Angel” earlier in the week, the Plus One boys looked (and sounded) angelic at the end of the show wearing all-white ensembles. They closed out the night singing their hit song, “Written on My Heart,” while waving matching

white scarves which they later threw into the audience.

The deafening drone of the cheers, whistles and screams gave way when opening acts Rachael Lampa and Stacie Orrico returned (dressed in white, to match their male counterparts), along with a choir of back-up singers wearing black robes, for the final encore, “When Your Spirit Gets Weak.”

Orrico opened the evening with a four-song set that included her popular, yet ironic, hit “Don’t Look at Me.” With support from three back-up singers/dancers, her well-choreographed performance came off very much like a more modest and brunette Britney Spears. Lampa’s sparkly outfit and heavy makeup may have made her look like Orrico’s twin, but her more mature vocal talent definitely set her apart from her teen pop sister.

DJ Maj played host to the Plus One house party, spinning jams in between sets and throwing out free stuff to the waiting masses.

Overall, the Plus One concert showcased three of Christian music’s rising stars, all of whom have positive messages to share with their young fans—even if they don’t have it all figured out yet. It’s definitely worth the price of admission if you’re a fan of the music (or if your kids are). **ccm**



Plus One

set list:

- “My Life”
- “With All Your Heart”
- “God Is in This Place”
- “Run to You”
- “Be”
- “I Could Sing of Your Love Forever”
- “I Need a Miracle”
- “Last Flight Out”
- “The Promise”
- “Soul Tattoo”
- “Written on My Heart”
- “When Your Spirit Gets Weak”



Katie Hebeisen
Norwood Young America, MN
“I loved the show. The guys have awesome voices, and I thought that the stories they told were just awesome.”



Seth Butz
Golden Valley, MN
“I thought the show was great. It was really loud. It was really exciting. It’s one of the best concerts I’ve ever been to.”



Cori Quistad
Maplewood, MN
“It was really cool to see what I think is a really cool band talking about God—it was really moving... I liked Rachael and Stacie, too.”

MxPx The Ritz Theater Raleigh, North Carolina

by David McCreary

Just moments into a recent MxPx pop-punk concert came an interesting question from a father attending with his adolescent son: “How do three guys make so much noise?” It seemed everyone else in the audience already knew the answer, as more than 900 adrenaline-filled enthusiasts packed the standing room only venue. Pimple-faced minors, college kids and even a smattering of adults converged to get their fill of the band’s live show. And did they ever, during a full-on sonic assault.

Executing a raucous 23-song set that went deep into the band’s repertoire, MxPx rocked fans into a sweat-drenched frenzy. With a sound not unlike Green Day and Blink 182, the trio culled its minimalist rhythms and tuneful vocalizations for 70-nonstop minutes. True to form, MxPx confidently bashed out a cavalcade of high-decibel numbers.

The performance jump-started with “Buildings Tumble” and “My Life Story,” a pair of turbulent cuts from the band’s latest full-length disc, *The Ever Passing Moment*. Frontman Mike Herrera led the charge, deftly handling lead vocals and bass guitar. The audience seemed mesmerized by ever-bounding guitarist Tom Wisniewski and drummer Yuri Ruley, whose combined aerobics rivaled an

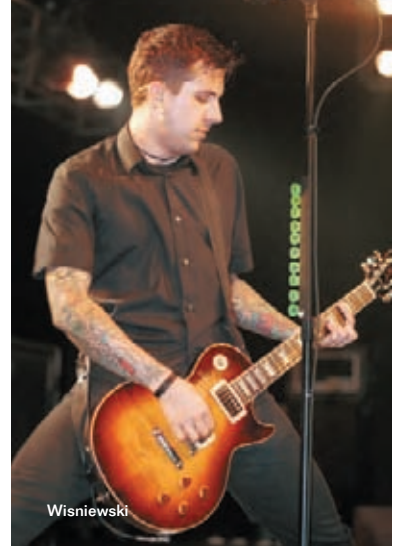
advanced Tae-Bo workout.

Standout cuts included a grinding cover of Bryan Adams’ “Summer of ’69,” sing-along favorite “Chick Magnet” and crowd-rousing mainstay “Punk Rawk Show.” Midway through the set, Herrera asked for a volunteer to assist the band. One sprightly youth leaped onstage, received instructions to sing backup vocals, and was told, “Just be entertaining.”

The teen pulled it off, frenetically jumping about the stage while simultaneously churning out every word to “Small Town Minds.” Herrera then jokingly invited him to come along for the balance of the tour.

MxPx delivered a solid one-two punch of optimism and decorum, eschewing the venom often found in similar punk shows. Take, for instance, the lyrics from “Fist Vs. Tact,” which pointed listeners to a higher authority: “*When all is said and done, our time is spent/And we’ve had our fun/Have you taken the time to think about your life/And what it means to know eternity?*”

Final analysis: MxPx’s concert was devoid of profanity, full of positive energy and featured enough clamor to send at least one dad scrambling for earplugs. That’s a laudable achievement on any night. **ccm**



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615/370-4700

DALLAS HOLM

July 12-Oshkosh, WI
14-Danville, IA
15-Fort Dodge, IA
16-Huron, SD
17-Sioux City, IA
18-Ida Grove, IA
903/882-6176

JAKE

July 4-Collerville, TN
6-Albuquerque, NM
12-Oshkosh, WI

13-Wilmar, MN
25-Tulsa, OK
26-Monterey, CA
August 6-Darien Lake, NY
11-Leitchfield, KY
13-Winchester, KY
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JUSTIFIDE

August 4-Dallas, TX
10-Scottsdale, AZ
25-Midland, TX
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CHERI KEAGGY

August 25-Lexington, KY
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WES KING

August 18-Denver, CO
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SCOTT KRIPPAYNE

July 7-Baltimore, MD
13-Brooklyn Park, MN
15-Oshkosh, WI
21-Detroit Lakes, MN
27-Decatur, IL
28-Corvallis, OR
29-Estes Park, CO
August 15-Suffolk, VA
19-Columbus, IN
615/345-4554

RACHAEL LAMPA

July 15-Rockford, IL
615/361-0444

LARUE

July 1-Riverside, CA
3-Norwalk, CA
6-Bakersfield, CA
7-Fresno, CA
13-Wilmar, MN
14-Oshkosh, WI
16-Des Moines, IA
21-Birmingham, AL
August 4-Toledo, OH
10-Oklahoma City, OK
12-Hamilton, OH
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RUSS LEE

July 10-Orlando, FL
13-Rehrersburg, PA
August 2-Brunswick, GA
12-Indianapolis, IN
18-Milford, DE
19-Matthews, NC
25-Ford City, PA
26-Woolwich, ME
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July 19-Hughesville, PA
August 9-Chillicothe, OH
15-Zanesville, OH
17-Harrisonburg, VA
18-N. Versailles, PA
19-Meadville, PA
31-Lancaster, PA
864/801-9266

THE MARTINS

July 15-Dallas, TX
19-Montgomery, AL
20-Lagrange, GA

21-Pensacola, FL
22-Jacksonville, FL
August 3-Toledo, OH
615/851-4500

MITCH McVICKER

July 6-Arden, NC
14-Oshkosh, WI
785/232-4189

HEATHER MILLER

August 3-Davis, OK
4-Spartanburg, SC
615/227-2191

KELLY MINTER

July 27-Bel Air, MD
August 24-Grantham, PA
615/777-2211

GEOFF MOORE

July 4-Jackson, MS
7-Bellefonte, IL
12-Salem, OR
20-Pensacola, FL
21-Detroit Lakes, MN
August 4-Racine, WI
11-Leitchfield, KY
15-Lehigh Acres, FL
17-Naples, FL
19-Largo, FL/
Clearwater, FL
615/790-5540

NICOLE C. MULLEN

July 20-Detroit Lakes, MN
21-Tampa, FL
28-George, WA
August 6-Darien Lake, NY

10-Lakewood, NJ
17-Phoenix, AZ
31-Gardendale, AL
615/790-7820

NEWSBOYS

July 5-King's Island, OH
7-Doswell, VA
12-Oshkosh, WI
14-Wilmar, MN
20-Detroit Lakes, MN
27-Monterey, CA
28-George, WA
30-New Orleans, LA
August 4-Lincoln, NH
6-Darien Center, NY
18-St. Louis, MO
25-Midland, TX
770/736-6363

NEWSONG

July 1-Patskala, OH
3-Baker, LA
14-Oshkosh, WI
August 4-Winston-Salem, NC
8-Darien Lake, NY
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NICHOLE NORDEMAN

August 3-Hudsonville, MI
4-New Orleans, LA
5-Taylors, SC
17-Nashville, TN
26-Cedar Hill, TX
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BEBO NORMAN

July 8-New Orleans, LA
15-Birmingham, AL
20-Vienna, VA
21-Bel Air, MD
25-Lake Worth, FL
615/297-2021

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

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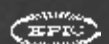
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10—Bradenton, FL
11—Wichita, KS
24—Vienna, VA
25—Cherry Hill, NJ
26—Woolwich, ME
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August 26—Chilton, AL
864/801-9266

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August 10—Mora, MN
18—Rohnert Park, CA
615/777-2227

PHILLIPS, CRAIG & DEAN

July 4—Tulsa, OK
12—Oklahoma City, OK
13—Oshkosh, WI
27—Knoxville, TN
August 10—Winston-Salem, NC
19—Rockford, IL
615/264-0012

CHONDA PIERCE

July 13—Fort Lauderdale, FL
22—Ashland City, TN
28—Sidney, OH
August 7—Whitneyville, PA
9—Pittsville, PA
615/377-3647

JONATHAN PIERCE

August 11—Muskegon, MI
14—Frankenmuth, MI
615/777-2227

PILLAR

July 7—Bushnell, IL
13—Oshkosh, WI
14—Wilmar, MN
18—Augusta, KS
19—Wichita, KS
21—Williamsport, PA
28—Monterey, CA
August 4—Dallas, TX
9—Taylors, SC
11—Leitchfield, KY
12—Hamilton, OH
17—Hays, KS
18—Smithville, MO
22—Ionia, MI
24—Niles, OH
31—Ligonier, IN
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July 1—Pleasanton, CA
14—Oklahoma City, OK
21—Arlington, TX
23—Harrington, DE
27—George, WA
August 18—South Bend, IN
615/248-0800

POINT OF GRACE

July 6—Doswell, VA
7—Cincinnati, OH
13—Fort Lauderdale, FL
615/963-3000

SALVADOR

July 4—San Diego, CA
7—Pueblo, CO
13—San Antonio, TX
14—Wilmar, MN
15—Minneapolis, MN
19—Charlotte, NC
20—Birmingham, AL
21—Williamsport, PA
22—Vienna, VA
25—La Mirada, CA
27—Monterey, CA
28—Oakdale, CA
30—Broomfield, CO
August 3—Elk Grove, CA
4—Demotte, IN
5—Naperville, IL
7—Darren Lake, NY
10—Leitchfield, KY
11—Cincinnati, OH
18—South Bend, IN
19—Muskegon, MI
21—Roswell, NM
23—Estes Park, CO
25—Albuquerque, NM
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SATELLITE SOUL

July 5—Livingston, TX
9—Arkadelphia, AR
19—Sandia, TX
28—Decatur, IL
615/790-5540

SCARECROW & TINMEN

July 12—Wilmar, MN
13—Oshkosh, WI
August 8—Darren Lake, NY
10—Springville, AL
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MARK SCHULTZ

July 7—Cincinnati, OH
13—Plant City, FL
14—Shallotte, NC
20—Detroit Lakes, MN
30—Kansas City, KS
August 1—Estes Park, CO
3—The Woodlands, TX
4—Marion, IL
5—Decatur, IL
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SELAH

July 1—Raleigh, NC
14—Baltimore, MD
20—Mansfield, OH
21—Kansas City, MO
22—LaGrange, IL
August 5—Ludington, MI
6—Darren Lake, NY
19—Simpsonville, SC
615/885-2145

SHADED RED

August 26—Naperville, IL
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July 5—Upper Sandusky, OH
8—Lima, OH
12—Wilmar, MN
13—Oshkosh, WI
21—Williamsport, PA
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25—Gulfport, MS
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July 3—Milligan College, TN
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10—Alamosa, CO
15—Clinton, IA
18—Spartanburg, SC
20—Detroit Lakes, MN
23—Cleveland, TN
24—Carbondale, IL
25—Bolivar, MO
26—Tahlequah, OK
31—Carbondale, IL
August 1—Nampa, ID
2—San Luis Obispo, CA
3—Austin, TX
4—Albuquerque, NM
8—Darren Lake, NY
10—Pleasantville, PA
11—Canton, OH
12—Hamilton, OH
24—Lancaster, PA
26—Reynoldsburg, OH
27—Coalfield, TN
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SONICFLOOD

July 5—Cincinnati, OH
6—Doswell, VA
17—Panama City, FL
20—Sarasota, FL
21—Detroit Lakes, MN
25—Jacksonville, FL
26—Daytona Beach, FL
27—George, WA
August 10—El Dorado, AR
11—Oklahoma City, OK
17—Waco, TX
18—Rohner Park, CA
25—Fredericksburg, VA
615/777-2211

REBECCA ST. JAMES

July 4—Norwalk, CA
13—Oklahoma City, OK
14—Wilmar, MN
15—Oshkosh, WI
21—Birmingham, AL
22—Chicago, IL
28—Hickory, NC
August 6—Darren Lake, NY
11—Boise, ID
17—Littleton, CO
24—Gaylord, MI
26—Reynoldsburg, OH
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STEREO DELUXX

July 14—Wilmar, MN
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RANDY STONEHILL

July 5—Bushnell, IL
27—George, WA
29-31—Kelseyville, CA
August 1—Kelseyville, CA
3—Boston, MA
7—Williamsville, NY
17—Saginaw, MI
18—Milford, DE
25—Salt Lake City, UT
219/269-3413

SWITCHFOOT

July 5—Garden Valley, TX
6—Oklahoma City, OK
7—Anaheim, CA
13—Oshkosh, WI
14—Wilmar, MN
21—Pensacola, FL
26—George, WA
27—Bakersfield, CA

August 1—Grand Haven, MI
4—Lincoln, NH
6—Darren Lake, NY
7—Palm Springs, CA
8—San Diego, CA
10—Oklahoma City, OK
11—Temecula, CA
12—Hesperia, CA
14—Palm Springs, CA
31—Orange County, CA
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PAM THUM

July 1—Dearborn Heights, MI
20—Saratoga, WY
615/331-3314

TREE63

July 5—Upper Sandusky, OH
13—Wilmar, MN
14—San Antonio, TX
15—Riverside, CA
21—Pigeon Forge, TN
27—George, WA
28—Monterey, CA
August 3—Leitchfield, KY
12—Hamilton, OH
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August 4—Austin, TX
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August 3—Atlanta, GA
17—Dallas, TX
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July 7—Bethel Park, PA
20—Pensacola, FL
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August 18—Oak Dale, CA
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V*ENNA

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13—Wilmar, MN
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5—Bushnell, IL
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August 22—Charleston, SC
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WATERMARK

July 14—Urbana, IL
25—Monterey, CA
27—Grass Valley, CA
August 10—Canton, GA
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20—Williamsport, PA
August 2—Davis, OK
8—Mora, MN
12—Wickliffe, OH
26—Woolwich, ME
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July 6—Albuquerque, NM
13—San Antonio, TX
14—Oshkosh, WI
25—Tulsa, OK
26—Monterey, CA
August 11—Leitchfield, KY
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STEVE WIGGINS

July 7—Temecula, CA
August 4—Albuquerque, NM
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BY the NUMBERS

Position	Position Last Month	Title/Artist	Label
1	—	FREE TO FLY Point of Grace	Word
2	2	LIVE IN LONDON AND MORE Donnie McClurkin	Verity
3	1	SONGS 4 WORSHIP: SHOUT TO THE LORD Various	Time Life
4	3	WOW WORSHIP GREEN Various	Integrity
5	4	KINGDOM COME MOVIE SOUNDTRACK Various	Gospo Centric
6	—	OXYGEN Avalon	Sparrow
7	9	THE PROMISE Plus One	Atlantic/143
8	7	WOW 2001 Various	Sparrow
9	10	OFFERINGS: A WORSHIP ALBUM Third Day	Essential
10	5	THE LIVE EXPERIENCE Yolanda Adams	Elektra
11	—	SONGS 4 WORSHIP: HOLY GROUND Various	Time Life
12	—	SOLO (EP) dc talk	ForeFront
13	—	SONGS 4 WORSHIP: BE GLORIFIED Various	Time Life
14	8	WOW GOSPEL 2001 Various	Verity
15	6	THE STORM IS OVER Bishop T.D. Jakes & the Potter's House Mass Choir	EMI Gospel
16	24	SONIC PRAISE Sonicflood	Gotee
17	12	THANKFUL Mary Mary	Myrrh/Columbia/C2
18	23	GENUINE Stacie Orrico	ForeFront
19	38	FREEDOM Michael W. Smith	Reunion
20	18	I COULD SING OF YOUR LOVE FOREVER Various	WorshipTogether
21	—	TRUE VIBE True Vibe	Essential
22	29	LET MY WORDS BE FEW Phillips, Craig & Dean	Sparrow
23	19	SHINE THE HITS Newsboys	Sparrow
24	13	ZOEGIRL ZOEgirl	Sparrow
25	32	LIVE FOR YOU Rachael Lampa	Word
26	28	MARK LOWRY ON BROADWAY Mark Lowry	Spring House
27	16	INTERMISSION dc talk	ForeFront
28	15	HIT PARADE Audio Adrenaline	ForeFront
29	—	FRIENDS Marvin Winans & Perfected Praise	ATF
30	—	BIG BLUE SKY Bebo Norman	Watershed/Essential
31	14	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD Anne Murray	Straightway
32	—	RENAISSANCE (EP) MxPx	Fat Wreck Chords
33	25	VOICE OF AN ANGEL Charlotte Church	Word
34	—	MARK SCHULTZ Mark Schultz	Word
35	21	WOW WORSHIP ORANGE Various	Integrity
36	36	TOP 25 PRAISE SONGS Various	Maranatha!
37	20	I DO BELIEVE Gaither Vocal Band	Spring Hill
38	27	MOUNTAIN HIGH... VALLEY LOW Yolanda Adams	Elektra
39	17	LIVE IN CONCERT Kim Burrell	Tommy Boy Gospel
40	33	AWESOME WONDER Kurt Carr Singers	Gospo Centric

(— chart debut, * chart re-entry)

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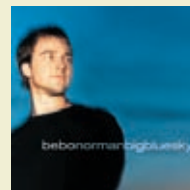


OFFERINGS: A WORSHIP ALBUM Third Day

OK, enough already! Not only did the men of Third Day release the best album yet of their careers in 1999 (*Time*, which is expected to reach gold status this month), but they followed it up last summer with a disc straight from their hearts: a praise & worship album. But not just any praise & worship album. The already gold-selling disc *Offerings* inspired a tour that was head and shoulders above any other Christian music concert experience in the last year. Musically excellent. Worshipful. Genuine. And now (see page 11), the band is making the experience available for its fans on DVD and VHS. It's reason enough to invest in a rockin' stereo system and a big-screen TV. As CCM MAGAZINE goes to press, Third Day and super-producer Monroe Jones are wrapping up loose ends on the band's all new studio album, *Come Together*, currently anticipated to hit shelves in early November.

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BIG BLUE SKY Bebo Norman



In a 1999 CCM MAGAZINE cover story on folk music, Caedmon's Call frontman Cliff Young sang the praises of Bebo Norman, an independent singer/songwriter Young had just signed to be the first release on his label, Watershed Records. "Bebo will talk about things he's going through that people can relate to," said Young. "He opens his whole life up to people. People of my generation want to see someone who is real." Apparently, people of his generation—and a bunch of others—liked what they heard. On his second album for Watershed, the May 15 release of *Big Blue Sky*, Norman's numbers went sky high, selling almost 10,000 copies in the first week alone. Expect those numbers to go even higher this fall when Bebo hits the road for a planned 60-city tour starting Sept. 5.

THIS MONTH FIVE YEARS AGO

Top Christian Albums

- 1 **WHATCHA LOOKIN' 4**
Kirk Franklin & The Family Gospo Centric
- 2 **JARS OF CLAY**
Jars of Clay Essential
- 3 **I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY**
Andy Griffith Sparrow
- 4 **JESUS FREAK**
dc talk ForeFront
- 5 **WHERE I STAND**
Twila Paris Sparrow



Apple Computer hadn't yet adopted its "Think different" slogan, but five years ago Christian music seemed to be doing just that. Industry leaders debated the pitfalls of fame and ministry. Charlie Peacock's innovative up-start label re:think had recently released its stunning compilation record *one point oh*, as well as the debut national record from Sarah Masen, all signaling again a rise of the boutique label. Meanwhile Michael Card and John Michael Talbot collaborated on *Brother to Brother*, an intentional effort to bridge creative and theological gaps between Protestants and Catholics.

What Flavor Faith?

According to the results of national religion polls in the last five years, if you had the current population of America represented by 10 people in a room, nine of them would claim to believe in a personal God. This is a pretty impressive statistic until you find out that, of those nine people, five wouldn't be able to name the four gospels or tell you who gave the Sermon on the Mount or why Easter is celebrated.

"Survey data point to an overwhelming belief in God, but when you go down a couple of layers, it can get pretty vacuous," says Michael Cromartie, vice president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. Cromartie's comments are found in a January 2001 article in the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* titled "Confessions of a

Lonely Atheist" by Natalie Angier. Whether or not her conclusions are simply the attempt of an atheist to slam believers is irrelevant; her findings are backed up by factual surveys. Born-again Christianity in America in the year 2001, though claimed by many, does not run very deep in knowledge or practice.

We live in a time when many claim belief but few are converted. A study by sociologists at the University of Washington compared Christian students with a comparable group of professed atheists and found that atheists "were no more likely to cheat on tests than were Christians, and no less likely to volunteer at a hospital for the mentally disabled." We believe, in other words, but our lives betray us.

In a 1996 article in *First Things*, a journal on religion and public life, Thomas C. Reeves, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, went as far as to say that it is inaccurate to label America "Christian": "We must ask what sort of Christianity lives in the hearts and minds of most Americans?... It is clearly something unlike the faith practiced by third-century hermits, St. Francis of Assisi or Martin Luther," to which we might add a 20th century Mother Teresa. A faith "practiced" is the operable word here, not a faith claimed but indistinguishable from the prevailing culture in every other way.

"Christianity in modern America," Reeves goes on to say, "tends to be easy, upbeat, convenient and compatible. It does not require self-sacrifice, discipline, humility, an other-worldly outlook, a zeal for souls, a fear as well as a love of God. There is little guilt and no punishment, and the payoff in heaven is virtually certain... The classic faith has been altered by a modern, literate, prosperous, technologically driven society undeniably absorbed with obtaining prosperity, security and pleasure."

In other words, the culture has informed our faith more than our faith has informed our culture. I used to think American Christians were shallow; now I realize it is America in general that is shallow. Our failure has not been our identification with culture as much as it has been our inability to rise above it.

The driving force behind the Christian subculture in America has been the issue of relevancy. We have wanted to make ourselves relevant to the world around us so that the gospel could be perceived in terms that were common to the day. There is nothing wrong with this as long as we maintain another standard for our own lives. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. We

have become so enamored with the culture in the process of being relevant to it that we now offer it hardly anything other than another flavor of itself.

"The faith has been overwhelmed by the culture," Reeves concludes,

"producing what is rightly called cultural Christianity," a faith he defines as being "dominated by a culture to the point that it loses much or most of its authenticity."

I am reminded here of Paul's identification with

Jews, legalists and those outside the law, that he might win them for

Christ. And yet, in his identification, he clearly

did not adopt the limitations of each group. For instance, he became like those under the law that he might win those under the law, but he did this without putting himself back under the law (1 Corinthians 9:20). He knew he was not under the law, but under grace, and yet he could take on the perspective of a legalist in order to speak to those who were. His identification with people did not go so far as to take on their limitations as much as to understand them and be able to communicate with them. This is a very important distinction. We need to learn to understand our culture without being swallowed up by it.

We need to find the boundaries of our identification. Once these boundaries were external—dress, makeup, music, cultural taboos. We have successfully removed these boundaries but not replaced them with inner character and other-worldly beliefs and value systems. If there is any indictment of American Christianity, it is not that it is shallow as much as it has failed to offer the world anything other than the shallow culture in which it finds itself.



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