

THE GRAY HAVENS | TIM BOWMAN, JR. | MARI



SWITCHFOOT

THE LIGHT OF DARKNESS

JUL 1, 2016

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From the Editor

Out & About

The latest industry sightings & events in images.



Switchfoot

Front man Jon Foreman explains why their new album, *Where The Light Shines Through*, exposes the things they have been unable to talk about until now.



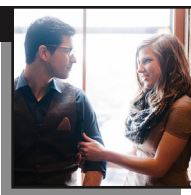
Tim Bowman, Jr.

Number two reaches number one, but successful stats aren't what drives this family man's musical ministry.



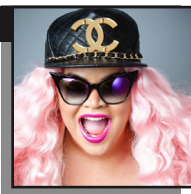
The Gray Havens

Dave Radford, the songwriter from this husband-wife duo, shares how he forms his craft at the intersection of reverie and reality.



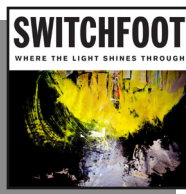
MARi

Mari Burelle is 'no typical CCM artist,' please read on for more less-obvious information...



Reviews

New music from Switchfoot, The Getty's, Starflyer 59, MARi + much more!



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**Fulfillment & Customer
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Suzanne Solinger

Customer Service Reps
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Jason Lloyd

Executive Dir. of Advertising
DeDe Donatelli-Tarrant
805.987.5072
dede@salempublishing.com

Joel Stombres, 630.584.0213
jstombres@salempublishing.com

Account Executive
Jon Edlin, 913.231.7333
JEdlin@salempublishing.com

Troy Hargrave, 615-312-4242
THargrave@salempublishing.com

Web Ad Traffic Coordinator
Kristina James

God is light | 1 John 1:5 (NKJV) *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*

In so many sci-fi movies and with the advancement of computer-generated graphics, we have seen impressive interpretations of powerful beings, deities, gods ... God ... in very dramatic forms of light. Makes me wonder what **Moses** experienced, back in the day?

Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. (Exo. 34:29 NKJV) The rest of the chapter explains how the people were afraid of this, and that Moses had to cover his face with a veil after he spoke with the Lord. That's some real power.

God *IS* light.

Two recently released albums, **Jason Gray's** *Where The Light Gets In* (CCM Magazine's June 15, 2016 cover), and **Switchfoot's** *When The Light Shines Through* (current cover) each uniquely employs the notions of God's all-powerful being—His light—permeating through all that we know, all that we are. Furthermore, shouldn't we allow Him to shine on and through every part of us, including our deep, dark secrets and wounds? **1 John 1:6** says, *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*

There is no darkness in the Lord, whatsoever. If God is light, and He illuminated Moses' face to the point of Israel's fear, I wouldn't want Him to consider me a liar. Where does the light need to go in my life, when does it shine through?

Blessings,



A stylized, handwritten signature of Kevin Sparkman in black ink. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'K' and 'S'.

Kevin Sparkman
Editor, CCM Magazine
KSpark@CCMMagazine.com



FACEBOOK.COM/CCMMAGAZINE



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OUT & ABOUT

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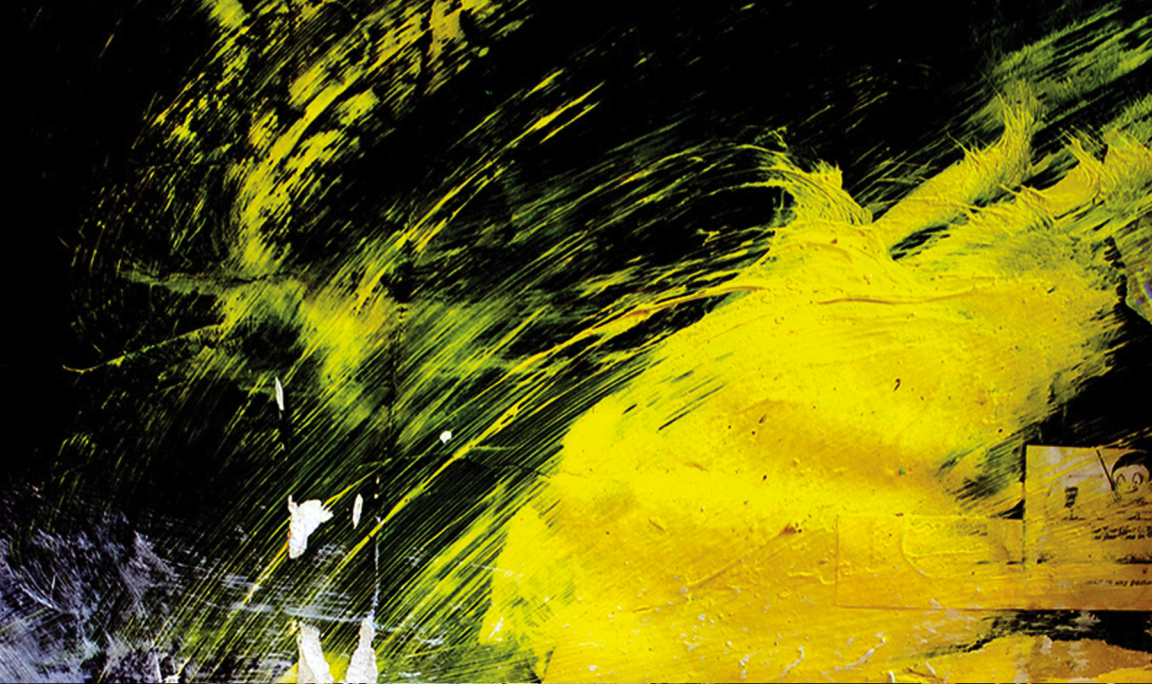


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SWITCHFOOT



Switchfoot - The Light of Darkness

A Conversation with Andrew Greer

“Where woundedness can be refined into beauty a wonderful transfiguration takes place.”

—John O’Donohue

Life is not simple. The trail of days that forge our stories often meander through tumultuous terrains of pain, shortstopping our pace with uncertainty, burdening our steps with fear, and clouding our vision in confusion. To be human is to experience darkness. And suffering. And heartache and grief. And yes, doubt.

Throughout recorded human history, music has provided a cadence for our hearts as our soul steps out on the shaky search for God. In the middle of our deepest disbeliefs, the volley of verse and chorus gifts our spirits with an eternal language to graciously initiate conversation with God.

The men of **Switchfoot** have long been known for recording their spiritual journey. Willing to probe the darkness of their human struggle in an effort to uncover holy light, the internationally applauded compadres’ rich musical catalog has bestowed alternative music with some of its biggest and most inspirational hits over the last fifteen years, while also gracing Gospel music with some of the genre’s most articulate anthems in history—all in an honest effort to articulate eternal hope through the earthy strains of rock ‘n roll.

After wrestling through the darkest year of his life, **Jon Foreman**, Switchfoot's thoughtful front man, suggests it is in this midnight of our need, when our pain is most poignant and our wounds most tender, that our souls are most exposed to the Light.

Now, on the milestone of their tenth recording, ***Where The Light Shines Through*** (Vanguard/Capitol CMG), Jon, his brother and bass guitarist **Tim Foreman**, guitarist **Drew Shirley**, keyboardist **Jerome Fontamillas** and drummer **Chad Butler**, play off Foreman's dark night of the soul to dig even deeper into the trenches of humanity to uncover diamonds of grace. And peace. And love and hope. And yes, God.

CCM Magazine: Jon, we are so glad to have you here. I want to first talk about music's influence on you personally. Your mom and dad are musicians. Your mom plays pipe organ, right?

Jon Foreman: Yeah. She was a pipe organ major [in college], which feels like a pretty impractical major these days. [Laughs] And my dad grew up playing rock n' roll. So we always had guitars, and there was a piano. People ask, "When did you write your first song?" I have no idea. There's no such thing as a song when you're two. You're just banging around. Pots and pans, guitars and pianos—it was all the same thing. Baby rattle. [Laughs]

CCM: So many of us grew up with music influencing our emotions and relationships. Music seems to capture this universal language.

JF: I've always thought of music as the scaffolding for the soul. It allows you to get to places you'd never get to otherwise.

As a band, we've come to the conclusion that we sing these songs night after night because we believe hope deserves an anthem. We want these songs to open the windows and doors of the soul, to see a horizon bigger than just a mirror. So many times our society is self-obsessed, and we get locked in with devices and comparison to other humans when there's a much larger story happening. Music helps unlock that.

CCM: In an interview we did last year, you said, "Music often tells the truth quicker than words." How have you guys used music to supersede what words can accomplish?

JF: I love the Judeo-Christian story of creation, of this deity speaking the universe into existence. I wonder if it was sung. I feel like anytime we enunciate words, when they're not written down, it's a singing of sorts. You could say, "No, I'm just talking," but the pitch is changing, the cadence. There's timing. There's a rhythm. I think music precedes speech as far as our language is concerned. And then you have Christ who, other than the time when He's writing in the dirt with a stick, we don't have any written words from Him. Just spoken words.

As a musician, when I am singing, I always think of it as cosigning God's blank checks. That there's this currency that I've been given to operate with—notes and words—and I can pay them however I want. We grew up playing in clubs and churches and frat parties and youth groups and coffee shops, and I didn't think it was strange. Anywhere that would let us in, we'd play. I was in a **Led Zeppelin** cover band and the youth group band, and I didn't see any problem with any of it. And my parents were very supportive. So I grew up with the idea that tonight we're playing the bars, and we're playing for hurting people that need love and need hope and need joy. And tomorrow morning we're playing at church, and we're playing for hurting people that are looking for

hope and love and acceptance. What we've been doing all along is just trying to tell the truth, just trying to tell our story, because I think that's the story I've been authorized to tell.

CCM: An author friend of mine, Patsy Clairmont, says that though it feels risky to share our story, it's safe because that is what God has allowed us to experience. In the backstory of making this record, you said, "It's strange to make a record of light out of a really dark year." It seems you took the risk to tell your own story of darkness through these songs.



JF: I was literally just texting with a friend of mine about his story. I've been encouraging him to tell his story. The moment you say the most personal thing that you've always been afraid to talk about, suddenly you put that into a song or into words and there's a resonance. Failure, doubt, pain, insecurity, fear—these are words that are attached to things that we hide.

For me, I realized I was building this “Berlin Wall” that was dividing myself into two sides. So with this record, I decided, *Okay, let's get in there, let's start talking about it*. I was trying to face up to the darkness. So every night after we'd be in the studio, I'd go to this one rock on the beach. The Pacific Ocean is a good place to wrestle with the darkness at 3:00 in the morning, you know? And I would be out there wrestling, and it felt like light began to break through. That, for me, was where the title track gained its power and meaning. *The wound is where the light shines through*. It felt like this realization that often the first step towards healing is acknowledging that there is something wrong. For me, that meant singing about it.

CCM: *Do you feel like grief, pain, this darkness has been a pathway for you to to experience God? Has it helped line that path in a way that you didn't expect?*

JF: In talking about that “Berlin Wall,” and the parts of my life that I wish hadn't happened, the questions, the pains, the doubts—all those things that you kind of shove to the side, when I was doing that, it created this schism, this duality, that isn't healthy or normal. And it is basically disbelief, because it believes in a God that's not big enough to encompass all of that. He's not big enough for the big questions. He's not actually big enough to get underneath the wound and actually heal it.

The practice of confession is a beautiful thing because it says, “I’m fatally flawed. I’m a sinner. I blew it again.” I feel like that’s such a healthy thing to say, “I don’t have it figured out.” Depression, failure, fear—to bring these things to the surface is liberating. That which is hidden is empowered. I realized I was empowering my doubt, empowering my fear, empowering the pain. So absolutely. Not only does the Healer Of Souls want to heal the wounds within us, but sometimes those are the very places that He wants to shine through and actually enlighten the rest of our world.

CCM: How so?

JF: I think of the cross, [and] the title, “the wound is where the light shines through.” Yes, shining through my own wounds, shining through the wounds of my community. The questions that I have about America—our interaction with Iraq, poverty around the world—I feel like those are the places with the most wounds that I could imagine, and yet I see such light when I look into the eyes of the kids. And then I think of the crucified Savior on the cross, [His] wounds and light shining through that. For me, I absolutely feel like the wound is a place that is meant to enlighten us about our humanity.

CCM: We live in a culture where our wounds are fairly exposed. Racial. Religious. Whatever is causing us to divide. What is your role as a musician, as an artist, as a husband, father and a friend, in this world of woundedness?

JF: A personal hero of mine once told me that God doesn’t need a lawyer, my job is to be honest. Going back to the confession element, I don’t think we know how to fail. I don’t think it’s been modeled for us, and failure is the most universal experience that any human can have. How many people will actually win a gold medal at the Olympics, and how many people will fail trying?

I want to be—and this is a desire, not something I’ve figured out—someone who’s quick to say when I screwed up, to be able to admit wrongdoing. I think that’s important, especially within the church. If we can’t confess that we’re sinners, the truth is not in us. I mean, it’s scriptural. Anyone who says that he’s got it all figured out is telling a lie. It’s pretty black and white. So to be able to say, “No, I don’t have it figured out. I am a sinner, and I am in need of grace.” To be able to do that, and to build a culture that is built on not our own merit, our own abilities, but rather our need for grace, I think that would be my role as a musician, as a husband, as a father—to forgive and be forgiven.

CCM: What you’re talking about is humility, and what a motivating element of our humanity—to be humble. There’s a lyric from the new record: Ain’t we all just Abraham’s sons / Just sinners with a song and drums / We all fall on our knees and bleed the same. So we’re talking about this common denominator. We’re all people in need of redemption. Yet, in our Western World church culture, it seems our banners aren’t necessarily reflecting this heart of humility.

JF: Faith and issues of theology [are] very touchy because you’re talking about something very serious—[something that has] eternal consequences. And there’s fear involved. Some of that’s natural—maybe a holy reverence, a desire to get it right. [But] perfect love casts out all fear. So at some point, dare we hope that all men might be saved? Dare we hope in a big God who would actually love people that aren’t like me? Dare we hope that He might even forgive someone that doesn’t look and act like me? I don’t know. Maybe. *Maybe* God’s that big. And maybe there’s a dialogue there. But I think, for me, the dialogue begins by saying, “Wow, I’m most surprised that I’m let into the party.” You know what I mean? That’s where it starts for me.

CCM: Maybe God's big enough to forgive someone, love someone, that doesn't look like me. We're talking about mystery, right? That we're not dictating an answer, but opening up a conversation. How does mystery play into the creation of your music and how you interact with listeners?

JF: The big questions that we're asking in our songs, it's not play-acting. These are actual questions that I'm thinking about at three o'clock in the morning on a rock next to the Pacific Ocean. For me, I don't believe in a God that I can fit in my back pocket on a piece of paper and say, "Quod erat demonstrandum. Here He is. Would you like to see my God?" [Then] fold him back up and say, "There, you're wrong. I proved it." I believe in a God that says, "Who are you? Tell him I Am that I Am." It's unsettling.



Whenever I feel like I have God figured out, He reminds me that I don't. When I think of the mystery, you go back to the humility of saying, "No, I don't know, and I have something to learn from everyone." And I do believe that there's doctrine, I believe that there's truth, but I don't believe that truth is something that I possess to pull out and brag about and show other people how they're wrong. I think truth is, rather, something that possesses me. And bigger than truth—love. I have been so deeply loved that it should transcend my actions.

CCM: Let's take this back to music. Music is therapeutic. It gives us a penmanship for our feelings, our thoughts, our questions, our doubts. How does music allow you to work out these layers of life ... spirit life, family life, music life?



JF: From the very beginning, music, for me, has always been an ability to talk about things I have no way to talk about otherwise. You could sum it up with God, girls, politics, and death—and maybe a few other topics—but things I don't know how to talk about with my closest friends, let alone thousands of strangers a night. And music transcends and allows me to scream things that shouldn't be whispered.

On this new record, talking about where the light shines through, these are stories and songs that we couldn't have written at the beginning of this journey. Even more than that, the last solo project that I did, 25 songs for 24 hours, where you're chasing light around the clock and using it as a metaphor for faith and doubt and death, life, birth, all these things—polar opposites





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and extremities which we're kind of pulled between as humans. That journey helped prepare this album of polarities. *Where The Light Shines Through* is an album that feels like it couldn't have been written without that.

I always think of songwriting as archaeology. Everyday you get up and you dig. You get your guitar and you start digging. And sometimes you discover a McDonald's wrapper and it's just trash. Other times you discover this lost city that it's been under your feet all along and you can't really claim credit for it—it just happened. A good song doesn't have my fingerprints on it. It feels like it transcends the moment and you take your shoes off and say, "Alright, there it is."

CCM: If you stripped it all back, what is the core motivator for you to create music? To do what you do?

JF: I feel like there's this great homesickness. With music, you can articulate these things. It's about the conversation that begins when those honest utterances are brought to life. So whether I'm playing in a parking lot for thirty people after the show, or on stage with smoke and lights, the goal is conversation. Music can be that vehicle towards hope. Hope deserves an anthem. That's why we sing. **CCM**

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A portrait of Tim Bowman, Jr. against a solid yellow background. He is a Black man with short dark hair, wearing large black-rimmed glasses and a wide smile. He is dressed in a white button-down shirt with a silver collar bar and a dark blue blazer with a small white geometric pattern. His hands are clasped in front of him, holding the bottom of the blazer. The text 'TIM BOWMAN, Jr.' is printed in white in the upper right corner.

TIM BOWMAN, Jr.

Tim Bowman, Jr. More Than Just A Number

Number Two Reaches Number One, But Successful Stats Don't Drive This Family Man's Musical Ministry

By Andrew Greer

If, as a child, you had told modern gospel artist **Tim Bowman, Jr.** that he would top the *Billboard* Gospel charts two decades later, he might actually have believed it possible. Not because the twenty-nine-year-old musician is puffed up on pride or overconfident of his craft, but rather the spiritually sensitive Detroit native was raised and trained on a steady diet of music and ministry thanks to the top-notch influences of his father, smooth jazz guitarist, **Tim Bowman**, and his aunt, gospel singing veteran, **Vickie Winans**. For Bowman, Jr., playing music, and even more specifically, *gospel* music, is simply second nature.

Enlisting his born-and-bred musical expertise, paired with the legendary record-making process of producer powerhouse **Rodney Jerkins (Beyonce, Michael Jackson)**, to propel his sophomore set, *Listen (Lifestyle Music Group)*, to the heady number one slot on *Billboard* Gospel's chart week of release, Bowman, Jr. and crew have successfully secured his title as "gospel music's fastest rising star."

Sitting down for his first ever interview with *CCM Magazine*, the young music minister talks about his expanding platform, his expanding family and how, for him, success is defined in spiritual terms, not sales numbers.

CCM Magazine: Tim, you were surrounded by top-notch musicians your entire life. How did the growing up inside such an astute musical environment influence your decision to make music your livelihood?

Tim Bowman, Jr: I've been traveling and singing with my family since I was twelve years old. I've learned so much from them. Most importantly, they pushed, supported, and encouraged me to always keep honing my gift.

CCM: How have these family musicians mentored your life, musically and spiritually?

TB, Jr.: My father [Tim Bowman] was a huge musical influence in my life. The way I approach music, as a whole, was shaped by him. He exposed me to music that was foreign to me, like jazz, fusion, rock and country. I remember us sitting down and going over musical scales day in and day out.

My Aunt Vickie [Winans] really helped me take that gift and move it into ministry. She taught me the importance of having spiritually integrity on and off the stage. Touring with her, I got a chance to see how to do ministry the right way.

CCM: Listen was produced by Rodney "Darkchild" Jerkins, famous for his work with heavy-hitting R&B-pop artists like Mary J. Blige, Destiny's Child and Michael Jackson. How did Jerkins' experience give Listen the lift necessary to take your musicianship to a new level?

TB, Jr.: Wow. What can I say about the influence that Rodney has had on this project and me? Rodney is nothing short of a musical genius. He took me as an artist and showed me new things about my gift. He put his stamp on this project while allowing me to

express myself authentically. He knew exactly what and what not to do. Everything is thought out with his natural and spiritual wisdom.

CCM: Listen earned you your first chart-topping album, and spawned your first #1 radio single, "I'm Good." How does it feel to be surrounded by all these number ones?

TB, Jr.: It's a dream come true! I do this to use and express my gift for the Kingdom, but it never hurts to be celebrated and recognized for your contribution to the industry.

We just set out to make life changing Kingdom music. If the music went to number one, great. But if it hadn't, I would've been happy with making a spiritual impact.

CCM: A lyric from "I'm Good" ... I have days when / It's true y'all / I just can't smile, I just wanna' cry / It ain't easy, sometimes it's work just to be alive. Do you feel it is important to share your successes and your struggles with your audience?

TB, Jr.: Absolutely. My generation is huge on transparency and being real. People need to see that real life problems and situations occur for everybody. We just have to make the decision to fight through and not dwell on it, because in the end we need to realize that we're good. Christ made us that way!

CCM: You and your new bride have been thrust into the mainstream spotlight for your public profession of purity—encouraging couples to wait to have sex until marriage. The public's response has been both supportive and critical. What is your message in regards to purity? And how have the two of you weathered the opposing responses?



TB, Jr.: Shout out to my beautiful wife, **Brelyn**. I love you!

Our message is simple. Walk out what the Bible says, more specifically in regards to purity—not just sexual—but in all areas. It just so happens that the spotlight was cast on our decision about sexual purity. So we've been traveling the country encouraging and empowering others on how to walk that life out.

The opposing responses don't knock us off of our game. We don't look at them as negative. We look at them as a chance to get the conversation started!

CCM: At the end of the day, why make music? Why share music? Why take to the stage one more time, lead worship one more time? At the core, what motivates your music?

TB, Jr.: I do all of this because it is my purpose and passion in life! Music and ministry is in me to the core. There is no dimming this fire that's inside of me. I get excited and amped when God gives me a new and creative way to share His gospel. I have a heart for believers and non-believers, for God's people. As long as I have breath in my body, I'll be pushing to uplift and encourage the believers as well as win souls! CCM



THE GRAY HAVENS

The Gray Havens

Shaping Words Of Fiction

How A Story-singing Songwriter Forms His Craft At The Intersection Of Reverie And Reality

by Andrew Greer

When **Dave Radford**, one-half of the husband-wife pop-folk duo, **The Gray Havens**, summoned producer **Ben Shive (Colony House, Andrew Peterson)** to the studio last year to pull the trigger on a new recording, the singing songwriter came armed with over 700 voice memos filled with melodic ideas, instrumental thoughts and lyrical blueprints to round out a record.

Sound a bit chaotic? Perhaps. But when the studio pair stumbled across a memo of Dave singing three words, “*Met a ghost ...*” over a haunting acoustic guitar riff, Radford and Shive knew they had just found a keeper. And so the title track for the group’s second full-length project, ***Ghost Of A King (Artist Garden Entertainment)***, was born, compiling a complete ten-track recording from one mysterious phrase, and instantly propelling the couple into the Top 5 of iTunes’ mainstream Singer-Songwriter chart upon the album’s release.

Reflecting a deep maturation in Dave and Licia’s already-acclaimed musicianship, *Ghost Of A King* also ups the ante lyrically, showcasing the matrimonial musicians’ literary flair to poetically explore humanity’s perpetual pining for love, home and God. So in an effort to further reveal the minds and hearts behind the music, we sit down with Dave Radford for an intimate one-on-

one about literature, longing and the allusive meaning behind the name, The Gray Havens.

CCM Magazine: For those that may be unfamiliar with your music, The Gray Havens' name is an allusion to Tolkien, correct?

Dave Radford: Correct you are. We were on a deadline to print our first CD and didn't have a band name. We decided to send out a message to our Kickstarter backers titled, "We need a band name!" We told them we liked The Lord Of The Rings and Narnia, and threw out a few key words that we'd be playing with.

We were happily surprised by the level of response. Some comical. Some serious. Some neither. I received an email from a backer whose son-in-law had come up with a few ideas for a name. Among them was, "The Gray Havens." It is a chapter title from the last installment of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. In the book, it represented a seaport from which characters sail to the undying lands.

It would be hard to overstate Tolkein's influence and value [on us] (**C.S. Lewis** could easily be thrown in here as well). The imagination, attention to detail, and authenticity of the world portrayed in *Lord Of The Rings* is incredible.

Tolkien is also an encouragement for us in the way he regarded music. He expressed a hierarchy for the ways we communicate. At the bottom was analytical speech. Higher than that was math, which took its place underneath prose. Climb a little higher and you've reached poetry. At the top, he argued that music was the highest mode of communication. Pretty cool.

CCM: How is the meaning of your moniker reflected through your songs, especially on Ghost Of A King?

DR: We want to take our listeners on a journey, so I thought it totally fitting when our bio writer, Mark Geil, described it this way: “If Tolkien’s seaport (the Grey Havens) is a launching point from which the traveler sails toward a distant holy shore, then *Ghost Of A King* is traveling music. This collection of expressive songs speak wisdom into the here and now even while they cast a watchful eye toward the holy shore.” He’s a far better writer than me, so I’ll just go with that answer.

CCM: Throughout the track listing, I sense a theme of longing. Is this true?

DR: Definitely. The first track, “Ghost In The Valley,” is a sort of a testimony and a prelude to the record, which describes our ultimate longing being met and fulfilled in the Son of God, the River of Life who calls us to live a life of abundance. After this, the lyrics dip in and out of other types of longing, whether that be following the Lord, loving my spouse well, or the desire to spend eternity with my non-believing friends and siblings.

CCM: I’ve read literature has a significant impact on your songwriting as well. How so?

DR: I believe story and metaphor have superpowers that are absent in non-fiction writing, which is probably why I lean more heavily toward a more “storyteller” disposition in writing. But I’ve also been incredibly influenced by many non-fictional works. Non-fiction taught me “what” to say and fiction taught me “how” to say it.



CCM: Any works in particular?

DR: I'm a fan of great writing, and a sucker for a good story. My favorite fictional books are *Lord Of The Rings*, *The Chronicles Of Narnia* and *Harry Potter*. More recently, I enjoyed reading a book called *Shantaram* and *The Name Of The Wind*. Both of these I would recommend only to college age and above.

In more recent years, my favorite non-fiction books have been *The Cross Of Christ* by **Jon Stott**, *Prodigal God* by **Tim Keller** and *The Things Of Earth* by **Joe Rigney**. I'm currently reading *The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism, and Gospel Assurance...* by **Sinclair Ferguson** and loving it, and plan on reading *One With Christ: An Evangelical Theology of Salvation* by **Marcus Johnson** after Licia finishes it.

CCM: Listening through Ghost, it is apparent you have significantly grown in your poetic sensibilities. You also have had a lot of personal growth, including a move to Nashville and the birth of your first son, Simon. Is there a correspondence between the two?

DR: Thank you very much for saying so. I actually don't think it had much to do with Simon being born, other than the downtime it afforded me to focus on writing. This is also the first record that doesn't have a significant amount of songs that were written during my college years. I think that definitely made a difference.

I also had a much better team around me this time. My wife Licia, our manager, and our producer all had a very active voice in the shape of each song. The general process for writing each song would look like me disappearing into the least messy room in our cramped apartment, writing for an hour or two, and

emerging to play for Licia what I'd written. If the song was good enough to make it beyond her approval—which is not an easy stage to pass through [laughs]—I'd upload the voice memo to a Dropbox folder for our manager and Ben Shive to listen to. They would then offer their comments before I headed back to into the room, that by now was much messier with pages of crumpled paper strewn everywhere, and make the edits.

CCM: Speaking of the music, the haunting, almost hip-hop programmed beats of the title track also exhibit a broader maturity since past projects. What do you attribute the growth to?

DR: Ben Shive certainly deserves a lot of credit here. He has this gift for coming up with creative hooks that happen at exactly the right moments using exactly the right sounds, all while carrying on a pleasant conversation and drinking a chai tea. He's a sort of ninja, and not to be trifled with. [*Laughs*]

In all seriousness, I think we were a great team. The ideas seemed to flow. That's not to say every bit of it was easy. There were many late, late nights, occasional walks outside to find inspiration, and moments when we would just stare at each other while trying to come up with the perfect lyrics, tossing out would-be phrases across the table at [our favorite burger joint] followed by, "No, that's stupid, forget it."

But outside of the songwriting portion I talked about before, I attribute so much of the record's "success" to Ben's being a ninja.

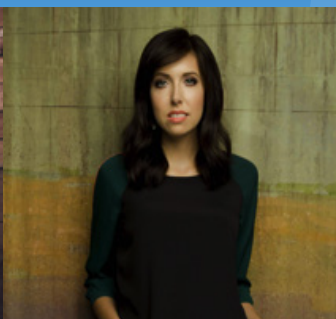


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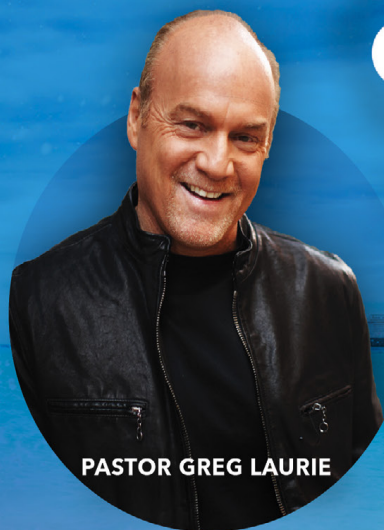
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CCM: At the end of the night, whether you are performing in a church, a coffee shop, a theater or a bar, what is it you want listeners to take away from a Gray Havens listening experience?

DR: Our goal by the end of the night is to awaken wonder and joy for the Lord and His glory through song, both in our selves and in our listeners. If we've done that, we did it right. CCM





PASTOR GREG LAURIE



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MATTHEW WEST

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I am passionate about stories. In fact, my songs have been inspired by more than 40,000 true stories I have collected from people all over the world. If you know anything about my music, you know I believe each of our lives is a story—and our stories have the power to change the world. That's why I'm so excited for my "Storytellers Cruise." I really hope you will join us on what will be an amazing week of music, worship, learning, exploration and of course a relaxing vacation!

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MARi



MARi—Ten Feet Outside Of The ‘Box’

Mari Burelle Is ‘Not A Typical CCM Artist’
—Read On For More Less-Obvious Info

by Matt Conner

MARi’s debut is a long time in the making. Over a decade after eschewing a major label deal at the advice of a pastor, **Mari Burelle** has found God’s promises coming true in a timing not her own. The talented pop vocalist has taken the long road to get to where she is, but the journey has been worth the wait.

MARi’s songs are dance floor ready even as they contain layers of meaning from her own vulnerable journey—one that moves from an abusive childhood to recent health concerns that caused her to, once again, lean into God for her sustenance and strength. But now her time has arrived with the release of *Treasure*, and MARi says she’s grateful for the story so far.

CCM Magazine: Give us some insight into this season in the lead-up to the album release?

Mari Burelle: Things are pretty busy and I’m running around like crazy. I’m Latina and I live in New York, so that’s what you usually get. [Laughs] Plus I’m doing this music thing.

CCM: Are you happiest when you’re busy?

MARi: Yeah, I love it. That’s how life should be as long as you have a balance and the fundamentals straight, staying busy can be a good thing.



CCM: What are the emotions like for you at this point?

MARi: I'm actually not nervous because I went through everything beforehand. It's even how the songs came about. I feel like God prepared me through my songs for what was going to happen. Thank God that He did because some of it was not very fun, but the music that came out of it was definitely worth it. It's kind of like a Cinderella story for me. Everything I've dreamed of since I was a little girl, the people I've gotten to meet, the doors that have been opening—it's amazing to see God's promises come to pass before my very eyes. I'm ecstatic and just so grateful to know the backstory of my life and even be here where I am.

I'm that girl who is very fun and out of the box. I hope to bring a refreshing twist to the Christian music scene because I'm not your typical cookie-cutter girl—looks-wise, size-wise, sound-wise. I'm just excited that I get to be a part of this and that He's opening me up to be in the big leagues. He gave me all the music. Every song, every lyric, every note was from Him. My entire journey was worth every moment that I went through.

CCM: You've referenced your background a few times, so can you give us a snapshot of what you're referring to?

MARi: Yeah! I'm adopted, so I feel like **Esther** in the Bible. I remember when I got saved when I was nine years-old, these two men came into the projects and told me not to be afraid, that I would be called for greatness and that God was going to use me to sing all over the world for His glory. I had to grow up at a young age because of my adoption and being abused by my biological family.

I understood exactly what it was and even felt God at a young age. It wasn't just a religious feeling. It was a real promise I re-



ceived that day and no matter where I went or what I was going through, I would always come across somebody—whether a stranger on the street or a pastor in a church—who would give me a word about the next step and it would always come to pass. So I've learned to always believe God and His word, so I don't take that lightly.

This past year... Well, I wasn't [planning to go into] the whole health thing—but I seriously thank God I'm alive. That's why I wrote the song called "Alive," because I didn't think I was going to make it. I got this weird virus out of nowhere when I was about to release an album last year, but it woke me up to taking care of my health because I needed it to be able to go and share this music [at this given time]. But they told me everything... cancer, every kind of disease possible. I kept declaring the word over my life, "Nope, **Psalms 118:17** says, 'I'm going to not die but live and recount the illustrious acts of the Lord.'"

I knew I would use it as a testimony all over the world, that I am still here and that I am still singing. Whatever comes my way, nothing can touch me or come against me—since I was a little girl, He promised me that I would sing all over the world for His glory.

I got an opportunity when I was seventeen to sing from a major label, but I was told by a pastor that if I chose to wait and do it in God's timing that it would happen and that He would take me all over the world but for His glory. So I didn't. I didn't believe that I was ready. But here I am at age 31 and it's all happening. I go back to that word and think, "Oh my gosh, You really have never failed me. Your word is so true." The Bible says that His word doesn't come back void. Everything that He says does take place and happen if we declare, speak it and believe it.

I'm not even a super-religious person, but I've just seen these things with my own eyes.

CCM: You've referenced the power of scriptures a few times. Have you always found solace in them?

MARi: I've depended on His word since I was a little girl. People will always fail you, even if you love and trust them. It's just human nature. But trusting in God has allowed me to be able to get through everything. His word even says, "Try me." I tried God. People go out and try the lottery all of the time, so why not try God? Read scripture and see if it doesn't come to pass.

CCM: Have you been singing and performing at an early age?

MARi: I have. I started playing on my grandfather's piano when I was really young. I would just start writing, worshipping and weeping and I didn't even know why. I knew based off of what I was told that I was special and set apart, not in a prideful way but that's just what I was told. So I kept singing and worshipping and praying.

Later, at church, they were having this talent show and I decided to go. When I walked through those doors, I felt that it was home and I was supposed to be there. For the next twelve years of my life up until two years ago, I stayed there and it sheltered me and protected me and made me who I am today.

CCM: If there was one thing you'd want people to know about your music...?

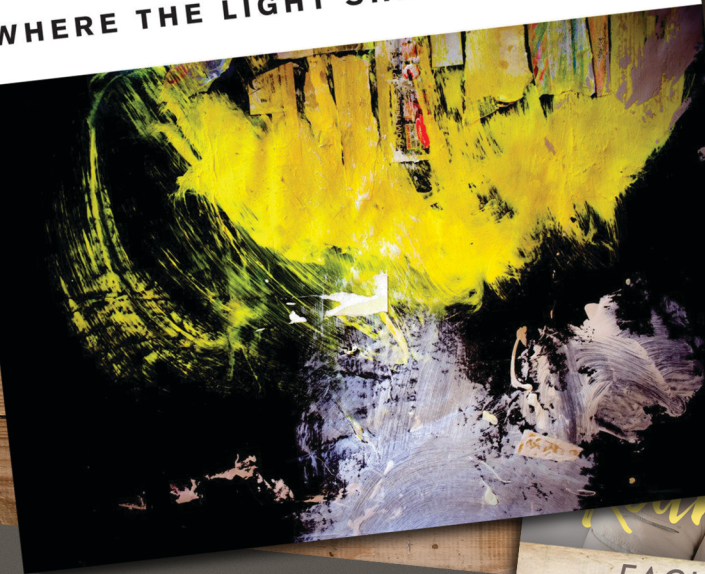
MARi: Every song has a meaning that's straight from my heart and life story. You'll find yourself singing and dancing and laughing and crying, but most importantly you'll find that it is inspir-

ing and can relate to so many people from different walks and paths of life. I'm not here to reach the Christians. I want to be a part of that since I am a Christian, and that's why you'll hear worship songs, but I really want to veer out and try to reach people without tainting myself. The Bible says you become like the people you hang around with, so I'm very careful to find that balance.

I want to reach a broader audience. Without being disrespectful, some music can be borderline cheesy. Even just the fashion or the looks, people will say, "Oh, that's Christian." I want to change that and show that we're awesome, too. Music started in heaven, so I want to show that you can dance and do a mean two-step and look awesome, but for the right reasons, the right party, the right team, you know? So I'm trying to reach out and branch out a little bit more without losing who we are as Christians. [CCM](#)

SWITCHFOOT

WHERE THE LIGHT SHINES THROUGH



REVIEWS

july 1, 2016



Kristyn Getty
FACING A TASK UNFINISHED

Starflyer 59

SLOW

ANCES • BEHIND-THE-SCENES FOOTAGE • INTERVIEWS & MORE!

WINTER



FRONT ROW
BACK STAGE
FROM THE
HEART

Switchfoot

Where The Light Shines Through

(Vanguard/Capitol CMG)

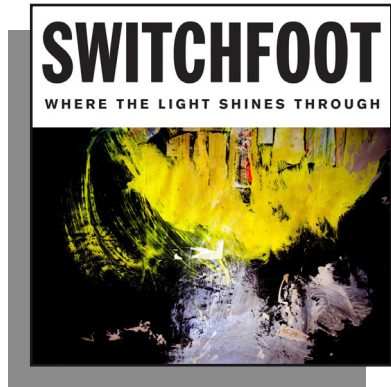
FOR FANS OF:

Jon Foreman, The Afters

WE LIKE:

"If The House Burns Down Tonight"

★★★★★



Ten albums in, **Switchfoot's** aim is sharper than ever. The San Diego-based band's newest album, ***Where The Light Shines Through***, shows off a veteran acumen in both **Jon Foreman's** straight-to-the-heart lyrical approach and their stellar alt-rock sensibilities. For a band already celebrated for providing fans with the whole package time and again, it's a testament to the band's talent and discipline that they continue to burn so brightly twenty years after they started.

Up-tempo cuts like "Holy Water" and "If The House Burns Down Tonight" should be live favorites. The title track spins the story on the scars we all bear. Then there's the potent "Looking for America," a track featuring Lecrae that asks a series of serious questions. Altogether, these twelve songs form another very fine effort from a band that's rocking their prime.

—Matt Conner

Keith & Kristyn Getty
Facing A Task Unfinished

(Getty Music)

FOR FANS OF:

Travis Cottrell, Darlene Zschech

WE LIKE: “Children Come
(f/ Ladysmith Black Mambazo)””

★★★★☆



Encompassing a sound of global praise, **Keith & Kristyn Getty** (Northern Ireland) release ***Facing A Task Unfinished***, inspired by the **Frank Houghton** hymn penned in 1931 of the same name. Facing persecution as a worker for **China Inland Mission** (now OMF International), Houghton wrote the song “with the belief that God’s people singing together fueled mission.”

Within that same spirit, the chants of **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** on “Children Come,” the tribal beats of “May The Peoples Praise You” and “For The Cause,” and the congregational singing throughout the album weave a tapestry of worship that would motivate the heart of any believer to fan the flame for Christ. This is a special album that bears further proof of the unending power of the hymn.

–Kevin Sparkman

Starflyer 59

Slow

(Tooth & Nail Records)

FOR FANS OF:

*Aaron Sprinkle, Pedro The Lion,
Death Cab For Cutie*

WE LIKE: "Told Me So"

★★★★★



Long before indie rock was “in,” **Starflyer 59** was carefully sculpting the genre with ethereal, left of the dial experiments that captivated an entire generation (or at least those in the know). On the band’s fourteenth studio album, the **Jason Martin**-led act not only returns to **Tooth & Nail Records**, but also turns in another textbook batch of its lo-fi atmospheres and melodic textures that could fit right in alongside any current band on **Pitchfork**’s tastemaking playlists.

Lyrical speaking, the guys sound older, wiser and at their most reflective, sure to be another sticking point for their extremely dedicated fan base and also a thought-provoking entry point for the hipster kids coming up.

—Andy Argyrakis

Various Artists

This Is Winter Jam DVD

(Word Films)

FOR FANS OF:

*Skillet, Jeremy Camp,
Francesca Battistelli*

★★★★☆



In case you missed the one-night-only in-theatre experience of ***This Is Winter Jam*** on April 19, 2016 (or perhaps you'd like to watch it again-and-again), **Word** Films now brings it all home for you on DVD. The 95-minute film showcases performances of ***Winter Jam Tour*** stops from 2015-16 featuring **Skillet**, for **King & Country**, **Jeremy Camp**, **Francesca Battistelli**, **Family Force 5**, **Crowder** and many more.

Presented in documentary format, the tour's creators, **Newsong**, offer commentary on the conception and history of *Winter Jam* (complete with retro footage) including vignettes from many of the artists mentioned above and more, rare behind-the-scenes look-in's and bonus features, and a concluding invitation from tour pastor **Tony Nolan**. The film does a great job painting the entire picture of the twenty-year phenomenon while, like the live show offered in cities across America every winter, keeps it entertaining and focused on Christ.

—Kevin Sparkman

MARi

Treasure

(Elevate Entertainment/Syntax Distribution)

FOR FANS OF:

Group 1 Crew, Seth & Nirva, Shakira

WE LIKE: "Shine Brighter"

★★★★☆



Like many single-named singer/songwriters, New York's **MARi** sounds like a superstar in the making throughout this vibrant debut. She displays a slick blend of pop, dance, reggae and Latin rhythms, while always ensuring a spiritually-grounded message at every energetic burst.

Though MARi's impossible to pinpoint, ***Treasure*** is a blast to play and it achieves cohesion thanks to her joyful vocals and several personal stories relating to God's faithfulness. In addition to singing in English, the newcomer is also just as proficient when Spanish pops up in a few places, suggesting she possesses the greatest potential for a multi-market crossover since **Jaci Velasquez** or **Rachael Lampa**.

–Andy Argyrakis

The Rubyz

I'll Follow You

(Bema Media)

FOR FANS OF:

pureNRG, *ZOEgirl*

WE LIKE: "I'll Follow You"

★★★★☆☆



If you're looking for new set of summer jams, then you might want to tune into the latest set of earworms from **The Rubyz. *I'll Follow You*** is a straightforward, feel good EP that feels as youthful as the vocalists performing the material—two 14-year-olds and one 17-year-old to be specific.

Chuck Butler's (Backstreet Boys, Mandisa, TobyMac) production delivers a slick, polished feel to the five album tracks, with songs like the self-worth anthem "Breathtakingly Beautiful" and the declarative "I'll Follow You" serving as the album's strongest tracks. That said, there is one odd inclusion at the end: a juvenile remake of "Angels We Have Heard on High," that feels very out of place both thematically and musically.

—Matt Conner

Julianna Zobrist

Shatterproof

(Self-release)

FOR FANS OF:

Plumb, Moriah Peters

WE LIKE: "Dawn"

★★★★☆☆



Julianna Zobrist has aims for a larger platform of her own, alongside her husband **Ben Zobrist** of the **Chicago Cubs**, with the release of her new full-length album ***Shatterproof***. Fans of dance-oriented pop music will enjoy the hopeful refrains found on Zobrist's new album, her first since her 2012 EP, *Say It Now*.

"Alive" is a song of awakening that pulses atop a piano refrain. "Shatterproof" waves goodbye to fear and shame as the propulsive opening track. "Dawn" looks ahead to a new day in the midst of life's darker moments. Together, Zobrist has put together an optimistic, live-affirming set of songs that will resonate with those who hear them.

—Matt Conner

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