

LEELAND, ALL SONS & DAUGHTERS | IN REVIEW: SKILLET, RELIENT K, GROUP 1 CREW

CELEBRITY

LADY ANTEBELLUM'S

HILLARY SCOTT

**MAKING SENSE OF A
BEAUTIFUL MESS**

WHY GOD'S PLANS RE-PURPOSED
HER PRAYERS TO, 'THY WILL BE DONE'

AUG 1, 2016

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Hillary Scott

Making sense of life's messes—Lady Antebellum's leading gal on trusting God's plans over her own, and her resulting gospel album



Leeland

Five years after their last release, the acclaimed worship band has a fresh lineup, new label and the opportunity to collaborate with some of their musical heroes



All Sons & Daughters

Part one of a two-part series featuring a song-by-song commentary from Leslie Ann Jordan and David Alan Leonard from their forthcoming album Poets & Saints



Andrew Marcus

During the making of his major-label debut, the Canadian worship leader reflects on finding a lot more than luck while completing Constant



Reviews

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The definition of “is.” | As a musician, my absolute favorite songs are the ones that I can listen to time and again and experience something new at each spin. I love it when we re-read scripture and a brand new meaning or added depth leaps out of the page.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, forever.”—a verse that I’ve probably remembered for as long as I’ve known about, or could read the Bible. Perhaps it’s due to a myriad of activity surrounding us all—the upcoming presidential election, senseless killings piling up at enormous rates (including the abhorrent murdering of the unborn), and a sweeping increase of divisiveness on every conceivable level.

The times, they are most definitely a’changin’.

Jesus Christ, however, is the same. That two-letter word, “is,” encompasses a completely new emphasis and meaning today. For me, there’s an added weight to it—yes, in the sense that there’s so much going on—but just as I begin to worry and feel confined by the world, “is” becomes a blessed refuge and reality that He’s got *all* of this! I also love that I didn’t have to go far, or uncover some obscure method to personally rediscover and renew this truth—the verse literally lived up to its claim (and then some)!

Regardless of who takes an office, I’ll count on Jesus for the answers—He knows them all. Look, voting is important, so if you’re of-age and are an American, please participate and support which ever candidate speaks to you. If you’ve been experiencing concern, worry, fear...I pray that maybe my own revelation from a tiny little word can provide the same kind of reassurance for you that it has for me.

Blessings



A stylized, handwritten signature of Kevin Sparkman in black ink.

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Explore the world of Aethasia™, and join the Resistance in their fight against the tyrannical emperor and his army of mechanical men!

Once a beautiful land, Aethasia is now covered by a sickly pervasive fog that corrupts everything it touches. But all is not lost. Rumors are spreading of a fledgling Resistance, who have the courage and audacity to try and restore Aethasia to its former glory, and to reinstate the The Great Engineer back to the throne of Aethasia.

And that Resistance needs you!



OUT & ABOUT

aug 1, 2016



click here for more pics!



"Our family has a wilderness lodge in Alaska where I've worked as a guide for about twenty years. Basically, I keep people safe all summer while I show them big furry bears and whales bigger than our boat. Two years ago I was on the job when my doctor called. . . .

Being told you have stage-four cancer changes your life. It was no joke what we were faced with.

The survival rate is less than twenty percent. I prayed, 'God, how do I do this? You will lead me. You will direct me. You will guide me.'

My wife and kids rallied around me. We spent time in daily prayer and worship, and they prayed scripture over me. It was five months of chemo, six weeks of radiation on a daily basis and then a ten-hour surgery involving two specialists.

In total, the bills came to more than \$160,000, and our fellow Medi-Share members shared nearly every cent! I felt incredibly supported through it all. . . .

Medi-Share is family—people who stick with you through the hardest times of your life. I don't know how we could have done it without them."

—Jordan and Jennie



See their video at mychristiancare.org/stories

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HILLARY SCOTT

Hillary Scott

Girl On A Mission

From being a leading ‘Lady,’ Hillary Scott—along with her family—takes her music to new heights, following her heart, and His call to walk the talk

By Staff

We’ve experienced A-level acts from the vast world of country music openly display their faith in Jesus Christ, it’s nothing new under the sun. Artists like **Charlie Daniels, Johnny Cash, Oak Ridge Boys**—even **Josh Turner, Brad Paisley, and Sara Evans** are considered synonymous with the “Christian Artist” moniker in most circles.

But not since the likes of **Carrie Underwood** and her massive hits, “Jesus Take The Wheel” and “Something In The Water,” has the Christian market experienced the kind of stratosphere-shattering crossover appeal as the forthcoming release ***Love Remains*** (EMI Nashville/Capitol CMG), fronted by one-third of **Lady Antebellum, Hillary Scott**, and blood relatives, the **Scott Family**.

Produced by Christian-country (or, is it “country-Christian?”) legend **Ricky Skaggs**, the “Family,” consisting of Hillary, little sister **Rylee**, and their parents, the seasoned **Linda Davis (Reba McEntire, Kenny Rogers)** and **Lang Scott**, lead single “Thy Will” has already caused a major ripple throughout both of the country and Christian frame of consciousness, including both “sets” of radio waves.

For an artist such as Hillary, a member of that elusive “One-percent’er Club” of artists to have consistently topped the charts and earned multiple awards of the GRAMMY, CMA, and ACM variety, why the need to do a project like this? It would seem easier to keep on producing and rocking-out to fun songs about love, dancin’, and good times. What we find out is that Hillary is really just a Daddy’s Girl, and heeds the call to serve her Heavenly Dad through creating art alongside her earthly Father.

Stay tuned to CCMmagazine.com for the official cover story from Lindsay Williams. Below is a transcription of their recent conversation:

CCM Magazine: First off, you had so much success with Lady Antebellum in the realm of country music, was it intimidating at all releasing a project to the Christian market?

Hillary Scott: Absolutely, I mean it’s definitely something that I did not take lightly. My faith has always been a huge part of my life since [I was young] and I never wanted to, I don’t know, send the wrong message. I have always been drawn to Christian music throughout my life for worship, for hope when I’m nervous on an airplane, and all of those [type of] moments—even just driving in the car, so I hold a very, very special place in my heart for contemporary Christian music. I wanted it to be right and obviously, have prayed that it would be received well.

CCM: Absolutely. You mentioned that you listen to Christian music, who are some of your favorite go-to artists?

HS: Oh my gosh, when my husband and I we were dating we bonded over a **Michael W. Smith** record—the one where the cover looks like it’s a bunch of gray and white circles, and has

“Missing Persons.” We know that album top to bottom—memory after memory from that time of our lives. I absolutely love **Rachel Lampa**, she has such a big, amazing, and dynamic voice and always hoped I would be able to belt like that. Then, let’s see, the “Meant to Live,” by **Switchfoot** from ***The Beautiful Letdown***—that whole album, which I know was a huge crossover success, as well.

I love **Kari Jobe**, love her! Lately, my husband has been getting me into **Marvin Sapp**—we really love gospel, too. He grew up [listening to] **Steven Curtis Chapman**—for me, I kind of fell into his music a little later with his album ***Deep Roots***, that was such an amazing place to go. I’ve kind-of said it before, and I’ve even told [Chapman] this, it’s like having a pot of coffee with my grandfather that I eventually lost to leukemia...gosh, it will be five years this year.

CCM: Steven even sang on your new album.

HS: Yes! We did a duet and **Ricky Skaggs** is featured on it, singing as well. That was a dream come true in more ways than one, but to have Steven Curtis on that song was really awesome.

CCM: Are you finding that there are a lot of similarities between the country genre and contemporary Christian music?

HS: You know, I am. From the standpoint of going out and visiting radio, the personal connections that you make are very important [in the country industry], and I’m finding that to be similar with my recent experiences behind the scenes in the Christian industry. The stories behind the songs, that’s another thing. [Like country], I feel like the fans really want [to know the story] behind the songs, and what you were feeling in your heart when you wrote it. That connection with the fans is also very

similar, because your hearts are connected—[there's a sense being] brothers and sisters in Christ together, so there's a bond, a relationship, over the songs and that your hearts are intertwined.

CCM: You chose to publicly share about your miscarriage last fall, and it's inspiration for the first single, "Thy Will." You could have kept that to yourself, obviously, it's a very personal thing that you experienced. Why did you decide that you wanted to share that story?



HS: That song...there is no way I could have been vague and said, "It's just about something I went through."—I felt like I would be dishonest by not sharing. This is the perfect example of when you're asked, "So what's the story behind that song?" I would have literally had to make something up.

The lyric, the thoughts and feelings I was having [at the time]... the questions. [Ultimately], it's everyone's personal choice whether they want to share something like that, or not, and I felt I was supposed to. I wanted to show that it's okay to talk about it, it's okay to grieve, and you don't have to grieve alone and in your own head and heart or try to figure it out all alone. It was something that became another part of the mission for me with this record, and the song in particular. I just feel like there are a lot of women [who go through similar circumstances] who need to know they're not alone.

CCM: *If you hadn't been working on a Christian album, do you feel like that's a song you still would have written and possibly recorded with Lady Antebellum?*

HS: That's a great question. **Charlie [Kelley]** said, "You know this song really could work on a Lady A record." They both have just been so supporting and encouraging, and I think it definitely could have, but I don't know if I would have written it had we not been doing this project.

CCM: *So, it's pretty personal.*

HS: Absolutely, and it's definitely the heartbeat of this record for me. As painful of an experience as it was, I can honestly say that I'm grateful for what has come from it. This beauty from ashes and the healing that's come through other's outpouring of love and support... When God put this in my heart to share, and in my

family's heart to actually do this project—when we were faced with this trial, I felt God saying, “Okay, you’re singing about all of these things that you say I am, that you trust Me, that your hope is in Me...now, are you going to walk the talk? Or are you just going to talk about the walk?”

Daily, I’m choosing to “walk it”—I don’t get it right most days, I don’t get it right multiple times a day on most days, but I’m trying and I think that’s why there’s a song on the record called, “Beautiful Messes.” I feel like we often are the ones that put that kind-of guilt and shame on ourselves, but God doesn’t see us that way—He sees us as the new creation that we are. So, that song is about being right where you are, no matter where you are and what you’ve been through, God can use you for His Kingdom and there’s, gosh, countless examples of that throughout the Bible.

CCM: You’ve been very public about your faith—long before you made this record—in interviews, on social media, so I don’t think it should come as a surprise to Lady Antebellum fans, necessarily, that you’re doing a faith-based record. Has it ever been challenging to be a Christian in the “country world,” or has that been relatively comfortable?

HS: It’s been comfortable. I think because for so much of country music, the roots are in gospel/spiritual songs, the lines are often blurred there. More than anything—what I’ve learned throughout my life, even before being in the public eye so much—when you’re sharing your story, what you’ve been through, and what God has done in your life—that’s your testimony. That’s your narrative—your perspective—and that’s where I feel like people begin to realize, “Okay, she’s come through this, and *how* did she get through it?” For them to then find out that their faith and their relationship with God is their foundation, that’s the key.

I just try to live and love well, to never point a finger, because you've always got one pointing back at you. I've been reading a lot lately, and [**Matthew 7:3**] keeps coming to me, "Don't point out the speck in someone else's eye when you've got a plank in yours" [paraphrased]. That's really how I try to approach every day—Lord, refine in me what needs to be refined.

CCM: What was it like recording with your family? I'm sure it was a little different than recording with Charles and Dave [Haywood].

HS: It was, it was a lot different, but it was precious. It was such sweet time together—making new memories, healing together, worshipping together, growing as a family. We laughed a lot, we cried a whole lot—it was just really awesome experience.

CCM: The whole idea behind this project began with the passing of your grandfather, which you mentioned. Tell us more about him and the process you went through as a family that led to Love Remains.

HS: One of the songs on the album, "Safe Haven," is about him. He and my grandmother moved to Nashville when I was five to take care of me because both of my parents traveled a lot when I was a kid. He was like a second dad in a lot of ways. He was a blue collar, hard working, South Carolina born and bred man, and he loved the Lord. He talked about that openly. He was such a dynamic personality, truly the patriarch of our family.

When he passed away, there was this gigantic hole left—it was truly the deepest loss I've ever experienced because he was in my every day, it was extremely difficult. Walking through that with my family, we had an outpouring of people that really loved on us and it was through that time—and through the **Caring**



Bridge site [that was created during his illness]—where a list of hymns and verses were shared that started this whole idea of making *Love Remains*.

He left an indelible mark on everyone who met him. He was so funny and encouraging, he was like our street team! He drove an airport shuttle van for many years for a couple of different hotels over by **Opryland** here in Nashville. [His passengers] didn't get an option for what was getting played in that cassette or the CD player—it was always the latest thing my dad and mom were doing, or what Charles, Dave and I were working on. Even before we were really doing shows as Lady Antebellum, he was bootlegging copies for people. He was just our biggest fan.

CCM: *Sum up the overarching theme for Love Remains for us.*

HS: No matter where you are in your life, no matter what's going on, there's a song on this record that can meet you right where you are. Whether you're searching for peace and comfort, or you're searching for just a song to worship to...if you're searching. I think "Thy Will" is a great example of asking hard questions, and bringing them to God and knowing that He can handle them. For so long I was like, "You can't ask God that—but then, wait, He created us and our brains and He knows what we think before we think it, so He wants us to ask the hard questions."

For our family—we just hope that, from start to finish, you feel that you are loved by your creator, Almighty God, that, He loves you, and the Scott Family loves you. [Our prayer] is that you find the peace that we have found in our relationship with Him, and that it meets you exactly where you are. **CCM**

LEELAND



LEELAND

INSIDE INVISIBLE

It's been five years since Leeland unveiled a full-length project. Now, with the release of *Invisible* (Bethel Worship), the acclaimed worship band has a fresh lineup and a new label home giving them the opportunity to collaborate with some of their musical heroes.

By Lindsay Williams

Three years ago, worship band **Leeland** found itself independent and on the brink of breakup. There was no major fallout. One by one, God just began to call the band members in different directions. Drummer **Mike Smith** and Leeland's longtime road manager exited the group to work full-time for up-and-coming country artist **RaeLynn**, lead singer Leeland's cousin. Meanwhile, **Jack Mooring**—Leeland's older brother—left to pastor a church in Franklin, Tenn., full time.

"That was a big, bittersweet thing. It's awesome to see him fulfill his dream, but at the same time...we've been doing music our whole lives together," **Leeland Mooring** says of his brother's departure. "I didn't realize how much I depended on him until he moved on. It just makes you grow up really fast."

Eventually, with only Leeland and good friend **Casey Moore** left, the band found itself at a crossroads. Should the remaining members strike out in search of a different calling? Was it time to close this chapter on their collective music career?

“We both still had this tremendous passion to keep recording music, writing music and traveling and doing ministry with the band Leeland,” the front man explains. “During this time, I really felt this urge in my heart to be somewhere connected to a family.”

Deciding to forge ahead, Leeland and Moore found that family in **Bethel Music**. After establishing an organic friendship with Bethel’s **Brian Johnson**, Leeland signed to Bethel’s label in 2015. Although the band is currently based in Nashville, the group will still participate in Bethel’s tours, conferences and events and will occasionally lead worship at the church’s main campus in Redding, California.

“It just felt so natural and so easy, and we felt the hand of God on it the whole time,” Leeland says of joining the Bethel family. “It’s just been literally the most peaceful thing we’ve ever done; and we felt such assurance that this is exactly where we need to be. From day one, they’ve just championed everything in our hearts.”

Since releasing their 2006 critically-acclaimed debut, ***Sound Of Melodies (Provident Label Group)***, Leeland has had the opportunity to collaborate with some of Christian music’s best and brightest artists and songwriters. One welcome benefit of signing to Bethel Music was the incredible stable of talent that was opened to them.

Under the leadership of Brian and **Jenn Johnson**, Bethel’s roster includes a host of emerging artists, including **Jeremy Riddle**, **Steffany Gretzinger**, **Amanda Cook**, **Cory Asbury** and **Kris-tene DiMarco**, among others. “Over the years, we’ve gotten to write with a lot of co-writers, but what’s been so cool is getting to see the heart behind all the writers at Bethel because they carry something different; they carry something unique,” Lee-

land explains. “It’s like everyone’s got a view of God that you need. They all see Him differently; and when you start writing, that comes out, and you go, ‘Wow, I would’ve never thought of that. That’s amazing.’ It just strengthens the idea and strengthens the song.”

PERFECT LOVE

For *Invisible*, Leeland and Moore wrote with a range of writers inside and outside the Bethel camp. The end result was a series of one-of-a-kind experiences and a new batch of more than a dozen moving, culturally relevant songs.

The band wrote the album’s fourth track with Gretzinger. “We’ve always been huge fans of her and her heart of gold,” Moore shares. As Leeland, Moore and Gretzinger began swapping stories about God’s active work in their lives, their conversation turned to the biblical narrative of the Prodigal Son, and the words for “Perfect Love” began to flow. The trio stepped into a large walk-in shower in the space where they were writing to capitalize on the premium acoustics and record the initial demo. It was a unique moment in the recording process they’ll treasure for years to come.

“We still have the recordings somewhere on our phones,” Moore says. “It was so perfect, and I’ll never forget that. It was a really special moment with her.”

SON WAS LIFTED UP

Bethel’s Brian Johnson contributed to multiple cuts on *Invisible*, including the powerful highlight, “Son Was Lifted Up,” a song focused on Christ’s ultimate sacrifice that proved arduous to write. “Brian had a part in writing ‘Forever,’ which is one of the greatest songs about the cross and the resurrection, and so I was nervous writing a cross song with Brian,” Leeland admits.

“You don’t want to write a song about the cross and not do it justice,” Moore adds.

Finding new words to describe the timeless story of Calvary can be a challenge even for veteran songwriters; and Johnson and the band found themselves coming up short, lost in thought during the co-writing session.

“We were just thinking about what Jesus did for us, thinking about what the chorus was saying and how to make it more personal,” Leeland recalls. “I was thinking back on that moment when I met Jesus for the first time, the *real* Jesus, and the Holy Spirit really encountered my life—what was that like?

“The Lord did a new thing in my heart two years ago, and I felt like I got saved again,” he continues. “The Bible says, ‘God restores the joy of our salvation and brings us back to our first love.’ ... I just had this real encounter with Jesus again on a plane that rocked my world. God was revealing His love for me and telling me that I’m never going to be able to earn it or beat Him to the punch or make myself presentable for Him to love me. I haven’t been the same since.”

With the songwriters each thinking back on their own personal encounters with Jesus, something just clicked, and the three men found themselves filled with gratitude, which they then poured out in the song that morphed into pinnacle track “Son Was Lifted Up.”

BELOVED

Moving ballad “Beloved” falls near the end of Invisible’s track listing. The worshipful cut was penned in Australia, where Leeland was playing for the first time. During the visit, worship leader and pastor **Darlene Zschech** invited the band to her

home. Though Zschech isn't a part of the Bethel roster, it was a dream co-write and one of the most memorable experiences of the recording process, especially for Leeland who grew up listening to the well-respected songwriter and vocalist.

"Literally, since I was eleven years old, her voice has been one of the big voices in my life that helped give a language to my heart in worship and helped inspire me to write songs," Leeland says. "It was a dream come true having her voice on the record. We didn't have to do anything to it. Her voice is so amazing. She did one take, and it was perfect."

Zschech, who recently battled cancer, began sharing her story with the group and how throughout her struggle she sat through countless worship services wanting the "worship leader to give my faith something to do." That became the premise for "Beloved."

"All we were doing is really writing out of our own experiences," Leeland shares. "We were all pulling from the different battles we were going through... It just felt like, 'Let's lift our eyes off our problems and lift our eyes to the answer, Jesus.'"

From there, the rest of the song progressed quickly. "Leeland got on the piano; Darlene was singing... It just came together so fast—one of the fastest songs that I've been a part of writing," Casey remembers. "It felt so right."

INVISIBLE

That's a sentiment that seems fitting for Invisible as a whole: it just feels so right. The band has discovered a group of kindred spirits in Bethel, and musically, the album captures a similar complexity and exuberance found on the band's debut. In addition, writing with a new sampling of songwriters



enabled Leeland to turn out some of the strongest lyrics of the band's career.

"I feel like this record is the best representation of us of any of the albums we've made," Leeland reveals, adding that the band is reveling in the freedom they've found in what feels like a definitive fresh start. "We can just be who we're created to be," he says.

Looking back on the thirteen tracks that comprise *Invisible*, it seems every song has its own unique story, primarily defined by the people who wrote them and the ways God was working in their lives in that moment. It's made Leeland grateful for every co-writer, every heaven-sent lyric and every melody.

"[Sometimes I think] we need to stop writing the song, and we just need to start thanking Jesus for what He has done for us," Leeland reflects before adding, "God really does have a plan for each [song] He gives you." **CCM**



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ALL SONS & DAUGHTERS

All Sons & Daughters

Stories Behind The Songs (Part 1 of 2)

We offer an exclusive song-by-song summary of **All Sons & Daughters'** anticipated upcoming release, Poets & Saints (Sep. 2, 2016, Integrity Music) as provided by lead members Leslie Ann Jordan and David Alan Leonard

"Heaven Meets Earth"

Oxford, England

Many scholars & theologians study his anthologies. Children find themselves traveling through the wardrobe into *Narnia*. Thousands comb the pages of *Mere Christianity* year after year for spiritual renewal.

C.S. Lewis' influence spans a wide demographic. His work, oddly enough, seems to hold one thematic component; the mystery of God. His life & works were a reflection of his journey. From fantasies to faith, from war to freedom, or grief to the afterlife, Lewis knew how to draw on the power of the transcendent in all things. You see, **Aslan** is not just the name of a beloved Lion, He is the gentle but powerful image of our Creator. Singing Narnia into existence in *The Magician's Nephew*, Aslan walks the earth and calls upon creation.

"Heaven Meets Earth" was written from that familiar scene in *The Magician's Nephew* and the passage in Genesis where light meets darkness, sky meets water, and spirit meets flesh.

*As you listen, you will hear waves underneath the heartbeat drum. Those waves and heartbeat came from a recording on the beaches of Normandy, in particular Omaha Beach.

“My Roving Heart” and “The Path Of Sorrow”

Olney, England

A slave trader-turned pastor and a poet with a broken heart.

John Newton and **William Cowper**, two unlikely friends in the heart of the English countryside, wrote what is considered to be the very first church hymnal. Oddly enough, at the time of their creation, these hymns were not allowed inside the church. Their familiar pub melodies and honest lyrics were quite the departure from the traditional psalms being sung in the church at that time.

Newton’s life of slave trading & monetary excess provided great contrast for his transition into a life as a humble pastor & hymn-writer. He saw an opportunity for his young friend William Cowper, who regularly dealt with depression, to use his poetic prowess to create art for the church. This not only gave Cowper purpose, but it gave the church the gift of lament in common language. Together, they wrote over 300 hymns and compiled what we now know as the ***Olney Hymns***.

“My Roving Heart” (straight from the *Olney Hymns*) is our attempt to marry the lyrics of John Newton’s hymn with modern pub-style melodies & instrumentation. These lyrics were written over one-hundred years ago and have a depth and richness that we long to see make their way back into the church and an air of celebration that we get to experience in the company of friends when praising the goodness of our God.

“The Path Of Sorrow,” adapted from a William Cowper lyric, draws on the strength of God in the midst of suffering. There is a steady beat—constant and strong—amidst the longing for relief. There is sincerity in the lyric and weeping in the instrumentation.

So steadily I keep my stride through every briar & thorn—
although my flesh will falter, my hope is in the Lord.

“You Are Love & Love Alone”

Saint Thérèse was fourteen when she became history’s youngest Carmelite nun. Known for “The Little Way,” Thérèse spent her short life learning how to be smaller so God could be bigger. She spent herself in the little deeds—glances, hugs, meals, prayer—knowing that God’s goodness is not only seen in the extravagant things we do. She died young at the age of twenty-four but her impact would be eternal. Regarded as one of the Catholic Church’s most influential Saints, Thérèse’s legacy of the little way lives on.

“You Are Love & Love Alone” is the modern adaptation of **Frederic William Farar**’s hymn, “Thou Art Love and Love Alone” and this quote from Saint Thérèse, “to love: how perfectly our hearts are made for this.” Musically, “You Are Love” is simple with the emphasis placed on the powerful words of the hymn. It is in the gathering of little things that we really understand how profound God’s love is for us.

“Rest In You”

Milan, Italy

“For who is Lord but the Lord?

Who is God except our God?

The highest.

The most good.

The most mighty.

The most omnipotent.



The most merciful, yet most just.
The most hidden, yet most present.
The most beautiful, yet strongest.
The stationary, yet incomprehensible constant.
You cannot change, yet You change everything.
You are matchless, O Lord.
So our praise of You must rise above our humanity.
You made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds
its place of rest in You."



Saint Augustine spent the first half of his life looking for fulfillment... in women, money, knowledge, and religion. Then, he met Jesus on a bench in Milan while reading **Paul's** letter to the Romans. The design of his life was no longer in question; he was created with an eternal longing that would only be satisfied when Jesus restores this world. In his journal, Augustine gives words to his discovery and insight into his holy longing. We know it as ***Confessions***.

"Rest In You" is Augustine's journal entry put to music. Slow and peaceful, we know that our hearts are restless until they find rest in God and God alone. Nothing else but the eternal presence of God will satisfy our deepest longings.



“Creation Sings”

Geneva, Switzerland

Have you ever seen a mountain so tall that it hurts your neck to stare at it? Have you ever seen water so blue that it didn't matter how cold it was, you had to jump in? Geneva, Switzerland was the backdrop of our exploration of the life of **John Calvin**. Known for his stance for or against certain things, Calvin's name can quickly become the source of friendly religious debates. But our hope was to find something different within his story. And we did.

Calvin's desire to express the creative nature of God in all things led him to bring excellence in music back to the church. Calvin himself was not a musician so he called upon outside professionals, skilled and trained, to change an apathetic musical culture into a symphony that might make you wonder if it came from Heaven itself.

“Creation Sings” is an adaptation of scripture with an arrangement of strings, which sound the way Geneva looks; bold, beautiful, inspiring. We found ourselves wondering how one could live in such a place of beauty and not want all things to reflect the same. Even the rocks cry out.

Editor's note: Stay tuned to CCMmagazine.com and our social channels on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as we will feature the remaining song synopsis from *Poets & Saints* in the August 15, 2016 edition of *CCM Magazine*! CCM

A portrait of a man, Andrew Marcus, sitting and smiling. He is wearing a black fedora, glasses, a dark blue denim jacket over a dark shirt with white polka dots, and dark pants. His hands are clasped in his lap. The background is a simple, light-colored wall with a wooden floor.

ANDREW MARCUS

Andrew Marcus

Shooting For Seven

In the making of his major-label debut, worship pastor **Andrew Marcus** reflects on finding a lot more than luck in the completion of *Constant*

By Kevin Sparkman

With five critically acclaimed recordings to his credit, **Andrew Marcus** has performed alongside such artists as **MercyMe**, **Leeland** and **Phil Wickham**, among others. A familiar name in Canada's Christian music scene since his 2007 debut, **Salvation And Glory**, the multi-Gospel Music Association Covenant Award-nominee also serves as pastor of worship and creative arts at Coquitlam Alliance Church in British Columbia, Canada. **Constant**, Marcus' **BEC Recordings** debut, bows August 12, 2016.

With so many accolades and much attention on his music as of late, *CCM Magazine* wanted to get to know the man with two first names on more of a, well...first-name basis! Enjoy our conversation with Andrew Marcus below.

CCM Magazine: Being from Vancouver, Canadian audiences have been familiar with your music for a number of years. How would you introduce who you are, and describe your music, to new listeners in the United States?

Andrew Marcus: I am a husband to my beautiful wife **Michelle** and we've been married for three years. She's been a huge sup-



port and encouragement on this crazy journey the Lord has us on. Also, I grew up in an amazing Godly environment. My mom, dad and sister are so incredible and continue to show me the love of Jesus in everything they do. I really believe I wouldn't be where I am today without my wife and family. I currently work at Coquitlam Alliance Church as the Worship Pastor. I am blessed to serve with such a great staff and community of musicians every weekend. I have been doing a bit more travel ministry this year and it's overwhelming to see all that God is doing through these songs.

This new album, *Constant*, is something I've been working on for the past two years. My focus for this record was to write songs for the Church. I try to create music that has singable melodies filled with gospel Truths about who Jesus is and what He's done for us. Of course, we always try and think of new and creative ways of sharing those Truths both lyrically and musically.

CCM: Speaking of the new album, it is your debut on the BEC label. Why is the title significant?

AM: Throughout the recording of this project, the Lord has been constant in His faithfulness. When the process started, I had no money and really no faith that God would provide the funds. A lady at our church gave me a prophetic word during one of our Sunday service fellowship times. She told me, "Andrew, this is God's project, it's His money. These are His songs for His church and you are His! This album has nothing to do with you." It was in that moment that I knew I needed to step out in faith and work on God's project. I've had to remind myself of these truths throughout the two-year recording process, and as I have continued to seek and trust the Lord, He's constantly led me, revealing His goodness and grace through it all.

When the record was complete we had six studio tracks and three live versions. I felt so strongly that I was supposed to do a seventh song. Looking back at an email the same lady sent me after we had the conversation about my album, she said to trust God to provide for seven songs. A few days before my trip to Nashville I was sitting in my studio, frustrated as I tried to come up with a new song. **Casey Moore** from the band Leeland called me that night. The first words out of his mouth when I picked up the phone were, “Dude, you need to relax, the Lord will give us a song when we are together.”

I flew a red-eye the next day to meet Leeland and the rest of the band. God orchestrated everything perfectly, again showing His constant grace and sovereignty. “Constant” was the last song we recorded for the album and I really feel like it summarizes my whole two-year journey working on the project.

CCM: Some of your friends, including Paul Baloche and Leeland, co-wrote and contributed vocals on the record. Tell us how those collaborations came to be.

AM: I met Paul Baloche at a conference a few years ago. We were chatting over dinner together and he asked me about the new record. I told him I was working with **Scott** and **Ed Cash** and shared about what God had been doing with some of the new songs He was birthing in my heart. Paul said if I ever wanted to co-write he would be open to helping in any way he could. He has been a huge inspiration in my life over the years. I am so thankful and have learned so much from Paul.

All the guys in Leeland have become such close friends too. When I told “Lee” about doing a new record with the Cash brothers, he was excited to jump on board and be part of it. They ended up driving twelve hours through the night from a show



in Oklahoma to record with me early on a Monday morning. I am so thankful to have them on this album. Their friendship has been such a blessing and we are all excited to do more ministry together in the future.

CCM: Constant was produced by Scott Cash, and executive produced by Ed Cash. What was it like working with them in the studio?

AM: Scott and Ed have both been so encouraging to me during this entire process. The amount of love and support I've received from them is a huge part of this album. Both the writing and recording process didn't feel like we were in a studio, it felt like we were in church. They created such a safe, worshipful environment, you couldn't help but be at peace, sensing the presence of God as we wrote or tracked. Their hearts for the Lord and His Church have been an inspiration to me and I've learned so much as I've observed how they live both in and out of the studio.

CCM: You wrote "You Are With Me" during a trying season in your life. Tell us about that.

AM: "You Are With Me" was written as my wife and I both faced illnesses. We found out the place where we were living was infested with black mold. This was the major cause of my wife's sickness, so we had to move out and we gave our notice with no place to live. This all happened a few days before I flew out to Nashville to start recording this album. It was such an overwhelming season. One night I was sitting on our couch with my guitar, praying and listening as my wife tossed and turned with asthma from the mold. The house was all packed up and we were ready to go wherever the Lord was going to lead us.

I began to pray, so desperate for Him to give me a glimpse of hope and encouragement in the middle of the storm we were facing. Paul Baloche always encourages me to “sing my prayers,” and so that night I did. “You Are With Me” was birthed out of that moment I had with the Lord. As I sang my prayers I instantly felt an overwhelming sense of peace. The situation didn’t change; I had no answers to all the unknowns ahead of us, but in my heart the peace I felt was as if the situation had changed. I was reminded that the Lord was with us; He will never leave us; He will never forsake us; and He will never walk out on us. He revealed a new glimpse of His faithfulness and grace to me that night.

CCM: You serve as pastor of worship and creative arts at Coquitlam Alliance Church in British Columbia. How does your role at the church impact and inform the music you create?

AM: It has been the biggest joy and blessing to be a part of the Coquitlam Alliance Church family. God has been teaching me so much during the past few years there and I continue to thank Him for our community. Whenever I am working on new songs, I am always thinking about my church. When I sit in a studio to create, or co-write with friends, I always try to envision the families that attend our church. How can I best serve them? How can I help them and remind them of the amazing grace we have in Jesus Christ? What about the new people who have just started attending? How can I share with them the Gospel of Jesus? How do I teach them who He is and what He has done for us? CCM

SKILLET UNLEASHED

REVIEWS

aug 1, 2016



Skillet
Unleashed

(Atlantic)

FOR FANS OF:

Thousand Foot Krutch, Red,
Three Days Grace

WE LIKE: "Lions"

★★★★☆



Hands down the most influential faith-centered band thus far this century and one of the entire modern rock scene's most popular puts expectations for **Skillet's *Unleashed*** at an all time high. In keeping with the tradition of the group's platinum-plus past (particularly ***Comatose*** and ***Awake*** with dashes of its industrialized infancy), the group's first project in three years is overflowing with towering rockers, symphonic grandeur, pulsating electronics and monster ballads.

As has always been their tradition, **John Cooper** and company stay committed to writing about various facets of spirituality and the human condition, taking a straight-forward and entirely relatable approach just as palatable to longtime Panheads as first timers. In fact, it's impossible for anyone not to throw a fist in the air for the full-throttled anthems "Back From The Dead," "Undeclared" and "The Resistance" or flick on a cell phone light for the glistening "Stars" and the roaring "Lions," all of which find Skillet staying right in the pocket of its consistent track record.

–Andy Argyrakis

Relient K
Air For Free

(Gotee)

FOR FANS OF:

Switchfoot, The Rocket Summer

WE LIKE: "Local Construction"

★★★★★



Just in time for a fall co-headlining tour with **Switchfoot**, **Relient K** is back with another rousing album, their ninth, entitled ***Air For Free***. **Matt Thiessen** and company have built a passionate fan base on their ability to combine the vibrant and vulnerable into one cohesive package. *Air For Free* takes this platform and expands it musically and thematically.

"Bummin'" sounds like a summer anthem but its lyrical focus is Thiessen's own brokenness: "Save me from my vices ... Try to hide as I might/I can't get it right." "Local Construction" builds perfectly atop the astute line, "Fix the car, fix the house/Fix the flaws in myself/It's never done ... like local construction, it's never done." Other highlights include "Man," "God," "Heartache" and the title track, but the entirety of *Air For Free* is an impressive, mature turn from a veteran band whose has forged one of this year's finest.

—Matt Conner

Group 1 Crew

Power

(Fervent)

FOR FANS OF:

Bruno Mars, Pharrell Williams, Maroon 5

WE LIKE: "Best Is Yet To Come"

★★★★☆



These days, **Group 1 Crew** is solely the brainchild of **Manwell Reyes**, but his long awaited full-length follow-up to 2012's ***Fearless*** almost didn't happen. Last December, the singer/songwriter/beat master underwent voice-related surgery and was literally silenced for three months, but as ***Power*** indicates, he's both fully recovered and artistically rejuvenated.

Not only do the surging synths, dance-floor tailored grooves and hopeful power ballads rank right up there with the most infectious in Group 1 Crew's arsenal, but they all pack a tremendous potential for crossover impact. Throughout it all, Reyes sings of finding identity and self-worth through faith rather fame, while also seizing the opportunity to continue displaying his talents (and those of several up and coming collaborators) following such an uncertain uphill battle.

–Andy Argyrakis

Hillsong UNITED

Of Dirt And Grace (Live From The Land)

(Sparrow/Capitol CMG)

FOR FANS OF:

Phil Wickham, Passion

WE LIKE: "Street Called Mercy"

★★★★☆



Hillsong UNITED took to the Holy Land to record their newest album, ***Of Dirt And Grace (Live From The Land)***, a live recording front to back of their most recent studio release, ***EMPIRES***. The total package includes both audio and video, and when taken together, the power of many of these songs really come alive when combined with a biblical backdrop. It's also nice to hear organic versions of studio favorites like "Here Now (Madness)," "Street Called Mercy" and "Prince Of Peace."

In addition, three bonus tracks bring "I Surrender," "Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)" and "Scandal Of Grace (I'd Be Lost)" to life in the same setting. Hearing the latter two tracks in this similar setting makes the listener wish for an unplugged "best of" album, but that's wishful thinking for later. The power of ***EMPIRES'*** songs are not lost in this new setting, but rather imbued with a sense of holiness in this live experiment.

—Matt Conner

Bryan & Katie Torwalt

Champion

(Capitol CMG)

FOR FANS OF:

Jesus Culture, Kim Walker-Smith

WE LIKE: “Let There Be Light”

★★★★☆



The first release from **Bryan & Katie Torwalt** in three years is a powerful worship recording that moves the listener with a reminder of God’s power from the very outset. “Let There Be Light” is the soon-to-be congregational favorite that kicks off ***Champion***, a studio recording of new worship songs upon which the **Jesus Culture** worship leaders swap vocal responsibilities.

The song is also one of several strong worship songs that speak to the strength, glory and greatness of God. The title track praises a God “who made a way when there was none,” while “Mountain” celebrates a God who is worthy of praise in “every season.” The Torwalts admit *Champion’s* release took longer than expected, but the worship songs here will undoubtedly find a home with many.

–Matt Conner

Love Displayed
You're The Only One

(Self-released)

FOR FANS OF:

*Jesus Culture, Amanda Cook,
Lindy Conant & The Circuit Riders*

WE LIKE: "All Power"

★★★☆☆



Mission-focused husband-wife duo **Love Displayed**, comprised of **Zak** and **Amy Huffman**, offer their first full-length album, ***You're The Only One***. One year after an inaugural and local buzz-worthy two-song EP, the fledgling act enlisted **Jesus Culture** keyboardist **Ian McIntosh** to kick-start this project—which began way back in 2014. Containing a good mix of worshippy tunes to straight-arrow CCM, there's a mood and feel for everyone here.

The pair, however, do have callings that span much further than the music they make, so it's for very good reason *You're The Only One* is just now seeing the light of day. With extensive global missions experience under their belts, the Huffman's proclaim that proceeds from album sales will go to support missions efforts at home and abroad, including their own **Spirit Of Adoption Ministries (SOAM)**—which ought to excite anyone who supports music to get behind this band.

—Kevin Sparkman

Joe Romeo

No Other Place

(Self-released)

FOR FANS OF:

Paul Baloche, Rich Mullins

WE LIKE: “Whole World Sing”
(featuring Judd Field)”

★★★★☆



As diverse as his homeland of Australia, physician-composer **Joe Romeo**—yes, we said, “physician”—releases the 14-track ***No Other Place***, completing a gamut of musical styles, including everything from reflective worship to synth-pop soundtracks. Claiming an affinity for composition since the age of fourteen, Romeo’s creative styles actually showcase his versatility in a positive light versus causing a distraction.

Though the album juts from anthemic praise to rhythmic dance floor jams in a matter of succeeding tracks, the seasoned and professional approach to Romeo’s production and execution make for a seamless and enjoyable listening experience. This album leaves us scratching our heads as to which of his two titles should appear first: composer, or physician? (For anyone reading this awaiting an appointment in his lobby, don’t worry, he hasn’t quit his “day job” yet!)

–Staff

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