

# The Martins

It's been years since their last homerun, which took place amidst a winning career that took them from the regional church platforms of Arkansas to the major leagues of the Gaither HOMECOMING stages, Carnegie Hall, The Grand Ole Opry and the White House. What would it feel like, almost a decade later, to step up to the plate and swing that bat again?

Not only did legendary vocal group **The Martins** hit the ball outside of the park, they have landed a grand slam with their all-new Gaither Music Group recording **New Day**.

We last heard from the multiple Dove decorated/GRAMMY-nominated trio of siblings on their career retrospective Decade, a homage to the trio's unmistakable harmonies and vast annals that have tastefully blurred the lines between southern Gospel, inspirational and contemporary Christian music. And even though it's been several years since the group released an all-new studio CD, this June's brand new album finds Arkansas natives and siblings Joyce, Jonathan and Judy picking up right where they left off, complete with some surprise plays.

One of those surprises includes their working with producer and multi-platinum selling Rascal Flatts member Jay DeMarcus (whose studio credits also include rock luminaries Chicago, country favorite Jo Dee Messina and vocal powerhouse/frequent Martins collaborator Michael English).

"Music production and music itself has changed so much since the last time we went in the studio, so we never really set out and said what style we were going to do," describes Jonathan. "We just started listening to songs and trusted Jay to take the project and make it the best it could be. We've been longtime fans of him from his days in East to West to Rascal Flatts and as a producer."

"I've been a fan of The Martins for years," described DeMarcus. "When we started talking about this, I was excited immediately. They are some of the most talented singers I've heard, and to get to be a part of creating something with them was a thrill. I am very proud of this release."

For fans of modern country, there's plenty of radio-ready contagiousness on this release; and for traditional southern gospel folks, there are odes to the old-time greats. Add in some breezy adult contemporary stylings, harmony-heavy pop and a unifying message that addresses grace, hope and perseverance, and this ten-song recording could quite possibly be the quintessential Martins' record to date.

Adds Judy: "I think our main goal going in was trying to find that balance between being The Martins that everybody recognized, and at the same time, have the edge we've always been known for musically that wouldn't necessarily be expected. Jay had such high energy that it's contagious, and he pulls things out of you that you never thought you could possibly do without making it feel impossible."

"One song that really humbled me was 'Unredeemed' because it speaks about wandering down the wrong road in life, but always reminding us that nothing goes through God's hands that doesn't come out as gold after it's sifted through His grace and mercy," shares Joyce. "And 'Somebody Like Me' is about as real as it gets right down to the nitty gritty of challenging us to truly live out our love for Jesus. We say we're His hands and feet, but what if someone who was homeless walked into church and sat down right next to us? The song puts that story right in your face and forces us to respond to some difficult questions."

For Jonathan, he turns to a pair of variety filled tracks that run the gamut between the group's signature storytelling and an all-out declaration of surrender. "'Tell Them That I Love Them' is about an old-time preacher in a small town church bathing the sanctuary in prayer prior to service, which is something we can relate to since the three of us pray before every concert that the audience hears what they need to hear," he offers.

"And I also like 'I Surrender' because it's a song that's truly humbling to us. God created

everything and He knows everything, so it should be easy to trust Him, but sometimes we don't do that. Hopefully this song will encourage us to surrender all of our daily decisions and circumstances to the Lord."

Even amidst the tender moments of reflection, there's still plenty of unabashed jubilation, most notably the hand clapper "Good to Me." "It's infectious because of the beat and drive, while acknowledging the goodness of the Lord," Judy notes. "We can know that God always wants what's best for us because He still keeps piling on the goodness, even when things are going bad. If there's any kind of a theme to this whole record, it's the bigness of God, His love, His redemption and how important it is for us to keep looking towards Him."

And The Martins have been doing just that as they are back on the road touring after taking some time off. "We took some time off to recharge our batteries on all levels, and we've since gotten to a healthy place of getting our spiritual and personal lives balanced," explains Joyce. "We didn't even have a plan to get back together when we first got off the road, but we were approached with the idea of doing a few dates a couple years back,...we thought and prayed about it, and decided to give them a try.

"And once we got back on stage, something just clicked and felt right, so we thought, 'If God in His graciousness was willing to use us again as a trio, who are we to say that He shouldn't?' and we gradually got back on the road. But we'll never go back up to 250 dates a year like we were the first time for our families' sakes and our own peace of mind."

And with renewed family bonds, getting plugged back into their home churches and even exploring solo routes on occasion, the ensuing reunion yielded both a classic Martins' record and a fresh step forward.

Part of that step forward has placed them on the familiar HOMECOMING stages on a regular basis in addition to their individual touring dates. Those deep HOMECOMING ties are highlighted in another new release—a DVD entitled *The Best of The Martins* (Gaither Music Group). The release captures some of the trio's most unforgettable hits and performances over the years as featured on the popular video series, taking them from the Red Rocks of Colorado to ????. *The Best of The Martins*, which includes a detailed interview with the group and their friend and mentor Bill Gaither as they walk down the memory lane of the group's career, will air as television special throughout summer and fall on networks including GAC, RFD, CTN, GMC, INSP, Family Net, CTS, TBN and others.

Perhaps Joyce sums up the group's goals this season most aptly in her assessment of these reunion sessions as a whole. "As we stood in the studio, we knew a song was going to be a keeper if we couldn't stop laughing or crying about a lyric we couldn't have said any better," she reflects. "We hope this record exemplifies what Christ said about loving God with all your heart, strength and mind and loving your brother more than yourself. And for those experiencing struggle or disappointment, just lay your burdens down at the cross and He'll use all the good and bad to stir it up and make something beautiful."

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### **The Martins At A Glance:**

**Multi-Dove Award winning and Grammy nominated vocal group, The Martins are recognized as one of Christian music's most talented trios. Siblings, Joyce, Jonathan and Judy, began singing in their home church, growing up in rural Arkansas. During their celebrated career, they have enjoyed countless radio hits and performances on stages at such prestigious locations as the Grand Ole Opry and the White House. After a decade of pursuing individual careers, the trio has reunited and this summer will release their first new recording in 10 years, produced by Jay DeMarcus (Rascal Flatts). The recording, titled *New Day*, highlights the group's rich styling and unmistakable harmonies.**

## **Interesting Facts About The Martins**

### **#1 Radio Singles:**

*The Promise*

*We Trust In God*

*Count Your Blessing*

*Grace*

*Out of His Great Love*

### **Top 10 Radio Singles:**

*So High*

*Standing On The Promises*

*Lord Most High*

*You Are Holy*

*Except for Grace*

*Light of the World*

*Only God Knows*

*Come On In*

### **Dove Awards from The Gospel Music Association:**

#### **2004**

Southern Gospel Song of the Year: *The Promise*

Southern Gospel Album of the Year: *Above it All*

#### **1999**

Country Recorded Song of the Year: *Count Your Blessing*

#### **1998**

Southern Gospel Album of the Year: *Light Of The World*

#### **1997**

Southern Gospel Album of the Year: *Wherever You Are*

Southern Gospel Song of the Year: *Only God Knows*

#### **1996**

Southern Gospel Album of the Year: *The Martins*

Southern Gospel Song of the Year: *Out of His Great Love*

**Grammy Nomination:**

**1998**

Best Southern Gospel, Country Gospel, or Bluegrass Album of the Year: *Light Of The World*

**Special Appearances:**

Hard Rock Live! in Orlando

Grand Ole Opry

Sam's Place at The Ryman

700 Club

Crystal Cathedral

Prime Time Country

Crook & Chase

Gaither Homecoming Concert & Video Series

Silver Dollar City

Dollywood

National Religious Broadcasters (NRB)

Christian Booksellers Association (CBA)

National Quartet Convention (NQC)

Southern Baptist Convention

Estes Park

Praise Gathering

Family Fest

Carnegie Hall in New York City, NY

Celebrating America's Musical Heritage - A Salute to Gospel Music at the White House

Fox News Channel's Fox & Friends