

TRACY LAWRENCE BIO

FOR THE LOVE

With the release of FOR THE LOVE, Tracy Lawrence adds a rich new chapter to one of modern country's most impressive legacies. Known for classics like "Sticks And Stones," "Alibis," "Texas Tornado," "Time Marches On," "Lessons Learned," and "Paint Me A Birmingham" from a catalog that has produced sixteen No. 1s and at least 20 top 10 hits, Tracy is recognized as one of his generation's most important artists.

FOR THE LOVE takes him another big step forward. Following in the wake of his Greatest Hits album, it serves as a potent reminder of his vocal prowess and of his ability to write and select songs with an eye both to the telling detail and to universal emotion. As always, the result is genuinely heartfelt. "I feel like this record is a good overview of everything musical and personal about me," he says, "and given the way things are going, a lot of the content is uplifting."

That sentiment reflects the fact that Tracy's life and career have entered new territory. FOR THE LOVE is the first release on Tracy's own Rocky Comfort Records, a venture that gives him a welcome new platform. "I feel like I'm starting fresh," he says. "I have a lot more freedom to do some of the things I think are important to me, and to build something of substance over the next several years. My fans will benefit as well. We don't have the same overhead that major recording companies do, so we can distribute my music in such a way at retail that I still make a living and my fans can purchase my music at the best possible price."

As the first step along that new career path, FOR THE LOVE begins on a base firmly planted in Tracy's love and appreciation for classic country. "I think this record is a little bit more retro," he says. "There's a lot more traditional country on this record, and some things reflective of my own early success."

The tracks *Just Like Her*, a classic country shuffle; *Just Like That*, which showcases Tracy's way with a swing tune; and *Rock And A Soft Place*, which hearkens to some of Tracy's own musical back pages, once again show that this is a man who knows his way around the country landscape. From there, the Arkansas native puts his stamp on a more cutting edge style of country, with the title cut, "For The Love," a contemporary gem featuring a guest appearance by the multi-platinum Three Doors Down's lead voice Brad Arnold; *You Can't Hide Redneck*, an energetic country rocker; and *As Easy As Our Blessings*, a bit of heartfelt spirituality in a state-of-the-art country setting.

The leadoff single is *Find Out Who Your Friends Are*, a song about strength, tenacity and redemption from a man whose own ability to overcome difficulties infuses this with an autobiographical passion that adds further authenticity to the project. An added highlight is *Speed Of Flight*, a waltz that represents the first time Tracy has cut a song he wrote without a co-writer. As a man for whom every decision, artistic or business, is one to be taken seriously, Tracy was hesitant at first to include it. "As an artist," he says, "I'm probably more critical of the songs I write than anybody else's, and for me to put something I wrote myself on this project, it really had to stand up to scrutiny."

This time around, Tracy was able to bring in his own road band to record two of the project's songs, *Rock And A Soft Place*, and *Just Like That*, and, in addition to Arnold, two other high-profile peers lent a hand to the project. Tracy's long-time friends Tim McGraw and Kenny Chesney took part in a bonus

version of *Find Out Who Your Friends Are*, one that adds another facet to the song's message. "All three of us hit town about the same time. We ate together, hung out together, bar-hopped together, and even borrowed a couch to crash on from time to time. We remain friends today. The song is really representative of us." The trio perfectly caps the record's personal touch.

Tracy's road life recently included participation in George Strait's tour as well as dates of his own, and included, as always, his continued passion for charity work for the Tracy Lawrence Foundation, raising awareness for Alzheimer's research in his role on the national advisory board, and the newly organized annual Tracy Lawrence Mission Possible Thanksgiving turkey fry for the homeless.

This collection of songs points Tracy in a positive and uplifting new direction. "I think overall I've just learned to be happy," he says, "and this record helps showcase that." Tracy sees himself more these days as someone for whom life and career continue to dovetail, and for whom art is increasingly a means of uplift. "My music is evolving to a place that is more spiritual and reflective of the heart," he says. "I can see the transformation over several albums, and I see it continuing to grow. I'm eager to see where the journey continues to take me."

Although he's focusing more of his time on his family, as daughters Skylar JoAnn and Mary Keagan grow up, Tracy still loves climbing up on that tour bus and taking to the road to entertain country music fans across the United States. "This is still fun to me. I love creating new music and performing for my fans on stage as much today as I ever have. My fans are amazingly loyal," he adds. "They've been with me for a long time, many since the release of my very first record. It's a friendship and connection that's difficult to define. They're like my extended family. They've laughed when I've laughed and hurt when I've hurt. As we launch this chapter, I hope they're as enlightened by listening to this new record as I was by selecting and recording these songs especially for them."

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