

# LADY ANTEBELLUM

own the night

**Lady Antebellum's** truth is in the music. But the alchemy which forged this seven time Grammy award winning trio extends beyond its signature vocal blend and heartfelt songwriting gifts. With a self-titled double platinum debut album and triple platinum second effort—*Need You Now*—it's easy to applaud their amazing achievements, but equally significant is the underlying importance of the group's shared heartbeat.

"That's the core of our group, how we started," says **Dave Haywood**, harmony singer and multi-instrumentalist. "What spawned our friendship was that special writing chemistry. That's when we are the happiest, just sitting in a room together making music."

"Maybe it's a self preservation kind of thing," agrees co-lead singer **Hillary Scott**. "Especially on the road we have to work to nurture our relationship. I write so much from about what is happening in my life and the people closest to me, so knowing my friends care about what is going on in my life outside of Lady A, makes me more likely pour it all out into a song."

"Writing lets us chill and slow down a bit," says **Charles Kelley** whose edgy lead vocals merge and weave with Hillary's velvet tone."

Lady Antebellum formed in 2006. Hillary and Charles decided to try writing together after a chance meeting at a Nashville music spot. Charles and his high school musician friend and co-writer Dave Haywood were living with Charles' brother Josh Kelley at the time. Late night songwriting sessions with the new trio soon became the genesis through which they discovered the remarkable emotional effect that was created when Charles and Hillary's vocals blended. With Dave's harmony sounds and instrumental prowess added to that mix the three young musicians realized they might not just be writing songs for other people, but perhaps would get to perform them, too. A Music Row "buzz" began to spread as the newly-formed trio started making appearances on local stages.

Soon key tastemakers began to believe in the group, including producer Paul Worley who has worked on all three Lady A albums. By April 2007, a blink of an eye in music industry time, Capitol Nashville had signed Lady Antebellum to a record deal and the trio began to ascend toward the constellation of country music stars with powerful hits such as "Love Don't Live Here," and "I Run To You."

The group's second album, *Need You Now* (released Jan. 2010) took the band to an even larger audience. To date the album has sold over five million copies worldwide, spawning three multi-week No. 1 hits ("Need You Now," "American Honey" and "Our Kind of Love"), and scored five Grammy Awards. It has also received over a dozen other award show tro-

phies. 'Need You Now' introduced the world, outside North America, to Lady Antebellum. The single was a huge airplay hit around the globe, reaching the No. 1 spot in numerous markets and achieving Top 5 Airplay in 30 countries world-wide. The album has sold in excess of one million units outside the US.

"We never expected to be thrust into the international spotlight in the way that we were... from the success of just one song," says Kelley. "It was six months or so after the album came out that we were finally able to go play overseas. When we got there, we were floored at the life that 'Need You Now' had taken on. The power of that one song really changed the scope of our entire career at home and in all these places we had only dreamed of playing."

## **In The Studio – Own The Night**

The pairing with Paul Worley has proved a good fit. His warm temperament, creative sensibility and platinum experience with acts such as the Dixie Chicks and Martina McBride helped guide Lady Antebellum's studio development.

"Recording for us is an open forum of ideas," says Dave who readily avows, "One of my first loves is messing around with studio production. Paul has great vision for where these songs need to go. Over three albums we've learned a lot about the recording process, how to speak the language and what it takes to get it done. Naturally, as songwriters we envision these songs a certain way. It's not some far removed kind of thing with a bunch of session guys and us just showing up to sing. This is from the ground up—we are writing these songs, playing these instruments and creating the arrangements."

Lady Antebellum's third album, ***Own The Night*** was released Sept. 13, 2011. The GRAMMY winning and PLATINUM certified 12-cut set features the band's No. 1 hits "Just A Kiss" and "We Owned The Night," plus 10 additional tracks. Charles, Hillary and Dave wrote or co-wrote 10 of the songs, including "We Owned The Night."

"'We Owned The Night' opens the album," says Dave excitedly, "and I really love this song. We reworked the title slightly to make it present tense for the album title—*Own The Night*. When people come out to our live show it's a call to action. Be confident, live in the moment and enjoy the experiences you're going through—own them. That's the premise of what we wanted to say."

## **Own The Night 2012 World Tour**

Part of the challenge of a new album is translating it into a live show. Lady A kicked off their headlining OWN THE NIGHT tour last fall in the US and extended it into 2012 with dates scheduled across the globe. The tour has become one of country music's top selling tours, constantly breaking attendance records and selling out arenas in advance. "When we were tracking 'We Owned The Night' in the studio," says Hillary, "I was in the control room with Paul (Charles sings lead on it). Listening to the track inspired me to visualize our live show. I grabbed a legal pad and began drawing out the stage. That was the first sign to me that the song would be a cornerstone of this third album."

"Many of our songs have an interplay between Charles and Hillary and we feel strongly about creating that emotion live," adds Dave. "And being on tour with artists like Kenny Chesney and Keith Urban has also given us a lot of ideas. So yeah, we're excited to get a chance to jump up into arenas and give that a shot."

"People want you to entertain them," says Charles. "The fans feed off your energy. They see it on your face. So we've learned to let ourselves go on stage. With three people the strongest moments are when we are close and tight together. But it's a giant stage to fill up."

Being themselves has worked for this group. As Hillary recalls, "I'll never forget when we were on our first radio tour and a programmer said, 'I don't think two lead singers, a girl and a guy are going to work.'

"Especially with the name too," remembers Dave. "Programmers weren't sure if people could identify with two singers. It was a risk at the time. But for us it was just like, well that's who we are. How can we not do that?"

## **It's All About Our Fans**

"We stay connected with everybody in a huge way online with our webisodes and social networking," says Dave. "After a show we pull up Twitter to see what people are saying, especially when we're introducing a new song. We care about what they think and the internet gives us a way to get an immediate reaction."

"All these people who spend their hard earned money on a concert ticket or a CD, they invest in us and who we are," says Hillary. "Not just in the music we play, but in our lives. So the least we can do in return is reciprocate that trust in the form of continuing to tour, create music and do our very best at both."

"We are just as vulnerable about this music, self-conscious and need approval like anyone else," says Charles quietly. "We recognize we've been given an amazing opportunity and don't want to let anyone down. We hit the lottery. We're just lucky we can sing and play instruments."

"I hope people realize we aren't taking it all for granted," says Dave. "This is crazy, but we want to enjoy it and do our very best. Twenty years later I hope people will talk about us and say, 'They were just genuine people who made genuine music based upon their life experiences'."