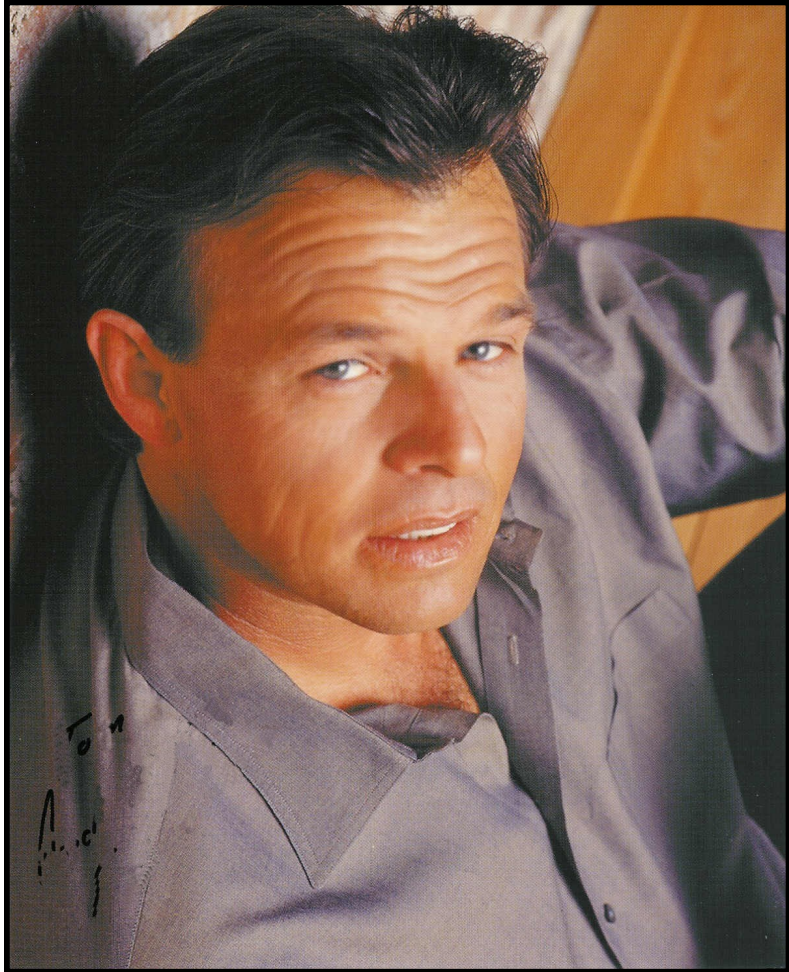


SAMMY KERSHAW  
by Tamela Meredith Partridge  
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Dreams do come true - just ask country singer and songwriter, Sammy Kershaw.

"I am a dreamer, and I dream big, big, big," Kershaw said during a recent phone interview. "Because you just never know when you might fool around and actually catch one of them. Once you get that first dream to come true, then you can start believing more in your other dreams, which can help them come around a little bit quicker and bigger for you."

Kershaw will be entertaining the Little Nashville Opry audience for two performances on Saturday, June 10.



The Kaplan, Louisiana native was born Samuel Paul Cashat in the heart of Cajun country. He learned many of life's most valuable and hardest lessons at the tender age of 11, following the death of his father. In order to help support his family, Kershaw attended school and worked various jobs by day and performed roadhouses at night. He received a priceless musical education during his teens while providing opening act entertainment for country stars such as Ray Price, Merle Haggard, and George Jones.

"The best piece of advice I ever received was given to me by J.B. Pere, a guy who gave me my start when I was 12 years old and playing night clubs five nights a week," Kershaw said. "He always told me, 'After a show, you make sure to always get your rest, because you have to work again the next night. Your throat and body will eventually give out if you don't get your rest.' And it's the truth. If I go a couple of days without much rest, it starts showing in the throat, and I start getting tired. But, if I can get me five or six hours of sleep a night, I'm fine. The throat will hold up."

When the pressures of growing up too fast took their toll in the form of some personal troubles, Kershaw took a break from music in '88 and began working as a remodeling supervisor for Wal\*Mart.

"At that time, I got out of the business for about a year and a half to get my life straightened out," Kershaw said. "But I told everybody that I wasn't getting out for good, that when I did get back in, I was going to do it the right way. And of course everybody kind of forgot about my dream, and what I wanted to do with my life. But I didn't. And then, all of a sudden, some stuff came around, and I told everybody, 'I'm going to Nashville to do my showcase, and this is going to be it.' And it worked, I got lucky."

Soaring straight out of the chute in '91 with his first single, "*Cadillac Style*," reaching Billboard No. 3 status, the "Cajun King of Country" has since achieved a string of platinum and gold albums, and numerous chart topping hits, including the Billboard No. 1 smash, "*She Don't Know She's Beautiful*," and the Top Ten singles, "*Anywhere But Here*," "*I Can't Reach Her Anymore*," "*National Working Woman's Holiday*," "*Third Rate Romance*," "*Meant To Be*," and "*Love Of My Life*."

Kershaw, who is currently shopping for a new record label after recently departing amicably from Mercury Records, is busy touring and promoting '99 album "***Maybe Not Tonight***," and current single, "*Me and Maxine*."

Always silently giving to benefit children, Kershaw developed The Sammy Kershaw Foundation of Acadia in his hometown of Kaplan, Louisiana. An annual concert and accompanying golf and softball tournament are just one of the many fundraising activities the Foundation provides in their efforts to help children.

"We build baseball fields, remodel old baseball fields, buy winter coats, milk, and diapers for kids," Kershaw said. "We help abused kids, kids who are sick, kids with heart problems and eye and hearing problems. We do a whole lot, and it's all for kids."

When it comes to musical dreams, Kershaw has few regrets in regards to the path he has chosen to travel.

"After all the things I have lived through, it's finally coming together, and showing me why things happened," Kershaw said. " Everything happens for a reason. Now I'm finally able to look at all the pieces of the puzzle, and see all the good and bad that has happened to me, and see why it happened, and where I'm going in my life."