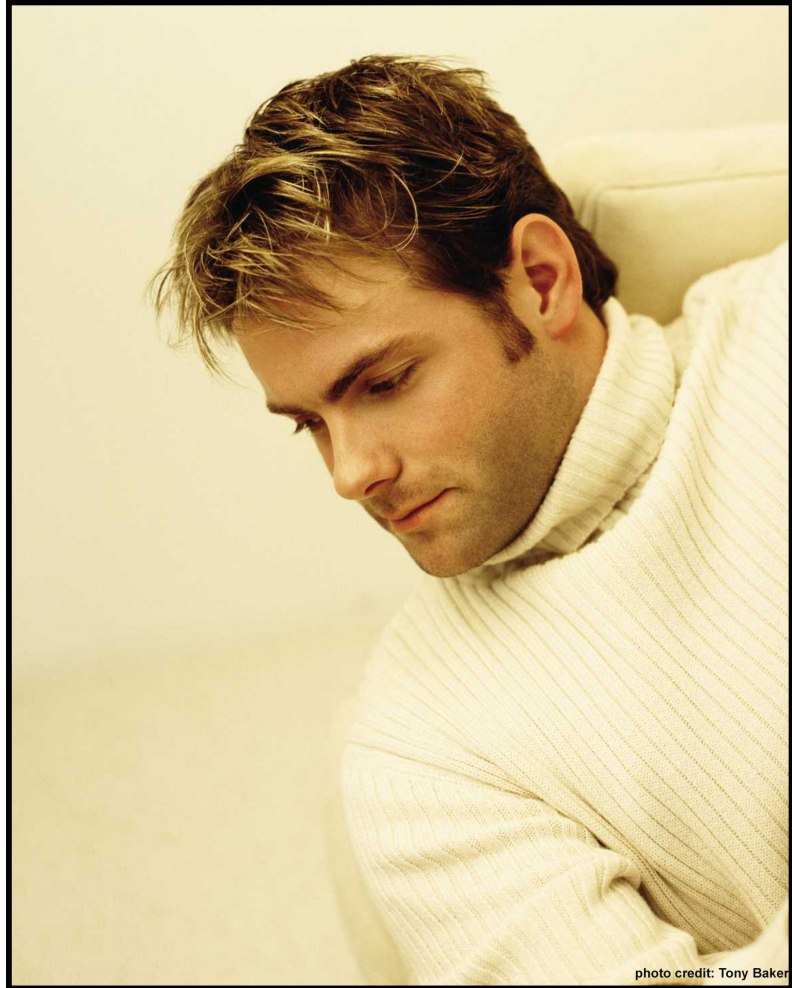


ANDY GRIGGS

by Tamela Meredith Partridge
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Country entertainer, Andy Griggs, captivated listeners from the very first notes of his gold debut album and title track, "You Won't Ever Be Lonely," smash hits, "I'll Go Crazy," "She's More" and current single, "Waiting On Sundown."

"Waiting On Sundown" was the hardest one on the album," Griggs said during a recent phone interview. "This was one where I had to trust my producers - David Malloy and J. Gary Smith. The demo was nothing like the way we cut it. I didn't hear it at all, but then again, I liked the song. David said, 'Let's put that on hold and if you trust me on this one, we can make this 100% you. Pretend like Bob Seger's singing it and that's the way we'll record it.' And we did. I love the way we cut it. I have to give my producers credit for this one."



Griggs will perform at the Little Nashville Opry on Saturday, October 14, at 6pm and 9:30 p.m.

The singer, songwriter and guitarist co-wrote four out of eleven selections on "You Won't Ever Be Lonely," and derives his songwriting ideas from various sources.

"I draw inspiration from all over," Griggs said. "I may draw it out of a dream, out of an idea that came to me on the highway, or even from something said over the phone. It can really come from anywhere. That, to me, is the beauty of songwriting. It's like there is a song floating around in the air and so many different ways in which you can catch it."

Another great catch for the 27 year-old Monroe, Louisiana native occurred in February of '95 when he exchanged wedding vows with wife and gifted art student, Stephanie Sullivan.

"Stephanie is my soulmate," Griggs said. "She has been able to catch a vision when it was only a minute old and see the end scene a lot clearer than I. She believed in me, in us and in the unbelievable long before I did. Because of her, I have never doubted anything we have gone through."

Even though he did not initially dream of a career in music as a child, Griggs did understand the power of music at an early age.

"My daddy had this old Merle Haggard album," Griggs said. "I used to listen to it a lot. When he died, me and my brother Mason went in his room. We never said a word, but we played that whole album. That was the last time we played something on his record player. We just sat in the room, not speaking, and played it. Eight years down the road, Mason died. I went into his room and I played that same album. That's what music is."

When it comes to career goals and aspirations, Griggs often relies on the guidance of a higher authority.

"You really do miss out on a lot of if you just limit yourself to your dreams," Griggs said. "Because even if you set your dreams high, God sometimes has a bigger plan than that."

Griggs received some priceless music industry advice while recording his debut album duet, "Shine On Me" with Waylon Jennings.

"Waylon told me, 'When it comes to music and being an artist, it's a matter of give and take.....and it's about 90% give,' "Griggs said. "And then Waylon added, 'Which is fine. There is nothing wrong with that. You just have to learn to know when to say no and pack up and go home when you need to.' I think I understand that a whole lot more now than I did the day he told me that."

For Griggs, creating music is more than just a way to make a living.

"Music is my whole life," Griggs said. "Singing, songwriting and performing can all be quite healing, but it can also hurt by re-opening old wounds. Anytime that you are expressing yourself through song, especially for the first time, there is a chance that you will be throwing your soul out on the table while trying to create all these ideas and words. That can be painful. I am a big believer in the soul of a song. It is not uncommon, during the creation process, to end up either laughing or crying."