Featuring Métis Artists

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Special Holiday Features

Seasons Greetings
Michelle Wright’s powerful voice and her distinctive style have been drawing rave reviews since release of her 1990 self-titled CD but she feels she’s just getting started.

Growing up in Merlin, Ontario, a small Canadian farming community, Michelle heard the rhythm and blues and Motown hits coming out of Detroit, just 45 minutes away. But she especially heard the strains of country music, since her Métis parents were both country performers. “My earliest memories of music are singing in the car, or spending the weekend with my father after my parents separated and watching him put on a rhinestone-studded suit to perform.” As a young girl, she tagged along on countless jobs. “We never were a family band, but I got a lot of inspiration and encouragement from my mother. That’s where my love of country music really began.”

When she released her first U.S. album, Michelle Wright, American audiences responded immediately and enthusiastically to “that girl singer from up North with the snow in her videos”, and her first single, New Kind of Love, became her first Top 30 American hit.

The following year she moved to Nashville to advance her career. She continues to reside in Tennessee today. In 1993 the Academy of Country Music named Michelle its Top New Female Vocalist. Michelle catapulted to superstardom in Canada the same year, receiving a total of 12 music industry awards, including the Canadian Country Music Association’s Fans’ Choice Entertainer of the Year award and double platinum honours for Now & Then.

The momentum generated by her next release, The Reasons Why (1994), enabled Michelle to headline a triumphant 40-city Canadian concert tour during the first quarter of 1995, at that time the most extensive tour in the history of the country music business in Canada.

Since then Michelle has had many highlights, among them delivering a show-stopping, gospel-tinged rendition of the Curtis Mayfield hit, People Get Ready, accompanied by a 50-voice choir. “I still get goose bumps whenever I hear that version,” she said. Over the past 20 years she’s sold nearly two million albums in the U.S. and Canada and enjoyed an international career, one that has seen her grace concert stages across North America and appear in Europe, Africa, South America, Australia and Asia. Michelle has amassed a total of 25 Top Ten hits in Canada and walked to podiums in music centres like Los Angeles and Toronto to accept more than 30 major awards.

At the dawn of the new millennium, Michelle marked her ten-year association with Arista Nashville with the international release of Michelle Wright: The Greatest Hits Collection. It offered listeners a sonic overview of ten magical years punctuated by highlight after memorable highlight. “It feels great to be at this point in my career. Very early on, when I first hit the road with a bunch of guys, crisscrossing North America in an old van, sleeping in the back on top of a couple of Peavey guitar amps, I could only dream about having enough hits to make a greatest hits package. And now here we are.” But the collection is not simply a measure of dreams fulfilled; it also chronicles her growth as an artist.

“When I listen to the album from start to finish, I can hear my development as a vocalist, and I’m happy with how I’ve grown and how I sound these days. And I’m excited by the fact that these days I’m writing most of my new materials; in some ways, ironic as this may seem, it makes me feel like I’m just getting started.”

In 2006, Michelle returned to country music, releasing her first new album in four years, Everything And More, in Canada.

With Everything And More the award-winning singer marries her immediately identifiable voice with an impressive collection of new material that mirrors so many of the changes in attitude and emotion that
Michelle has experienced as new chapters of her life have been written, according to her biography. A heartfelt combination of emotions and points of view, coupled with effective shifts in arrangements and tempos, make Everything And More a complete package that finds Michelle singing with conviction and passion, and, when called for, injecting the right amount of urgency or subtle shading.

Today, at a point in her career where there is both much to look forward to and much to reflect upon, Michelle is grateful for the successes she’s enjoyed and the lessons learned. “We all have a lot of talented friends whose dreams have not been fulfilled. It’s just the way it goes sometimes. But, for me, the ride so far has been awesome. My career has taken me to every continent except Antarctica, and I’ve just had so much fun.”

And the adventure and fun are anything but over as Michelle introduces fans to the new tunes on Everything And More alongside her catalog of hits. “Do I love being out on the road? You bet,” smiles Wright.

She performed on Saskatchewan Day, Saturday, July 24, at the Back to Batoche Festival. In October and November she’s travelling across Canada to unveil her Wright Songs touring concept, which presents her in an intimate acoustic setting.

Brian Ferriman, founder and president of Savannah Music Inc. and longtime personal manager of Canadian country music star Michelle Wright, has reactivated his Savannah label for the Canadian marketplace.

Announcing the return of the imprint, Ferriman commented, “When we closed the label in 1995 after a good 12-year run, the music business landscape was much less favourable for the independent sector than it is today. Not to deny the challenges we face, I’m excited to be working with the technological tools available to us now, and I look forward to having the entrepreneurial freedom and wherewithal to help my artists forge deep emotional links with their fans.”

Savannah Music will be distributed in Canada by Fontana North. The label’s first release is the remastered/repackaged reissue of Wright’s 1988 Savannah debut, Do Right By Me, on Tuesday, August 24.

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