

Michelle Wright

Milestone

Like so many country artists Michelle Wright cut her teeth playing six nights a week in clubs. In 1988, after teaming with Savannah Records President Brian Ferriman, Savannah Records released her first CD, *Do Right By Me*, in Canada, and Michelle and her band set off to tour North America. *Do Right By Me* was a major hit in her homeland, with seven chart singles and over 40,000 copies sold. That success opened many doors, including the brand new Arista/Nashville label. Arista/Nashville made Michelle one of its flagship artists, and, in 1990, they 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 Thirty American hit.

In 1992, Arista released *Now & Then*. *Now & Then*, which produced a total of six singles included, including "One Time Around," "Guitar Talk," "He Would Be Sixteen," and the song that changed everything, "Take It Like A Man." "Take It Like A Man," was released in February of 1992 and in less than a year, Michelle became the first Canadian-born artist in the modern era of country music to have a Top Ten hit in America, a Number One video on CMT-USA (also for "Take It Like A Man") and to win a major U.S. music industry award (the Academy of Country Music Top New Female Vocalist award in 1992). The song also catapulted Michelle to superstardom, receiving a total of twelve music industry awards, including the 1993 Canadian Country Music Association's Fans' Choice Entertainer Of The Year award and double platinum honors for *Now & Then* the same year.

The career that followed is one that many artists dream of having. A total of twelve album releases have sold millions of copies and produced twenty-five Top Ten radio hits. Michelle enjoys an international career that has seen her grace concert stages across North America, Europe, Africa, South America, Australia, and Asia. She has walked to podiums in music centers like Los Angeles and Toronto to accept more than forty major awards, including her 2011 induction into the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame.

In 2021, when Michelle began work on her tenth studio project, she once again teamed with producer Bob Funk (the husband of the newest inductee into the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, Patricia Conroy). "I'm so happy to be back in the studio working with Bob, and I am very excited about the new music that we are making. 2022 is the 30th Anniversary of the release of my *Now & Then* album. Ironically, that album's title describes what it is that we are celebrating with this new music, so *Milestone* just seemed to fit.

Michelle describes the new project by saying, "Growing up in Merlin, ON, I spent many Saturday nights watching my mother and father playing music in their country bands. We would also spend long hours working the farm and listening to the sounds of R&B and Motown coming across the border from Detroit on our transistor radio. Making this record, I once again drew on all of my country influences and those R&B/Motown sounds. Blending these influences is a

natural, authentic way to express me in my music. It always has been that way and always will be."

One of the tracks on the new project is "Small Town," a song that I co-wrote with Rick Ferrell and up-and-coming Canadian singer/songwriter Danielle Bourjeaurd. It was our first time writing together, and as we were tossing around ideas, Danielle began to ask me questions about my career. It was fun to reminisce, and at one point, she said, "That's what we need to write. We need to write your story." At first, I wasn't so sure if I wanted to write about myself, but once it started to present itself on the page, the song unfolded organically. In 3 minutes and 38 seconds, "Small Town" says so much about the road that I've been on all these years. It makes me smile when I listen to it."

Michelle Wright continues to do what she loves to do; write songs and play them for audiences worldwide. With the release of *Milestone* (BFD/Audium Nashville), she showcases the distinctive musical style that has been the hallmark of her career.