



Believe

With the release of its fourth studio album, *Believe*, Emerson Drive secures its place as the premiere band in contemporary Country music. The album, produced by Josh Leo and Teddy Gentry (of the legendary country band Alabama), showcases all of the attributes that have fueled the group's long, steady rise through the country ranks-- lead singer Brad Mates' passionately expressive vocals; the extraordinary musicianship of band mates Danick Dupelle (guitar), Dale Wallace (keys), David Pichette (fiddle) and Mike Melancon (drums); the quintet's ability to choose first-rate songs, coupled with their own growth as songwriters; and their ability to capture in the studio the energy that has made them one of modern music's must-see live acts.

Believe, a co-release of The Valory Music Co. and Midas Records, captures the most extraordinary period in the group's history. Their last album, *Countrified*, gave them their first #1 single (the smash "Moments"), earned them nominations for a dozen major awards, including a Grammy, and set the stage for *Believe*.

"This is the album that will define Emerson Drive from this point on," says Brad, "I think you can hear in each song the fact that we're at a very comfortable place in our career when it comes to knowing who we are as a band."

The album displays the band's ability to get the most out of a variety of songs and styles. "Belongs To You," the project's first single, is as big and passionate a love song as they have ever done, sure to become a sought-after wedding song. "Your Last," which features the band's world-class harmonies, is a call to appreciate the moment and the people around us. Songs range from "That Kind Of Beautiful," an upbeat appreciation of a woman's off-the-charts beauty, and "Life Down Here," a quirky look at the universality of youthful love and passion that displays the band's instrumental prowess, to "Clean," the powerful story of a woman in the early stages of recovery. The band's power to uplift and inspire, demonstrated so dramatically last time around with "Moments," continues with songs like "I Love This Road" and "Livin' It Up," both about the exhilaration of following dreams and celebrating life, "Believe," a rocker about the

transforming energy of big dreams and a song that personifies the Emerson Drive journey from small-town Canada to the upper reaches of the country music world, and "There's My God," a song about finding the presence of the almighty in a world torn by strife and sorrow.

The CD displays all of the musical prowess that earned each member nominations for the Canadian Country Music Association's "All-Star Band" and led Dale, David and Mike to take home wins in 2008. The band shows off its own writing chops with four songs, including the life-affirming "I Love This Road," the nostalgic "That Was Us," "Life Down Here" and "Too Much," with a groove and lyric celebrating the pleasures of love.

Believe is literally a celebration of the band's triumph over tragedy. The fact that it follows the breakthrough "Moments" is highly fitting, since that song's story of redemption parallels the band's triumph after losing a record deal, then losing a former member to suicide.

"As we look back at the ups and downs we've gone through in the last eight years in our business and personal lives," says Brad, "it's obvious they have molded us into something very strong."

Emerson Drive's success grew out of a dream that began in Brad's hometown of Grande Prairie, Alberta. A selfless camaraderie has kept them united through the years, and a tireless work ethic continues to make them one of country's busiest bands. Non-stop touring (their old bus recently passed the one-million mile mark) has won them fan loyalty that has been a key to their longevity.

"We have fans that have been with Emerson Drive since the beginning," says David. "They're still very dedicated. During the years when we were going through lean times and we weren't being heard on the radio as much as we would have liked, they were buying tickets and supporting us. People believed in this band and continue to believe in us, and that means everything."

The journey began when Brad, who grew up with his dad's George Strait and Don Williams records, was inspired after an 11th grade talent contest to start a band with some classmates. They began life as 12 Gauge, but soon became Emerson Drive, taking their name from the Emerson Trail, which crosses western Alberta to join the Alaskan Highway.

The members of Emerson Drive moved to Nashville and released a 2002 self-titled album that featured two breakthrough Top 5 hits "I Should Be Sleeping" and "Fall Into Me," as well as follow-up hit "Only God (Could Stop Me Loving You)." The band also received their very first #1 video on CMT with "Fall Into Me." Their second album, *What If*, gave them four Top 15 Canadian hits and one Top 20 in the U.S. but following a corporate restructuring, they parted ways with DreamWorks Records.

They continued touring, and their story took a dramatic turn in the right direction when producer Leo and Alabama's Gentry came to see them play. "They blew us away," says Gentry, who called them "possibly the best band I've heard in years as far as playing live on stage."

Leo and Gentry believed in Emerson Drive and agreed to work with them before they signed their next record deal. The band joined forces with Midas Records in 2005 and released *Countrified*, which spawned the band's hits, "A Good Man," and the career-changing #1 "Moments."

The video for "Moments" was named Video of the Year at Inspirational Country Music awards and The Canadian Country Music Awards. The song "Moments" also garnered the group their very first Grammy nomination. These accolades add to the long list of accomplishments by the band. With numerous nominations and awards from The Academy of Country Music, The Country Music Association, The Canadian Country Music Association, The Christian Country Music Association, The Junos (Canada's Music Awards) and a "Reader's Choice Award" from College Campus Activities for two successful college market tours during 2006 and 2007.

Even beyond "Moments," which brings life-changing and life-saving stories to the band in e-mail messages and meet-and-greet lines on a daily basis, the group's members are the perfect musical ambassadors, creating their own Country style out of backgrounds that span the musical spectrum. Not long ago on a cruise to the Bahamas, David, who is a classically trained violinist, joined a string trio entertaining on board. "We started out playing Mozart," he says, "but we ended up playing 'The Devil Went Down To Georgia,' with two fiddles, a double bass and classical guitar. And none of them spoke English!"

In both their musical and personal dealings, they are fulfilling a life-long dream.

"We hoped from the very beginning of our career that we could do something special," says Brad.

"What's cool about what we do," adds Danick, "is that there's always something good, something new happening. That keeps us on our toes and gets us excited. It's what keeps us motivated."

These days, those changes are all for the better. On the personal side, three of the five have gotten married within the past year—Mike, Brad and David—and David and his wife Jill welcomed their first child. For guys who've spent their young adulthood on the road pursuing musical dreams, getting married represents a major milestone.

"We've been together on the road for such a long time," says Mike, "that it's the same thing as a bunch of brothers growing up. You see everyone's lives changing. It's kind of nice sometimes to stand back and see how everybody is evolving."

On the musical side, their recent partnership with The Valory Music Co. brings them back in contact with executives who had roles in their early success.

“It’s kind of funny how things come full circle in this business and in life,” says Brad. “We’re dealing again with people we held in very high regard for the amount of work they put into our group in the first few years. There’s some unfinished business we all wanted to take care of and didn’t have the opportunity to finish because of merging labels and the rest of it. It’s nice to be able to come back to a place where we feel 100 percent confident in our team.”

“Everything is running on all cylinders,” adds Dale. “We believe this is our time.”

It’s a belief their accomplished, confident new album justifies in spades.

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