

The Wilkinsons Biography

The Wilkinsons are one of the most amazing success stories in contemporary country music. Virtually unknown two years ago, the family trio has received more nominations, awards and honors in two years, than most artists garner in a lifetime. In 1999 alone, they were nominated for everything from CMA's Horizon Award and Vocal Group of the Year, to the Academy of Country Music Awards' nomination for Single of the Year, and Top Vocal Duo or Group - well over 20 nominations! The threesome took home a remarkable five Canadian Country Music Awards (Single of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, Group or Duo of the Year, and the Wrangler Rising Star Award) and four Big Country Awards (Best Vocal Group/Duo of the Year, Single of the Year, Video of the Year and Album of the Year).

Now with their second album, *Here and Now*, they're here to turn up the excitement and raise the bar on their already stunning career.

From the opening chords of *Here and Now*, you know you're in for something different. The Wilkinsons are doing things their way. The family group, known for their sweet harmonies and fresh-scrubbed image, has grown up. The latest album for Giant is a dramatic leap forward, and it's clear that the act has taken the reins. "We loved the first album," confides Amanda, "But this time we feel we've gone the extra mile. We poured everything we had into the songs." "There has been incredible growth - almost at light speed for my kids and myself," says dad Steve. "We were always into music, but we've living it and breathing it for the last two years."

In fact, what other acts might call a grueling tour schedule, The Wilkinsons call an opportunity. Not only have they savored being able to see so much of the country, but they credit their daily sets with sharpening their abilities. "Being on the road has strengthened our voices, given us more range and tones we never had before," says Amanda. "That really helped when we came in to do this record. We were able to focus and stretch-both vocally and with our music. We had a confidence that we didn't have before.

They were also able to have more fun with the arrangements, giving each song the sitting it needed, even using instruments like tuba and sitar. "It definitely is different, but I think it adds an element that hasn't really been explored," says Amanda. "Yet when you listen to it, you can still hear the roots of Country. I'm proud to say that this album really captures what we are, and what we have always wanted to be.

"*Here and Now* is who we are and where we came from," says Steve. "Our music is about feeling good, even when it's introspective." As the band's main songwriter, Steve wrote six of the album's eleven songs. "For me, writing fills a creative need," he says. "I would love to be able to paint or to draw, but I couldn't draw a ragged breath. But when you write and sing a song, you get three minutes to tell a story, paint a picture for somebody."

"Because the kids are older now, they can sing a different style of song," Steve continues. "Their perspectives have changed over two years, and the songs that they're singing reflect that maturity." From the infectious and catchy "Jimmy's Got A Girlfriend" to the fun Beatle-esque romp "Hypothetically"; from the soulful groove of "Til You Let Go" to the yearning of "I'll Know Love"; and the lush "1999" the songs on *Here and Now* convey the fun and liveliness of the family's personalities. So even as they've changed, the things that make The Wilkinsons special remain the same: the wonder of life, the gift of love and the joy of music.