

# VINCE GILL

## BIOGRAPHY

*“Vince Gill is quite simply a living prism refracting all that is good in country music. He uses the crystal planes of his songwriting, his playing, and his singing to give us a musical rainbow that embraces all men and spans all seasons.”* - Kyle Young/Country Music Foundation on Vince’s induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame

Vincent Grant Gill was born April 12, 1957 in Norman, Okla. His father encouraged him to learn to play guitar and banjo, which he did along with bass, mandolin, dobro and fiddle. While in high school, he performed in the bluegrass band Mountain Smoke, which built a strong local following and opened a concert for Pure Prairie League.

After graduating high school in 1975, Gill moved to Louisville, Ky. to be part of the band Bluegrass Alliance. After a brief time in Ricky Skaggs’s Boone Creek band, Gill moved to Los Angeles and joined Sundance, a bluegrass group fronted by fiddler Byron Berline. In 1979, he joined Pure Prairie League as lead singer and recorded three albums with the band, the first of which yielded the Top Ten pop hit “Let Me Love You Tonight” in 1980. Departing the group in 1981, Gill joined Rodney Crowell’s backing band the Cherry Bombs, where he met and worked with Tony Brown and Emory Gordy Jr., both of whom would later produce many of his future solo albums.

In 1983, Gill signed with RCA Records and moved with his wife Janis and daughter Jenny to Nashville to pursue his dream of being a Country Music artist. His debut mini-album *Turn Me Loose* (produced by Gordy) was released the following year, featuring his first charting solo single, “Victim of Life’s Circumstance.” *The Things That Matter*, his first full album was released later that year, featuring two Top 10 hits: a duet with Rosanne Cash on “If It Weren’t For Him” and a solo hit with “Oklahoma Borderline.” In 1987 he achieved his first Top 5 single, “Cinderella,” from his album *The Way Back Home*. In addition to performing as a solo artist, Gill also worked frequently as a studio musician, wrote songs for other artists and toured with Emmylou Harris.

Gill signed with MCA Records in 1989, reuniting with Brown as a producer, and released the album *When I Call Your Name*. While the debut single “Oklahoma Swing” (a duet with Reba McEntire) reached the Top 20, it was the title cut that firmly established the singer as a new force on the Country Music scene. The song peaked at No. 2 and earned Gill his first CMA Award (Single of the Year) and his first Grammy Award (Best Male Country Vocal Performance) in 1990. The next single, “Never Knew Lonely,” peaked at No. 3 and the album was certified Platinum by the RIAA for sales of more than one million copies.

Declining an offer from Mark Knopfler to join Dire Straits as a full-time member, Gill went on to record his next album *Pocket Full of Gold*, which also became a Platinum certified album after it was released in 1991. The album featured four Top 10 hits including the title cut, “Liza Jane,” “Look at Us” and “Take Your Memory With You.” That year he also earned his first CMA Vocal Event of the Year Award for his performance with Mark O’Connor and the New Nashville Cats (featuring Gill, Ricky Skaggs and Steve Wariner). In 1992 he released the quadruple-Platinum certified *I Still Believe In You*. The title cut became Gill’s first No. 1 single, followed quickly by “Don’t Let Our Love Start Slippin’ Away.” The album also featured the hits “One More Last Chance,” “Tryin’ to Get Over You” and “No Future in the Past.” Gill also topped the charts with “The Heart Won’t Lie,” his second duet with McEntire, which was featured on her album *It’s Your Call*.

Vince Gill co-hosted the CMA Awards for the first time in 1992. He continued to host “Country Music’s Biggest Night™” for 12 consecutive years, ending his run in 2003. Gill not only set a record for the most times anyone has consecutively hosted a televised award show, but he set the bar for other television awards emcees with his respect for his peers and the audience, quick ad libs and gentle humor.

Gill recorded his first Christmas album *Let There Be Peace on Earth* in 1993, before releasing *When Love Finds You* in 1994. This album also sold more than four million copies and featured six hits including the title cut, "What the Cowgirls Do," "Whenever You Come Around," "Which Bridge to Cross (Which Bridge to Burn)," "You Better Think Twice" and "Go Rest High On That Mountain." Becoming an in-demand duet partner, Gill sang with Amy Grant on "House of Love," the title cut of her 1994 album which became a hit on adult contemporary radio stations, and with Dolly Parton on a duet version of her signature "I Will Always Love You" from her *Something Special* album that earned the duo the CMA Vocal Event of the Year Award 1996.

His 1996 album *High Lonesome Sound* featured Gill's eclectic musical stylings. Hits included the title cut, "My Pretty Little Adrianna," "Worlds Apart," "You and You Alone" and "A Little More Love." *The Key*, released in 1998, was a return to hardcore Country while chronicling the turmoil in his life including the death of his father and the breakup of his first marriage. The album, which was one of his most critically acclaimed releases and his first to top the *Billboard* Country Albums Chart, featured the hits "If You Ever Have Forever In Mind" and his duet with Patty Loveless on "My Kind of Woman/My Kind of Man." His status as an in-demand duet partner continued with his 1999 duet "If You Ever Leave Me" with Barbra Streisand on the latter's album *A Love Like Ours*.

Gill married singer Amy Grant in 2000, and released *Let's Make Sure We Kiss Goodbye* that same year. The album celebrated his new relationship and featured the hit "Feels Like Love." The couple celebrated the birth of their daughter Corrina Grant Gill in 2001. Three years later, Gill released *Next Big Thing*, his first solo-produced album, featuring the title cut and "Young Man's Town." He reunited with Rodney Crowell, Tony Brown, Richard Bennett and Hank Devito (as well as new additions Eddie Bayers, John Hobbs and Michael Rhodes) as the Notorious Cherry Bombs, and the supergroup released an album in 2004 on Universal South Records featuring the single "It's Hard to Kiss the Lips at Night that Chew Your Ass Out All Day Long."

In 2006, Gill released *These Days*, a groundbreaking, four-CD set featuring 43 new recordings of diverse musical stylings. Each album in the set explored a different musical mood – traditional Country; ballads; contemporary, up-tempo; and acoustic/bluegrass music. The set features a variety of guest performers including John Anderson, Guy Clark, Sheryl Crow, Phil Everly, daughter Jenny Gill, wife Amy Grant, Emmylou Harris, Diana Krall, Michael McDonald, Bonnie Raitt, Leann Rimes, Gretchen Wilson, Lee Ann Womack, Trisha Yearwood and more.

Gill has sold more than **26 million** albums. He has earned 18 CMA Awards, including Entertainer of the Year in 1993 and 1994. He is tied with George Strait for having won the most CMA Male Vocalist Awards (five), and is currently second only to Brooks and Dunn for accumulating the most CMA Awards in history. Gill is a member of the Grand Ole Opry, and has received 19 Grammy Awards to date, the most of any male Country artist. An avid golfer, he helped create the annual Vince Gill Pro-Celebrity Invitational Golf Tournament ("The Vinny") in 1993 in order to help support junior golf programs throughout Tennessee. Besides being known for his talent as a performer, musician and songwriter, Gill is regarded as one of Country Music's best known humanitarians, participating in hundreds of charitable events throughout his career.

In August of 2007, the Country Music Association **inducted** Gill as the newest members of the coveted **Country Music Hall of Fame**.

Gill is the third artist inducted in the "Career Achieved National Prominence Between 1975 and the Present" category, which was created in 2005. "Induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame is the highest musical honor a Country Music artist and industry veteran can attain," said **Tammy Genovese**, CMA Chief Operating Officer.

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