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FREE

Simple Gifts of Sound Singer/Songwriter Christy Crowl Returns Home For Benefit Concert



by Nathan Oravec

*"So Let's Celebrate Everyday Miracles
Simple Gifts in Each Whisper of Sound...
Singing 'Round and Around We Go
All Come Tumbling Down'
Riding the Merry Go Round."*

- *Mary Go Round*
Christy Crowl

Los Angeles-based singer/songwriter, Christy Crowl recently returned to her hometown of Boonsboro, Maryland to perform a benefit concert at Hagerstown Community College's Kepler Theater. Crowl and husband, Scott Dicken, having just recently celebrated the release of the artist's self-titled de-

but album, were overwhelmed with the incredible turnout and wonderful response they received during the concert, held on Sunday, November 12 at 3 p.m. to benefit the HCC Faculty Merit Scholarship Program.

"It was fantastic," says Crowl of the event. "There were over 300 people. We came close to

filling the theater."

The first half of the November 12 concert was comprised of classical works, an encore performance of those she and Dicken presented during their visit to Geneva, Switzerland in August. There, during a UN Conference, the artist was invited to speak on the role of music in education and also performed her own songs from the new album, including the Billboard Award winning single, *I See Light*, at the opening ceremony of the Fete d' Excellence in Victoria Hall.

Following the classical performance at the college, Crowl, accompanied by Dicken, performed various pop-numbers from her debut CD.

The concert, with the proceeds going to the HCC Faculty Merit Scholarship, was a monumental success, with Crowl remaining at the theater to sign autographs for nearly 45 minutes following the show. "It was very successful for the college foundation," she says. "Everyone was really great to work with. The concert was very well received and we had great attendance. It was a lot of fun to do."

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Christy Crowl

The event was also nostalgic for the singer, whose last public performance in the Hagerstown area took place while in high school, and who, as a teen, had performed with the college's chorus group as well as a solo recital in honor of previous college president, Dr. Atlee Kepler. Interestingly enough, Crowl's father, Dr. Vaughn Crowl, is a professor of psychology and a faculty assembly chair at HCC.

"People who knew me from when I was a little kid were coming up and saying, 'I knew you when,'" she says of the concert. "It was really neat."

Crowl's self-titled album made its official debut during a recent release party on October 17, 2000 at Entourage Studios in Hollywood, California. Mainly a music industry event, a number of representatives from several leading labels were in attendance - and the word of this talented and refreshing artist's arrival undoubtedly began to pick up.

"Without over-speculating - Things are in development, and we're really looking forward to moving ahead," says Dicken.

Incidentally, the debut album came about as a result of Crowl's invitation to perform in Geneva, an experience that still

has both artists awestruck. "It was incredible," says Crowl. "Victoria Hall was probably one of the most beautiful halls I've ever played in. The acoustics were amazing!"

"We were so pleased with the audience's reaction," she adds. "Often when you're in another country, you feel a little skepticism as a performer. But the audience was so appreciative. It was almost a surreal experience... Unknown and American, without having a lot of exposure... and to be there and be appreciated... We were so pleased. It leads us to think we're doing a good thing."

Both Dicken and Crowl, who had spoken on the importance of music in the educational system at the Conference, are involved with children's programs back at their home in California. "We believe firmly in raising awareness," she says. "There is new scientific proof that music training at an early age leads to better performance in other subject areas."

"We've seen the need first hand," says Dicken. "Where we are, music programs are non-existent. We've been pleased to see that they are in place here [in Washington County]. [In LA], we've seen cases in which audi-



Christy with Scott Dicken

toriums have been partitioned off for extra classroom space."

"It's something we really want to focus on - Getting music back into our schools," says Crowl.

Crowl and Dicken are a team - husband and wife, making music together... literally. "For the CD, which was something we had talked about for a long time, we co-wrote and co-produced everything together," says Dicken.

"The way I put it - It kind of comes together like a puzzle," says Crowl. "There's no one route, path or method. We have a basic idea - and we each start building together and adding things."

"It's nice to work together," she adds. "Especially when we come up with a product we're really pleased with."

For now, there are no immediate plans for a local tour. "It's hard to start planning tour dates going into the holidays," says Crowl. "Hopefully, in early spring, we'll do some colleges in the Tri-State area."

Crowl and Dicken are also hoping to showcase at the European Music Festival known as Medam sometime in January.

"It's all part of the journey."

Christy Crowl, the debut CD, is available for sale from the artist's web site, www.christycrowl.com, as well as Borders and Machen Music in Hagerstown.