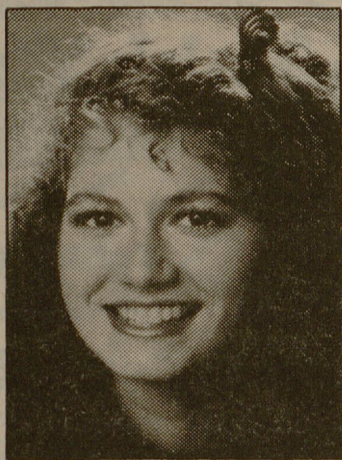


Grant's 11th album transcends barriers of pop, gospel music

Amy Grant, best known of the singers whose music is termed pop gospel, recently was interviewed by two men on the same day. She says one told her that "Lead Me On," her new album, her 11th, is her biggest attempt at the pop market and the other told her it's the most gospel she has ever done.



Amy Grant

So that both pop and gospel fans know about it, "Lead Me On" was released simultaneously by a religious label, Myrrh Records, part of Word Inc., and by A & M Records.

She says, "As far as I know, I'm the only person signed to two record companies for a single project."

Also new in the life of Amy Grant and husband Gary Chapman, who plays bass, is son Matt, born Sept. 25, 1987. "Lead Me On" is dedicated to Matthew Garrison Chapman by "Momma."

Grant doesn't find her album either more or less gospel in tone than her earlier LPs.

"I guess for me it's the most complete expression of my life I've ever put on tape; that feels really comfortable," she says. "I think it's going to be an easy album to live with."

"It's the closest-to-the-bone experience I've ever had making a record. It was a really healthy experience for me."

One song she might mean is

Instead of coming off stage while touring and writing a song for the next album, still full of energy from performing, Grant prepared for "Lead Me On" at home. She says, "I think in the high-energy environment of touring, I have tended to write songs that were a little more high-energy."

"This album is a little more conversational and vulnerable. It isn't void of energy, it's just a different kind of energy. I think, without knowing it when I was writing it, it's probably the broadest thing I've ever done. I'm really crazy about these songs."

The album was recorded last September. She sang the scratch vocal on the title song the day before her son was born, with recording gear moved to the Chapmans' living room.

Her first album came out 10 years ago, when she was 17 and a senior in high school.

"I sort of quietly made an album over the course of a year and it sort of quietly slipped out," she says.

"During college years, I started singing and performing more. Once I got out of school, I was on the road. I never had that much time at home before."

After an 18-month tour for her last album, "Unguarded," ended in September 1986, the Chapmans went to a farm they'd bought near Nashville.

"We wanted to start a family," Grant says.

"I've always wanted to be a mother from the time I was a little girl," she says. "I had a miscarriage early on. Then I got pregnant with Matt. When I had Matt and even when I was carrying him before he was born, I just felt something settling down in me. I guess everybody goes through it. I think I anticipated it for so long and having miscarried before I had him, everything heightened the anticipation."

"You tend to want something more when you can't have it. There have been big blocks of my life where I've obligated myself 18 months in advance. I couldn't get pregnant in the middle of a tour."

"I'd love to have a girl after the next tour."

The next, 13-month tour will be through America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and England. When it starts in September, the singer will have enjoyed two years at home.

"I'm sort of a homebody," she says, "who likes to write and sing."

New producer tries to clean up acts on Dynasty

NEW YORK (AP)—"Dynasty" isn't exactly turning into a bastion of high morality, but its new producer promises more meaningful relationships than affairs this season, and more ginger ale than gin-and-tonics.

David Paulsen, named executive producer of the show as it begins its ninth season, said he's betting that more realism, more action and some new characters will attract more viewers — even as the characters clean up their acts.

"I don't think people will be popping in and out of every bed," he said.

"In the age of herpes and AIDS, it's irresponsible to have flagrant bed hopping and I don't think we ought to do it," he said.

He promised that men and women would develop less ephemeral relationships, and there would be less smoking and drinking on "Dynasty."

"We're going to cut that down, because I just don't think it's healthy," Paulsen said.

But he cautioned that any one show should not be used as a barometer of societal changes.

Paulsen, who was in New York auditioning actors and actresses for the show, is no stranger to glamorous prime-time soaps.

He spent five years writing or directing more than 50 episodes of "Dallas."

He also was supervising producer of "Knots Landing" for one year.

"Dynasty" finished the 1987-88 television season ranked 37th out of 85 regularly scheduled series.

Although he is planning some new wrinkles for "Dynasty," Paulsen said some of the strengths of the past will be revived.

"We'll see the character of Blake (Carrington) be a driving force again. The character was allowed to weaken," he said.

Blake will "lead the charge" of men with stronger personalities, he said.

"I don't think people will be popping in and out of every bed. In the age of herpes and AIDS, it's irresponsible to have flagrant bed hopping..."

— David Paulsen, Dynasty executive producer

"The women have always been the stronger force," he added.

Also, there will be more action in the episodes, and, he said, "we're going to tell a faster story."

One of the new characters will be a young detective, "a street guy somewhere between Serpico and Colombo," he said.

And although there will be plenty of elegant clothing, diamonds and fancy place settings, there will be more people from other walks of life, "people who even live without air conditioning," Paulsen said.

The changes in the show are aimed at higher ratings.

But he said the effort to clean up the lifestyles of his characters came from his desire to reflect changing values in America.

And he insists that television shows can affect the way viewers live.

He recalled that once, in a scene of a television sitcom, a character in a car made passing mention of fastening seatbelts.

"For four or five days afterward, police departments noticed a distinct drop in fatalities and serious injuries," he said. "It was a very humbling experience that showed that although we're not out to preach, there are subtle things you can do."

New Edition matures after problems in music

NEW YORK (AP)—No more growing pains for New Edition. After years of legal and personal problems, the five-man vocal group is ready to enjoy its success.

"Being young and coming into the business, you just sign your name on dotted lines," group member Ralph Tresvant said recently in an interview.

"We got caught out there at a young age. We were forced to grow up a lot quicker and we found out things people didn't think we'd ever find out," he said.

"Now we're back on the right track," he explained.

A "new" New Edition can be heard on their latest album, "Heartbreak."

Original member Bobby Brown left in 1987 to pursue a solo career and was replaced by Johnny Gill.

Gill is best known for his duet with Stacy Lattislaw, "Perfect Combination."

Gill says he had little trouble fitting in.

"We'd known each other a long time," he said. "They didn't have to know me."

Ricky Bell, Michael Bivins and Ronnie DeVoe round out the band. Although Gill, 22, is the oldest member, New Edition had been around long enough to have a wary approach towards the music business.

"I don't think you really look for a friend in the music industry; I don't think you can find one," Tresvant said. "You get someone that likes you and you get along with and they're working for you and working with you."

New Edition, then teen-agers, became known nationally in 1983 with "Candy Girl," a catchy, danceable song heavily influenced by the Jackson Five.

Although they also had hits with the ballad, "Is

This the End?" and "Mr. Telephone Man," problems arose.

Maurice Starr, New Edition's former producer, filed suit, claiming he had the legal rights to their name.

A Boston judge later ruled in New Edition's favor.

Brown left and the group did not record for a year and a half.

The legal difficulties took their toll on New Edition. Tresvant wrote the song "Competition," which appears on "Heartbreak," and chronicles the group's dissension.

"There was a lot of separation in the group, pairing off and doing things that weren't a group thing," Tresvant said. "I just wanted to write about what was happening and what we were doing to each other. I just pictured what each person would say if he tried to explain how he felt."

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