

Little Big Town to Play Concert in the Park at Water Festival

"Call it a contemporary classic." - Miami Herald

"They're forging a compelling new path for country music's future overall." - Associated Press

"Refusing to limit itself to country conventions, this four-way-harmonizing Nashville group's follow-up to its platinum breakthrough, The Road to Here, marks a huge leap in confidence." - Billboard



Little Big Town believes fiercely in the music on its new album *A Place to Land*, so when a change of record label left it in limbo shortly after its November 2007 release, they didn't give up on it. Now that Jimi Westbrook and bandmates Karen Fairchild, Kimberly Schlapman and Phillip Sweet have found a new home at Capitol Records Nashville, Little Big Town's faith in *A Place to Land* has been rewarded with a new life.

"We want the world to hear this music," Georgia native Schlapman says. "It's our heart and soul. It's who we are, and we put so much of ourselves into it. It's how we tell the story of our lives."

But this isn't the album plenty of Little Big Town fans already know and love-it's much more. Three brand-new studio tracks demonstrate the group's continuing growth and evolution, while "Life in a Northern Town," the hit live collaboration with tourmates Sugarland and Jake Owen, captures its onstage sizzle. "We're getting a boost of creativity from being in a new situation," Arkansas-born Sweet says of the new tracks. "The music is really feeling alive and fresh for us."

A dazzling showcase of Little Big Town's diversity, originality and songcraft, *A Place to Land* was never short on inspiration. Recorded at longtime producer Wayne Kirkpatrick's studio outside Nashville, the follow-up to 2005's smash *The Road to Here* vividly reflects the emotional currents and concerns of the band right now. "This album is the heart and soul of what

we're about," says Fairchild, who grew up in and around Atlanta. "We did a lot of soul searching while making this record. It was a very intense, and very gratifying, experience."

The group songwriting and complex vocal interplay on *A Place to Land* is the result of almost a decade of deep friendship and camaraderie among the members. Fairchild and Schlapman go back even farther, having begun singing together while students at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Both moved to Nashville in the mid-1990s, and invited old Alabama friend Westbrook to join them in 1998. Sweet completed the band later that year.

"There's a special connection between the four of us, for whatever reason," Westbrook says. "Who knows why that happens? You like to think that maybe it was meant to be, and I really do believe that. This group of people came together for a purpose."

The band's uniqueness made it a hard sell at first in the ever-cautious country music field, but Little Big Town pushed forward with characteristic determination. Their patience paid off with *The Road to Here*, which has sold over a million copies and produced four Top 20 hits including the Top 10 smash "Boondocks," the Top 5 "Bring It On Home," "Good As Gone" and "A Little More You," and earned them nominations at the Grammy Awards, the Country Music Association Awards, Academy of Country Music Awards and CMT Music Awards.

They toured with superstars like George Strait, Kenny Chesney, Keith Urban and Martina McBride, and collaborated onstage with rock legend Lindsey Buckingham for an episode of CMT's *Crossroads*. Another musical luminary, John Mellencamp, invited them to sing on his *Freedom's Road* album. (Fairchild is also prominently featured on Mellencamp's new *Life, Death, Love and Freedom* and in his "My Sweet Love" video.)

Along with those triumphs came personal changes: all the members have married since 2006 (Fairchild and Westbrook to one another), and Schlapman and Sweet are both now the parents of young daughters. But there have been challenges as well, particularly the group's exit from its former record label just after the initial release of *A Place to Land*. The members entertained offers from several labels before settling on Capitol Records Nashville. "Looking at the roster there and the things they wanted to do, it felt like that's where the music belongs," Fairchild explains. "We went with a gut feeling, which is what we've always done."

While the group was sorting out its business dealings, yet another unexpected twist in the tale appeared. That all-star cover of the 1986 Dream Academy hit "Life in a Northern Town," intended as a video-only memento of the group's stint on 2007's CMT on Tour, became a surprise radio hit due to spontaneous listener demand. With the new version of A Place to Land, the track makes its appearance on the Little Big Town album. "The phenomenon of how it happened was really awesome," Sweet says. "It's been amazing."

Among the new studio tracks debuting alongside "Life in a Northern Town" is one that harkens back to the beginnings of Little Big Town almost 10 years ago. Kirkpatrick's "Love Profound" was among the first songs the group ever sang together, before they even met the man who wrote it. "It's a beautiful song about the power of love and what it gets you through," Schlapman says. "The lyrics ring absolutely true to the four of us individually and as a band. We're a family, and the love we have for each other and for the music is the reason we're still around."

The road to here has been an eventful one, for certain-and the road ahead promises to be just as exciting. The first step in that process is this revisited, reloaded and renewed edition of the band's finest work to date.

"All we ever wanted to do was to travel around and write songs and play them for people," Westbrook says. "There's great joy in that for all of us. We have a great life doing what we do, and we just want to keep doing it. We want to keep exploring, growing and finding new challenges."

Little Big Town will headline the Concert in the Park at the Beaufort County Water Festival, sponsored by Country 106.0 FM. The concert begins at 8 pm in Waterfront Park. Admission is \$25.