

MUSIC

New release reflects many faces of David Kersh

Country newcomer David Kersh wants fans to like him; that's why he put Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight," and Willie Nelson's "Hello Walls" on "If I Never Stop Loving You," his second album for Curly Records.

When you can give an artist something familiar when they're not familiar, it helps," said Kersh who will be performing Sunday at the WYCD Young Country Festival in the Michigan State Fairgrounds Amphitheater. "Eric Clapton wrote a great song, it tested well with listeners," Kersh said explaining why he recorded it.

"If I Never Stop Loving You," he says is a "reflection of the many faces of David Kersh — rock & roll and country."

He admires the work of Clapton, Nelson and other artists, but he's not trying to be like them.

"I want to build a foundation," he said, like George Strait whom he admires. "He just keeps getting better and better. He had a lull, but he built a great fan base and was a very consistent performer."

On the road in Raleigh, N.C., Kersh says "be sure to thank the fans," a lot.

"I love it so much. There's a great, great love inside for the music, and the feeling you get on that stage is comparable to nothing. It's awesome. People will come up to you afterward and say 'thank-you for singing that song, it meant so much to me.' Not many people ever have the chance to touch people that way."

Kersh wants his music to be a reflection of him, and to evolve and grow as he does, but "the fans dictate, and you need to make the fans happy," he said.

"Part of being an artist is pleasing fans. Otherwise you wouldn't have a chance. I'm not the super talent like Vince Gill. George Strait takes a song and makes it his own."

Growing up, Kersh sang in the choir at First Baptist Church of Humble, Texas. "Both of my parents were in the church choir," he said. "My dad would come home from work and play piano. Being around it developed that love I have for music. I turn to music for therapy to change my mood."

While talking to this gentle, polite man who answers questions "yes and no" it's hard to believe "his concerts are so wild, anything goes... He brings female fans to tears and leaves them begging for more."

"Oh, does anyone read that?" he laughs referring to the quote from his press kit. "Who sees that? I don't see that. I might see people clapping and singing along."

Pop listeners liked Kersh's interpretation of "Wonderful Tonight," but he's definitely country. "I don't hear my sound as pop," he said. "The Pastor I Go" we kind of rocked on that, but it's a country format that would sound out of place somewhere else."

Still, he admits country musicians are trying to reach pop listeners. "They sell millions of records a day," he said about pop musicians. "There's definitely an evolution in change taking place. You really don't know how to please radio stations and fans. Where's that medium? It's so hard to find. We just want to have fun, otherwise we wouldn't be doing it — it's too hard."



Newcomer: David Kersh will be performing Sunday at the WYCD Young Country Show at the Michigan State Fairgrounds Amphitheater.

Second annual Young Country Fest

When: Friday-Sunday, June 19-21, at the Michigan State Fairgrounds, Woodward at Eight Mile Road. It is sponsored by WYCD Young Country 99.5 FM.

In addition to the concerts, the two-day long event will feature a full carnival, including a giant wheel, from Michigan's Wade Attractions, games, a children's activity area, fireworks 10:15 p.m. Saturday, June 20.

Hours: 6-10 p.m. Friday, June 19 (local bands); 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, June 20; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday, June 21.

Cost: Admission free on Friday; \$3 per person Saturday and Sunday, children ages 8 and younger are free. Parking is \$5. For more information (248) 799-0600.

Performance schedule:

Saturday, June 20:

Kristy Deck — 2:30 p.m.

The Thompson Brothers Band — 3:45 p.m.

Sherrie Austin — 5:30 p.m.

Kevin Sharp — 7:15 p.m.

Tracy Lawrence — 9 p.m.

Sunday, June 21:

Mila Mason — 1 p.m.

Shane Stockton — 2:15 p.m.

Lisa Brokop — 3:45 p.m.

Linda Davis — 5:15 p.m.

David Kersh — 6 p.m.

Toby Keith — 7:45 p.m.

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BIRMINGHAM Jazzfest

Birmingham's Jazzfest is a special event in a special town and, this year, takes place July 23rd through July 25th. Watch for the special program that will appear in the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers on Sunday, July 19th and will contain the events and information you need to know to enjoy this event to the fullest.

If you're an advertiser and want to reach over 84,325 readers of the Jazzfest program in Birmingham/Bloomfield, West Bloomfield, Troy, Rochester, Southfield and Farmington, call

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JUNE

Teen Idols *from Moore, Gary Jones, Bobby Sherman*
23 **Phil Collins** *by David*
quest vocalist Chris Adams & featuring Gerald Albright on saxophone

Wynton Marsalis & The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra
21 **Michaelson** presents **Gullah Gullah Island Live Your**
21 **Ani DiFranco** w/ *Heath Brass Band*

JULY
21 **Joe Piscopo** *from June 21*

Chumbawamba *from June 21*
21 **The British Rock Symphony & Choir**
Starring Roger Daltrey, Playing: The Music of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Led Zepplin & Pink Floyd

Beauty & The Beast
Live Stage Presentation of The Timbers Classic
21 **Detroit Symphony Orchestra**
10 Mozart Gals w/ Royal Fireworks Conductor - Jaime Laredo
11 Roberta Flack w/ The DSO Conductor - Leslie Dunner
12 Romance Under The Stars Conductor - Leslie Dunner

Pat Metheny Group
17 **Air Supply** *from June 21*
17 **Steven Wright** *from June 21*
17 **Kansas** w/ Symphony Orchestra *from June 21*

Alison Krauss & Union Station
Bela Fleck & The Flecktones

Art Garfunkel
21 **The Mavericks** w/ *from June 21*
21 **Kevin Nealon** w/ Victoria Jackson *from June 21*

Detroit Symphony Orchestra
The Great Graig Concerto Conductor - Heeme Jarvi

AUGUST
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Bravo Beethoven Conductor - Heeme Jarvi
2 Summer's Fantastique Conductor - Heeme Jarvi

Pinocchio *from June 21*
Live Stage Presentation of The Children's Classic

Detroit Symphony Orchestra
7 "Top Down" Pops Conductor - Erich Kunzel
8 "Chalkovsky Spectacular" Conductor - Erich Kunzel
9 Giants of Broadway Conductor - Erich Kunzel

David Grisman Quintet w/ Lee Kulek *from June 21*

Richard Jeni *from June 21*

Wizard of Oz *from June 21*
Live Stage Presentation of The Family Theatre

Carrot Top *from June 21*

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