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Step 'out

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**Afro
Man
to the
rescue!**

**The
Heart
of
America**

**Crystal
Gayle**

Interview by
Chance Hayden

**The
Ramones
can they
continue on?**

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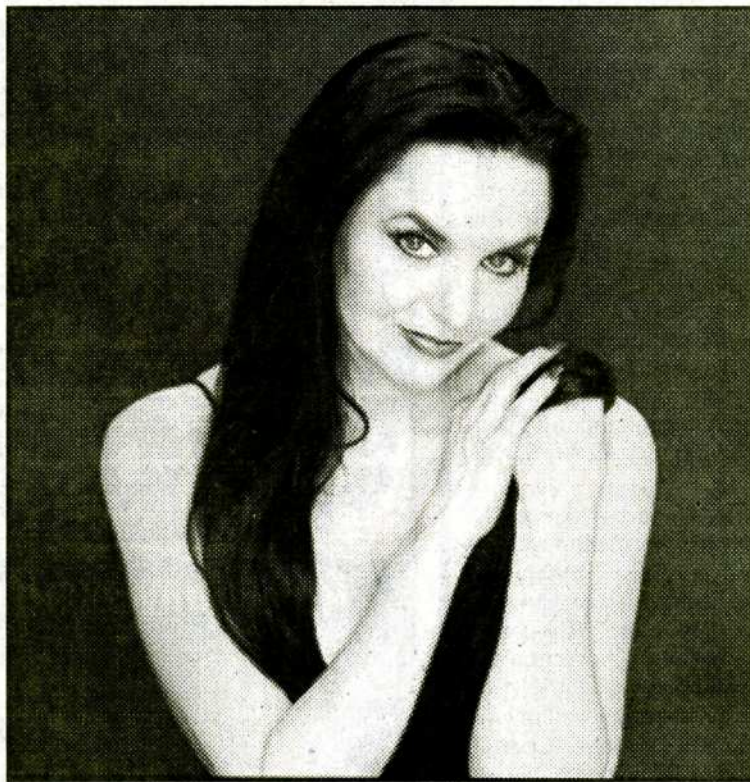
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Beautiful. The twenty selections on *He Is Beautiful* focus on the traditional hymns that Crystal grew up singing in church.

Most recently, Crystal recorded a collection of children's lullabies titled *In My Arms*. Conceived, written and produced by Nashville's Steve Ivey and Denny Jiosa, *In My Arms* is Crystal's first album for children. "I have wanted to do an album of children's songs ever since I recorded "Songs," a duet with Big Bird, several years ago. Steve and Denny approached me with some wonderful material and I couldn't resist joining in."

A long-time resident of Nashville, Crystal spends much of her personal time raising her two children, Catherine and Chris. Another aspect of her life is her business,

"Crystal's For Fine Gifts and Jewelry," which is located in Nashville. This popular gift and jewelry shop has been the subject of many national television and magazine feature stories. It all adds up to one of the most diverse individuals in the entertainment industry. Crystal Gayle is truly one of a kind.



Chance Hayden: It's not every day that I get to chat with an American treasure.

Crystal Gayle: (Laughs) You're making my head big!

You look great!

Well, I feel good. I love being out on the road, singing and entertaining. I think that keeps me young.

Maybe it's those Appalachian Mountain genes?

That's right! (Laughs)

Most of us have seen the movie "Coal Miner's Daughter," starring Sissy Spacek as your older sister, Loretta Lynn. I've got to know what you thought of the movie.

I've seen the movie, and I think it's fabulous.

How many times have people asked you if you've seen the movie?

Lots of times! One of the questions I always get is, "Which one were you?" And I always tell them, "Count

the children! There were only seven and I was number eight!" So I didn't get in the movie. I was the baby in the family.

How accurate was the film?

It was really pretty accurate. There were some things that they did just for filming purposes that weren't quite right, but that was okay. The only thing that bothered me about the movie was the person they had playing my mother. She did a great job, but that was not my mother. They portrayed her as very down and very somber. But that wasn't my mother. My mother was just out there! But that was the only thing.

Did you really grow up in a shack?

When my mom and dad first got married, they lived in an even smaller shack than that. We actually have a brother named Herman who still lives in the area and gives tours of the old house. You can still visit that old house! **It looked like a very depressing place.**

Once you go back there and you see the beautiful hills and how wonderful the people are, it's not so gloomy. But we didn't have a lot of things, that's true.

Be honest. Have you ever tried moonshine? (Laughs) Yes! Of course! We always had a few jars of it lying around.

When Loretta Lynn started to sell records, how soon was it before you felt the benefits of her success?

I was definitely happy to see Loretta be able to take care of her own family. She had five or

six kids at the time. I remember our mom actually sending *her* money in the beginning.

Okay, let's talk about your amazing hair. As long as I can remember, your hair has reached the floor.

You know, when I was growing up my mother kept my hair really, really short. I mean it was cut to the ears. She just didn't have time to take care of my hair and send me to school. I think that's why I always wanted to have it long enough to put in a pony tail.

Do you consider yourself a national treasure?

No! I really just consider myself a singer. I've been very lucky to have a lot of good people behind me throughout my career, and a lot of good luck. This business is not easy. You can have a hit record one day and be off the label the next. So I've been very lucky.

But don't you feel there's something extra special about you?

(Laughs) Well, we have fun out there!

Did you feel there was a lot of pressure to succeed because of the success of Loretta Lynn?

You know, when I first started people would introduce me as Loretta Lynn's little sister. It didn't bother me, because that's what I was. She's my sister and I love her. It never bothered me. It opened a lot of doors and it closed a lot of doors. But I had success, so I don't have those other thoughts like "What if I haven't succeeded? How would I feel?"

Most sisters have their moments when they just don't get along. Was there ever a time when you and Loretta didn't get along? Especially when it came to your careers?

No. We both headed in different directions. We really didn't fight. I've read in the tabloids that we've fought, but we weren't around each other that much to have any problems. Of course, we're sisters, and we can sit down and argue about something. But that's okay.

Loretta was always very conservative on stage. On the other hand, you've always leaned toward the sexy side. Did you ever get friendly advice from Loretta that maybe you were being too sexy?

Lately, I know that Loretta would like me to cut my hair. But yes,

there were times throughout the years where she wanted me to cut my hair because it wasn't a normal thing. But I couldn't fix hair. I'm not a beautician. So it was just easy for me to keep it very long.

By the way, how long does it take to wash your hair? It's got to be a major hassle.

When I'm performing, I wash it every day.

Do you have a team of people who are in charge of just your hair?

No, there's not that many people that can work with long hair like this. There's a woman in New York named Maria who's very good. She deals with long hair only. She knows how to comb it and do all the things you have to do. But normally I just do it myself.

It must take hours.

Well, if you really want long hair like mine, don't use the dryer. If you want to keep it good and healthy, let it dry on its own.

Your hair must be worth money.

(Laughs) I never thought about it!

You have two teenage children. Do they know how famous their mom is?

I'm mom first. But they realize that I go out there and sing. For the beginning parts of their lives they traveled with me a lot, so they've been all over the world.

Let's talk a little bit about music.

Sure.

Have country music and pop music finally merged?

Country music has definitely taken on a pop edge.

There's still the true hardcore country singers, but it's been overshadowed lately. So I would say, yes, country music is much more pop.

How did that happen?

Well, a lot of people who buy records today are children, and those children are looking for pop-sounding records. Plus, a lot of the country music producers today started out doing pop music, so there's that strong influence mixing in as well. It's what they know.

Does that bother you?

No, that's okay. But I wouldn't want to see pure country go away either!

Some feel pure

country is a thing of the past.

I hope that's not true. It's still there, it just gets overshadowed. Right now, it's just important to the record companies that the songs being put out are able to cross over to the pop market.

With that in mind, are you also affected by that? Do you yourself need to sound more pop and youthful to sell records?

If I was just starting out, I probably would be affected by that.

Today it seems that any young female starting out must also be very beautiful and be willing to pose in magazines in thongs. Would you have been willing to do what it takes had you just been starting out



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today?

I wouldn't have done some of the things girls are doing today. But that's just me.

What kind of fan comes to your shows these days?

I get a lot of mixed people. From little girls with real long hair to their moms and dads!

Is it true you have some American Indian blood in you?

The reason why I have hair that grows so fast is because of the American Indian that's in me. I'm Cherokee, and I'm also Scottish and Irish. That's where my temper comes from!

Tell me three things about you that would shock me.

Well let's see ... I love popcorn. Does that count?

I knew you were a troublemaker! Do you work out every day?

I should workout every day. But ...

You're so thin!

I was a lot thinner when I was younger. I love food! I love to eat!

You look great. But would you ever consider plastic surgery if and when the time came where you felt you needed a lift or a tuck?

Do I have to answer that?

Of course!

Well, I think if you're in show business and you want to look better or feel better, it's okay. Even if

you're not in show business and you just want to look better and you've got the extra money to do it, why not? You just have to be careful who you go to. So no, I'm not opposed to plastic surgery at all. I keep saying I need an overhaul! (Laughs)

You look great! So is there one question nobody has ever asked you and you wish they would?

Oh my! Probably not! (Laughs)

So be honest. Have you ever partied with Willie Nelson?

Yeah! He's a great guy. He actually sang on my last CD.

I know he smokes a lot of weed. I was on his tour bus once and I got so stoned just from the fumes that I couldn't find my car for hours.

But he still sings great!

What's your opinion of MTV?

I think it's great! I like all that stuff. You have to have things that appeal to everyone. There are all different types of markets for all different types of people.

So many people around the world love you. Have you ever said "Why me?"

I've always felt so honored. I love that people enjoy my music and what I've stood for.

Ever been in a scandal?

I know that's what the press wants but ... I'm saving that for the book.

Will you really write a book about your life one day?

I don't know. I could.

Would you name names?

Yeah!

What big stars did you date before you were married?

I'm not going to tell you! That's for the book!

I can only imagine. Have you met

President Bush?

Yes! My sisters

Loretta and

Peggy went out

and campaigned for him. And we just had a ball! I really like him.

Did you have fun talking to me?

Yes, I really did! I liked all your direct questions!



Steppin' Out

You can send comments to
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