Mp3 Pat Duran And Friends - Halfway To Heaven



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The CD encompasses Traditional Country, New Country and Blugrass. The title track of the CD defies classification, and is about hot air ballooning, as is the second track, High Times, which has its roots in reggae. 12 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Traditional Country, COUNTRY: Modern Country Details: Songwriting duo Brenda Wilkinson and Pat Duran have been writing songs together since 1997. Halfway to Heaven, their first collaborative CD, is a collection of original material, as well as two covers of selected works with a connection to their home state of New Mexico. The CD includes songs inspired by George Jones, Merle Haggard and Johnny Rogriguez; can you guess which ones? Take a listen and see if you can figure it out. If you want a serious chuckle, check out track #9, and if you love cows or cowboys, check out track #12. Pats musical background started early in Albuquerques south valley. As a small child he and his mother would sing together to pass the time while waiting for Pats father to get home from late night shifts at work. She taught him how to sing harmonies, which seemed natural to him. He was startled when, later in life, he learned that not every family sings harmonies together. He soon picked up the guitar and was playing in bands by the age of twelve. In the early eighties he joined the Army. His musical ability didnt go unnoticed there either, and he ended up winning military talent contests and was ultimately chosen to trade his combat boots for a microphone for a year in a USO-type tour called Showtime USA. Duran returned to his hometown of Albuquerque and started performing as a solo act for the first time, with a variety act including everything from 40s jazz to country to rock and oldies. He took his act on the road but eventually landed up back in Albuquerque. He found that the music scene was thriving there with jam sessions and songwriter competitions popping up everywhere. He jumped right in and won four New Mexico Songwriter of the Year competitions in the 90s, resulting in his music or performance being on four albums resulting from the New Mexicos Best project. It was at one of these competitions that he met

singer-songwriter Jim Jones, leading to a popular club act Duran and Jones and the album Tucumcari Tonight. His harmonies still with him, one writer for the Albuquerque Journal called Duran and Jones the Simon and Garfunkel of Country Music. They made it to Nashville in the Charlie Daniels Talent Roundup (similar to todays Nashville Star) and a spot on national TV. Of the Nashville experience Duran says: It was like a splash of cold water on my face. This is when Pat realized that great imitations of other acts was great for the club circuit, but to go to the next level hed need to find his own style. Pat performed with other bands, opening for national acts like The Judds and the Bellamy Brothers. Not long after this he met songwriter Brenda Wilkinson Brenda was sitting in a Cultural Anthropology class at the University of New Mexico in 1992, troubled by a rocky relationship. As she was taking class notes, her thoughts and emotions ended up on the paper too, in the form of her first song Its Over Forever Again. It would have no more occurred to me to write a song than perform brain surgery says Wilkinson. It just spilled out on the page and that was the beginning. She continued to write songs but didnt quite know what to do with them. Her career took her to Socorro, an hour south of Albuquerque, where she met Pat Duran in 1997 at a gig at the Sports Page. The two got to know each other, and when Pat looked at her portfolio of songs he realized that she had something. What she had was a gift for the turn of a phrase, and for using words to make an emotional connection with the listener. Working out the flesh of a song and the lyrics, and properly telling the story always seemed to be my greatest challenge, says Duran. Working with Brenda on the first few originals I quickly realized that these were her strengths. Brenda had a gift for telling a story and conveying emotion, but without a background in music she had limitations. Thats where Pat came in says Brenda. He taught me about the structure and parts of a song, and his confidence and guitar playing ability really took things to another level. Our strengths really complement each other adds Brenda. The two ended up writing about 60 songs over the next eight years. Brenda is the primary lyricist and Pat is the primary creator of melodies and arrangements, but every song happens in a different way say the two, sometimes we trade places. After an eventful hot air balloon ride in Albuquerque, Pat called Brenda and said Hey, weve got to write a song about ballooning; its such a part of the Albuquerque and New Mexico experience. Brenda started working on concept and began penning some lines. Pat came down to Socorro and they finished the song, the title track of the new album Halfway to Heaven. The two call their songwriting partnership Rockin WD, and their logo is a brand.

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