

Mp3 Voices From Afar - Country: Country Rock



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Songs of personal experience, strength and hope...the songwriters recovery journey 10 MP3 Songs
COUNTRY: Country Rock, BLUES: Blues Vocals Details: VOICES FROM AFAR THE STORY Weve all done it. A rotten day gets you grumbling and cranky, so you throw on a bright and poppy dance CD to lift you out of that negative mood. Or youve just ended a relationship and you want to wallow, so you sob along to song after song about love lost. An old college friend sends you an email, and after responding you go through your CD collection to find all the stuff you listened to back in the old days. Music transports. It sympathizes. It speaks to us. And thats exactly the point of voices from AFAR. The 10 songs of the album, written and performed by six artists came out of their own experience and reactions to addiction and recovery. As a songwriter, professionally you write songs for different reasons, Stephanie Urbina Jones, Creative Director and member of voices from AFAR explains. These songs were for ourselves, needing to express something as we went through it. The idea of making an album came up and when we heard each others songs, we were all blown away. We wanted to share that, to validate peoples experiences so that they wouldnt feel alone. Jones and the other Voices Boh Cooper, Porter Howell, Paul Jefferson, Sherrie Phillips and Vee Bishop each took different paths that led them to Nashville to pursue their love of music. In an all-too-common occurrence, each also developed addictive ways of coping. At different times, they found their way to therapists Max and Kathleen Haskett, who guided them through recovery. Some knew each other beforehand, some met through the Hasketts, but eventually they were meeting and talking and helping each other. The seed thought of using microphones for this emerging post-trauma health originated through Dr. Max R. Haskett. This was confirmed by Kathleen Haskett's energy and gifts. The end result was the voices from AFAR, which were enthusiastically introduced to Dr. Patrick Carnes at the Radio Caf, a club in Nashville. Patrick's

acceptance and support poll-vaulted the voices from AFAR singers into their first recorded CD and national recognition. Dr. Patrick Carnes is CEO of the American Foundation For Addiction Research (AFAR), which is dedicated to fostering scientific research and understanding -- and to disseminating the knowledge of -- the causes and nature of addictive disorders. The songwriters started tossing around ideas. A concert. A song, maybe. I remember saying, I dont know what this is, but I want to be part of it, says Howell, of the band Little Texas, and currently a songwriter with cuts by Trace Adkins and Montgomery Gentry. Then we got together and listened to each others stuff. There was pain and anger coming through the music, but also hope and celebration. They agreed that, with the songs they had all already written, they could put together an album that could speak to every aspect of the addiction and recovery process from the core causes, to hitting bottom, to finding release from those demons. Hearing that back from someone else in a song was so validating, says Jones, a singer/songwriter, whose works have been recorded by Lorrie Morgan and Shannon Brown. We were supporting each other in this process, because were putting our souls out there, literally. Theres a lot of deep, truthful stuff that you could feel really vulnerable about, so we all walked through this path together. It was a cathartic experience the first time. One Big Happy Family reveals the private hell hidden behind a sunny family portrait. Youre Not My God came out of a counselors observation that addiction is a form of worship for those in the middle of it. God Dont Make Trash affirms individual value. Freedom in Your Eyes documents a moment of salvation. The members of voices From AFAR sang these songs and others at Radio Caf, a small Nashville club, and were floored by the reaction. Ive never seen that kind of exchange of energy between an artist and an audience, says Jones. You could just feel the room completely blow up because the songs touched something deep. It was a huge release for the people listening, to hear those feelings finally expressed. Dr. Carnes, who attended the concert, saw firsthand how the music touched the audience. He began to formulate ideas on how to harness that power and incorporate it into his lectures. By the time he returned to Nashville, in November 2001, he had reworked his talk to include the voices from AFAR songs and performances around the topics of his speech. The music provided a heartfelt complement to the spoken words, and the successful combination led to plans to incorporate the voices from AFAR into Dr. Carnes future workshops. Seeing the response to their intensely felt music confirmed the songwriters pursuit of putting together the album. Funds were raised, players were found and the singer/songwriters met numerous times to keep the project going. I guess I have an attitude from years in

the music business of having to beg, borrow, steal to get someone to listen to something, says Howell. This has a reason, and people commit to it because they've been through it. In fact, Templeton Thompson, a singer/songwriter who has a cut on the latest Reba McEntire album, says that she's often the audience for these songs as well as the one who wrote them. Two of the three songs she contributes to the album, *They Can't Hurt You Now* and *Nobody But Me*, address the self-doubt that can be paralyzing, and that often contributes to addiction. A lot of times, you have one of those days when you can't quite get around those damn voices inside you, that make you feel you're not as good as you really are says Thompson. I still need to listen to these songs. I have to remind myself sometimes to listen to what that song says, to take my own medicine, so to speak. Perhaps most important is the fact that the songs apply to life in general, avoiding any kind of preachiness or hectoring. Our intention isn't to try to sway people to our way of thinking, or to make them know there's a better way. It's just to affect whoever could be listening, says Boh Cooper, a keyboardist who's toured with Steven Curtis Chapman, Michael W. Smith and Rascal Flatts, among others. It was definitely a concern for us that we not be preachy. I know how people who haven't been through it can feel about recovery. You see people make fun of it and it is kind of funny, says Jefferson. I laugh too, at the movies when they make fun of 12-step programs. But this is serious, too. The truth is that the 12-step program and recovery has helped an incredible number of people. As can the lessons learned through the process, even for those who may not actually enroll in a program. I play *You're Not My God* a lot, Jefferson says, it's one of my most requested songs. A woman who comes to hear me play told me that the song is responsible for her losing 25 pounds. Which comes to the point of voices from AFAR. It harnesses the power of music to help people in need. When I was a little girl, Carole King had an album out called *Tapestry*, says Jones. My dad went to Vietnam, and my parents were divorced, and there was a lot of pain in my childhood. I would go to my bedroom with that album and listen to *You've Got A Friend* and rock and rock and rock myself. I felt soothed by her voice, by her music, by that song. That is why I do what I do. Because that so saved me as a child. Music is the most profound medium of communication because it goes far beyond anything that we can understand. To schedule a performance by voices from AFAR, contact Julie Hargrove at 615-957-9157 or DJBHargrove2@comcast. To schedule a lecture with Dr. Patrick Carnes, including the voices from AFAR, contact Marianne Harkin 480-488-0150 BIOS Stephanie Urbina Jones is a brown eyed, gypsy-soulful singer/songwriter from Texas. She was signed by Sony/ATV Tree Publishing and has had five major label

cuts by other nationally renowned recording artists and was the first female independent artist to go #1 on the Texas Music chart with her single "Shakin Things Up". For several years she dreamed of making a healing album and when she was approached by AFAR, her vision found its wings and she became the creative director and an artist for the Voices From AFAR CD. Today, Jones is making her own records and touring to take her music to the fans. Expect Jones's national Latin/Country/Rock debut on Equity Records entitled "Fiery Angel" in early 2007. stephaniejones.net

Boh Cooper, from St. Petersburg, Florida, began taking piano lessons at the age of eight, and has been playing professionally since 1982. He has traveled and performed with artists such as Kim Carnes, Michael W. Smith, Michael English, Steven Curtis Chapman and most recently, Rascal Flatts. He has a Classical Performance Degree from Belmont University and has a passion for counseling. My heart beats now to give back what I've gleaned from my own recovery journey, says Cooper. I have been waiting 10 years for an opportunity to perform recovery/healing music. Voices from AFAR is an answer to a prayer. bohcooper.com

Paul Jefferson moved to Nashville in 1993. Shortly thereafter, he became the first country artist to sign with the then-new record label, ALMO Sounds and began touring with such artists as Trisha Yearwood and Dwight Yoakam. The [Nashville] Tennessean named Jefferson one of the Top 5 artists most likely to achieve stardom. He wrote the No. 1 hit, That's As Close As I'll Get To Loving You for Aaron Tippin. His own critically acclaimed singles include Check Please and I Might Just Make It. To support his ALMO Sounds release, Jefferson formed a band, which was managed by international talent impresario Miles Copeland. During a songwriting retreat at Copeland's castle in France, Jefferson met Porter Howell. The two are now recording their second album together. Paul also is a producer and sound engineer. He is currently working on the new AFAR projects. hilljack.com

Vee Maurice Bishop started learning guitar at eight and began touring across North America at age 18. His musical travels included recording and singing in Australia, Canada, Alaska, and the main land U.S. Vee moved back to Nashville, TN in the summer of 2004 after a meeting with the Voices from AFAR. Vee graduated from University of Missouri with a bachelor degree in music. He is pursuing Classical Music on a Graduate level while sharing his experience, strength and hope via the arts.

Sherrie Phillips was born and raised in Northern California. She began singing in church at the age of 5 and has been singing professionally since 1987. She has toured and traveled with her original rock group Hangman's Daughter and sang with greats such as Pat Benetar, Three Dog Night and Eddie Money. She has just completed producing and singing lead for a

gospel project titled Magdalene Messengers. Deeply called to be of service and participate in healing music she has been singing with the Afar group since January 2004. Porter Howell emigrated from Longview, Texas, to study guitar at Nashvilles Belmont University. In 1988, he helped form the band that came to be known as Little Texas. Recording for Warner Bros. Records, the group scored a barrage of No. 1 and Top 10 singles during the early and mid-1990s. Howell not only played lead guitar for Little Texas but also emerged as one of its most successful songwriters, penning such chart-topping singles as What Might Have Been, God Blessed Texas, My Love, Some Guys Have All The Love, First Time For Everything and Kick A Little. He also wrote the Top 10 adult contemporary for Hall Oates, If a PromiseAint Enough. Jewelie Hargrove was born and raised in Charleston, IL. In 1976, Jewelie graduated from Lakeland College with an Associate degree in Business. She has 20 years of management experience working in retail, oil and banking industries. As manager of the Voices from AFAR, Julie utilizes all of her management experience performing the administrative duties for the group. Jewelie says that music has and is a big part of my life and to be able to use my administrative skills with music is a dream come true. Lee Andrew Garner, Jr. is a native of Jackson, Mississippi. He has a Bachelors degree in Psychology, a Masters degree in Emotional Behavioral Disorders, and is currently working towards completion of a Ph.D in Counseling Education from Mississippi State University. Lees love and passion for all genres of music began over twenty years ago when he started playing saxophone and bass guitar. From the muddied waters of the mighty Mississippi to the festive shores of South America, he has played bass guitar and/or served as a sound engineer for several local, national, and international blues, rock, gospel, jazz, reggae, and funk artists. Presently, he serves as the chief sound engineer and technical consultant for Voices from AFAR.

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