

Anne Wilson to bring 'REBEL' spirit to Kingdom Bound

BY JOSHUA MALONI

GM/Managing Editor

Everything you need to know about Anne Wilson can be found in "Songs About Whiskey."

As the Kentucky singer proclaims on her new single, it was the Bible – and not the bottle – that brought Wilson solace in the wake of her big brother Jacob's passing.

She sings, "Turned the radio on my drive today/Heard a whole lot of songs 'bout a whole bunch of things/I knew all the words but I couldn't relate/'Cause my three chords and the truth is/I ain't no preacher and I ain't no judge/My straight and narrow's been a little bit rough/Ain't trying to bible belt kill the buzz/'Cause God loves country music/I've heard songs about Jack Daniels/Songs about Jim Beam/Heard songs about one night regrets/Neon and nicotine/I guess I'm just kinda fixed on/The only thing that's ever fixed me/That's why I sing songs about Jesus/Instead of singing songs about whiskey."

On her Universal Music Group Nashville debut, "REBEL," Wilson declares she is a little bit country, and a little bit (on this rock) 'n' roll.

The 22-year-old songster pairs her other-worldly vocals with creative lyrics, catchy beats and a message that makes fans move – whether two-stepping or raising their hands in praise.

Of the album, Wilson stated, "For me, I think it started when I sent a song to Christian radio that was very like faith-based, but it got a lot of pushback because it sounded too country, and so it kind of lit a fire in me to go, 'Well, I'm not going to fit



in anymore. I wanna be who I am authentically,' and I want that to be my message. So, that's where it really came in.

"But on the other end, just being a person of faith in the world that we live in today, it feels like you're an outsider if you have faith, especially for my generation. You know, my generation struggles a lot with feeling like we have permission to talk about our faith. We can come out and say it without being judged, you know? So, I think for me, I'm gonna be a rebel. I'm gonna stand up

for what I believe in. I'm gonna love my country. I'm gonna love God. I'm gonna stand up for the things that I believe in. I'm not gonna follow the world or the ways of the world, but I'm gonna follow Jesus and my faith, and that's what makes me a rebel."

Upon its release, "REBEL" secured the No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 spots on the Christian, country and all-genre charts, respectively – a rare feat accomplished by the likes of Carrie Underwood, Chris Tomlin and Hillary Scott.

The record is the follow-up to Wilson's 2022 debut, "My Jesus," which made her an instant superstar in contemporary Christian music – and someone the country industry was eager to lasso.

That album, and the title track, racked up accolades including ASCAP's 2022 Christian Music Awards Song of the Year, Spotify "Viral 50," Shazam Top 200, Rolling Stone's Top 25 trending, RIAA's "Class of 2022," Pandora's 2023 "Artist to Watch: Christian/Gospel,"

No. 1 on Billboard's Top Christian & Gospel Albums, and Platinum certification. She performed on the iconic Grand Ole Opry stage in Nashville after being named one of the venue's 2024 NextStage Artists to Watch. Wilson was nominated for the K-LOVE Fan Awards' Best New Female Artist and has claimed its Breakout Single of the Year and Female Artist of the Year honors. She also scored nominations from the Grammys and American Music Awards. To date, Wilson has more than 1 billion global streams.

"I think, in this song, in what it's talking about, and really what we wrote that song about, was my brother dying and how God made a way when there really was no way," Wilson said in a recent Zoom interview. "How he brought something really good out of something really horrible; and watching how he took the tragedy of my brother dying and turned it into this platform he's given me to travel and to share my story, to talk about him, has been more than I

Kingdom Bound Festival returns to Six Flags Darien Lake July 29-31

The Kingdom Bound Festival, one of the largest and longest-running Christian music festivals in America, is set to return to Six Flags Darien Lake from July 29-31 for its annual three-day residency. Tickets and accommodations packages are available at www.KingdomBound.org.

Kingdom Bound 2024 will feature over 40 artists and speakers, including gospel music legend CeCe Winans, rising country music star Anne Wilson, Casting Crowns, Matt Maher, We The Kingdom, Mac Powell of Third Day, and more across four stages.

Every ticket to the festival also includes access to the rides and water-park attractions of Six Flags Darien Lake. Special ticket discounts are available for Six Flags Darien Lake season-passholders.

"We are so excited to gather once again with friends from across the United States and Canada," Festival Director Donna Russo said. "This year we are looking forward to gospel legend CeCe Winans joining us for her first appearance at the festival, while artists Casting Crowns, Matt Maher, Mac Powell, We The Kingdom and CAIN make return visits. Kingdom Bound continues to bring families and friends together for three days filled with praise, teaching, fun, camping and Christ-centered community."

The festival will also feature special events and activities for guests who stay on grounds, including bonfires, movies, and late-night events.

More information about Kingdom Bound 2024, including the full lineup, tickets and accommodations, can be found at www.KingdomBound.org. Kingdom Bound 2024 is presented by Houghton University.

could have ever dreamed.

"And so, my Jesus is everything to me, and getting to see firsthand – like, you read the Bible and you hear stories of people with these crazy miracle stories, but getting to actually see that firsthand happen in my life – to be a witness of that – has been just really amazing, and just proves his goodness and how incredibly good he is to us."

"Anne Wilson is a boundary-pushing artist who belongs in both Christian and country music formats and cultures," UMG Nashville Chair and CEO Cindy Mabe said. "She's here to take her story and the power of her music to new audiences, while continuing to be an ambassador of faith in youth culture and beyond within the Christian music audience. She's unique and dynamic in sound, purpose and spirit."

"From the moment we first met Anne, it was clear she had a special talent and an incredible story and message," Capitol CMG's Brad O'Donnell and Hudson Plachy said. "It's been so rewarding to be a part of the success she's had with her debut project, and we are thrilled to have UMG Nashville and Cindy Mabe as partners for this next chapter. We believe there's no ceiling for what Anne can achieve."

Wilson will perform at Darien Lake on Tuesday, July 30, as part of the Kingdom Bound Festival.

"It's going to be so much fun," she said. "A lot of brand-new songs we're playing off of the new album."

She explained, "I love country music. I love how it's always very storytelling. I love how all the music, especially like Johnny Cash or Dolly Parton, it always had such a story element to it, that I feel like music nowadays lacks a lot of. I love just the heart behind the simple life, you know, in country music, of the simple things like your family and your dogs and your truck, and like all the little things that are so simple, but that's what makes a great life."

Now, for the first time in Kingdom Bound's history, there might be some "Whiskey" shared with fans.

"It was so much fun," Wilson shared of her song. "I loved it. We got to shoot it in a bar, actually, which was so much fun; and just got to hang out with a ton of friends that day."

"The whole song and the idea is just what it means to go out into the world and to spread the gospel. Also, I feel like it shows a different part of my personality, and a different part of, really, my artistry; and that was really cool to see that come to life."

Anne Wilson is online at www.anewilsonofficial.com.



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