

PRESS RELEASE
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Country Music Legend Don Williams Set to Visit
Threadgill Series and Release New Album
on Same Day

Max Stalling and Matt Hillyer to Open Concert

Don Williams, a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, will make a tour stop in Greenville as a part of the Threadgill Concert Series on Tuesday night, June 19th.

Two past Threadgill performers, Texas singer-song writers Max Stalling and Matt Hillyer of the band 1100 Springs, will open the concert with an acoustic song swap.

Tickets for the June 19th concert are on sale now at Cavenders in Greenville. Tickets are also available in downtown Greenville at the Auditorium office, at the Calico Cat and at the Magic Bubble on Lee Street. Tickets also be purchased online through the Auditorium's new website: www.ShowtimeAtTheGMA.com, or by calling 877-4-FLY-TIX. A limited number of seats are available in the platinum and gold reserved sections.

Series coordinator, Larry Green, Jr., expects Williams to draw a large crowd.

"I saw him perform at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, the historic home of the Grand Ole Opry, in October of 2010. He sold out the auditorium two straight nights. The concerts were part of his induction later that week into the Hall of Fame."

"I was amazed at how much Don Williams is loved by his fans. He sang hit after hit and the audience knew every word and sang along to every song," Green related.

"Linda Davis, who is a frequent collaborator with Reba McEntire and whose daughter is in Lady Antebellum, sat two rows in front of me in the balcony. She was the most excited fan at the Ryman that night. Don Williams is idolized by other artists, which tells you just how special he is," Green concluded.

Coincidentally, Williams' first studio album in eight years, *And So It Goes*, is being released on June 19th, the day of the Threadgill concert.

Born in Floydada, Texas in 1939 and growing up near Corpus Christi, Williams was playing guitar by age twelve, taught by his mother, and performed in folk, country and rock bands as a teenager. He first gained musical attention as a member of the pop folk

trio The Pozo Seco Singers, which had six pop chart hits in 1966-'67, then was signed as a songwriter by Nashville's Cowboy Jack Clement in 1971.

They came to call Don Williams "the Gentle Giant" in the decades he was a dominating country hit maker because of his unique blend of commanding presence and that laid-back, easy style that has appealed to adult men and women alike—cutting across national and genre boundaries. If those personal and musical qualities stood out strongly across the 1970s, '80s and '90s, they are all the more distinctive in 2012, when so many country and pop records seem to work as check off lists of somebody's idea of how to be a man, or hard-sell attempts to indicate affection for a woman. Don Williams has never sounded like he felt the need to sell somebody something, or to prove anything.

Between 1974 and 1991, Williams had at least one major hit every year, including such country standards as "Good Ole Boys Like Me," "Till the Rivers All Run Dry," "It Must Be Love," "I'm Just a Country Boy," "Amanda", "Some Broken Hearts Never Mend" and "I Believe in You." He also had a hit duet with Emmylou Harris on Townes Van Zandt's "If I Needed You". Williams was the CMA Male Vocalist of the Year in 1978; his "Tulsa Time" was the ACM Record of the Year for 1979.

Riding and crossing the line between country and pop, and all the more distinctive for doing it, Williams brought a sound and sensibility to the country charts that proved a smash—a development that was initially a surprise even to him.

"When I was just a wee lad," he recalls, "I really appreciated people like Johnny Horton, Johnny Cash and Jim Reeves; all of those guys back then meant a lot to me, but at the same time, I really loved Brook Benton, and the Platters and all of those people. But even when I was 'in pop' myself, with everything that I wrote, the only people who really seemed to appreciate it were country fans. That has to tell you a little bit about where your heart's at, whether your head agrees with it or not!"

On *And So It Goes*, available from Sugar Hill on June 19th, that winning, self-assured ease is again front and center, and the musical style that has made Don Williams a ballad vocal model for performers ranging from Eric Clapton (with whom he'd traded songs—"Tulsa Time," "Lay Down Sally") to Keith Urban (who guests on this release). One listen to the characteristically right-on-target vocals on this first Don Williams recording in eight years and his admirers will be wondering what he's done to maintain that strength over the hiatus.

Williams can still fill an auditorium or stadium across the U.S., the U.K., Europe and Africa; his special role as an international ambassador for American country and pop music is ongoing and his musical appeal, he has long since been astonished to find, is about the same from the Central Time Zone to central Africa.

“The weird thing about that is—no; I don’t change my show to go play England or Nairobi. I can pretty much choose anything from my repertoire and it works wherever I am, and that still amazes me, because you’re talking about different cultures, sometimes different languages, and the whole nine yards.”

The hundreds of memorable songs in that repertoire—over fifty of them major hits—whether contemplative ballads, affecting love songs or change-up rhythm numbers, have always been a core Don Williams strength and focus. Williams and long-time producer Garth Fundis, who returns in that role on this new album, each credit the other with having contributed to their own song-picking and sequencing skills—skills well put to shared use again when Nashville’s finest writers submitted hundreds of songs for consideration for William’s return to recording. They both knew what they were looking for in selections that would appear on *And So It Goes*.

In 2010, Williams received country music’s highest honor, with his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. He was still surprised: “I never really thought that I was viewed in that manner by the powers that be. It’s an incredible honor, to be added to the caliber of people that are on that roster. It’s pretty overwhelming, actually.”

Popular Texas singer-songwriters and past Threadgill performers Max Stalling and Matt Hillyer will open the evening with an acoustic song swap.

Stalling and Hillyer are among many in the current generation of Texas songwriters who have been influenced by Don Williams. In fact, Stallings' song "Goodnight Never Meant Goodbye" includes the line: "Here it is one a.m. Don Williams on my radio; You know 'Some Broken Hearts Never Mend' reminds me of you".

Violin students from local elementary schools will again perform at the June concert. The Greenville Suzuki Strings Association will sell bottled water and concessions at the concert, with all proceeds being used to purchase new violins for the students.

The Kenneth Threadgill Concert Series is produced by Friends of Main Street, a non-profit organization dedicated to historic Downtown Greenville.

More information on the Kenneth Threadgill Concert Series can be found at www.ShowtimeAtTheGMA.com and www.greenville-texas.com.

For more information on the artists who will perform June 19th, please visit www.don-williams.com, www.maxstalling.com, and www.elevenhundredsprings.com.