

TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

A man with a serious expression, wearing a black cowboy hat and a dark leather vest over a dark shirt, is the central focus. The background is a solid, light blue color. The text 'CONTEMPORARY COUNTRY' is overlaid at the bottom in a large, white, stylized font.

CONTEMPORARY
COUNTRY

CONTEMPORARY COUNTRY

The Early '70s

- 1. The Fightin' Side of Me**
Merle Haggard and the Strangers
- 2. Coal Miner's Daughter** Loretta Lynn
- 3. Easy Loving** Freddie Hart
- 4. Woman (Sensuous Woman)**
Don Gibson
- 5. Hello Darlin'** Conway Twitty
- 6. Would You Take Another Chance
on Me** Jerry Lee Lewis
- 7. He Loves Me All the Way**
Tammy Wynette
- 8. Loving You Could Never Be Better**
George Jones
- 9. Empty Arms** Sonny James
- 10. Help Me Make It through the Night**
Sammi Smith
- 11. For the Good Times** Ray Price
- 12. Joshua** Dolly Parton
- 13. Kiss an Angel Good Mornin'**
Charley Pride
- 14. The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.**
Donna Fargo
- 15. Made in Japan** Buck Owens
- 16. Behind Closed Doors** Charlie Rich
- 17. When You're Hot, You're Hot**
Jerry Reed
- 18. Rose Garden** Lynn Anderson
- 19. Lead Me On**
Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn
- 20. The Year That Clayton Delaney Died**
Tom T. Hall
- 21. Hey Me** Kris Kristofferson
- 22. Sunday Morning Coming Down**
Johnny Cash

SEE PROGRAM NOTES INSIDE

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CONTEMPORARY
COUNTRY
THE EARLY '70s

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

DIDP 077293

CCD-06
A-22488



1. The Fightin' Side of Me
(Sensuous Woman)
7. He Loves Me All the Way
10. Help Me Make It through the Night
13. Kiss an Angel Good Mornin'
15. Made in Japan
18. Rose Garden
21. Sunday Morning Coming Down
2. Coal Miner's Daughter
5. Hello Darlin'
8. Loving You Could Never Be Better
11. For the Good Times
14. The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.
17. When You're Hot,
You're Hot
20. The Year
3. Easy Loving
6. Would You Take Another Chance on Me
9. Empty Arms
12. Joshua
16. Behind Closed Doors
19. Lead Me On
22. Sunday Morning Coming Down

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CONTEMPORARY COUNTRY

THE EARLY '70s

After struggling through the second half of the '60s in Nashville, Kris Kristofferson busted out as a songwriter at the turn of the decade and forever changed the face of the country song. Kristofferson, an army veteran, helicopter pilot and Rhodes scholar, brought a self-consciously literary sense to country lyrics. As a Bohemian who entered music via the urban folk scene of the late '50s and early '60s, he bridged the gap between mainstream country acts and the pop singer-songwriters coming to prominence in the early '70s.

Kristofferson had been responsible for a handful of largely conventional Nashville hits in the '60s before Roger Miller became the first to discover his hipper material and cut *Me and Bobby McGee* in 1969. Johnny Cash's recording of **Sunday Morning Coming Down** in 1970 however proved to be Kristofferson's real breakthrough. He had written the autobiographical song after his wife and young daughter left him; without a family to occupy his time, Sunday

became the worst day of the week because the bars didn't open until one in the afternoon. Ray Stevens cut a country version, and Hank Ballard a soul version, before Cash performed the song on his network TV show (resisting executive pressure to change the word "stoned," which by 1970 had drug as well as liquor connotations). Columbia released it as a single.

Help Me Make It through the Night grew out of Kristofferson's activities away from Nashville on the Gulf of Mexico, where he helicoptered workers to and from offshore oil rigs. Recalling a Frank Sinatra interview quote about "a bottle or a woman or whatever I need to help me make it through the night," Kristofferson picked out the tune on his 12-string guitar while sitting in his chopper on the platform of an oil rig. A novelty rock version and a country version of the song both failed, and Ray Price and Waylon Jennings each had their own arrangements in the can that might have been hits if the parties had been able to

agree on who would release the song. Kristofferson negotiated that standoff by teaching the song to his old friend Sammi Smith, and her recording became an "instant standard." By then, Price had already scored with **For the Good Times**, another Kristofferson tune that grew out of the dissolution of his first marriage. As he drove the dark, deserted Alabama back roads down to the gulf one night, the first line, then the entire first verse, came to him—though it took him a couple more months to finish the song.

Why Me was Kristofferson's only major hit as an artist. At the behest of singer Connie Smith, he had attended services at the church of the Reverend Jimmy Snow, son of Grand Ole Opry star Hank, and was stirred when Larry Gatlin sang *Help Me*. Almost against his will, he experienced what amounted to an epiphany in which he confessed to being lost and hearing words of forgiveness from the Rev. Snow that made him weep. On the way home from services he wrote *Why Me*, a song that couldn't have been more in conflict with his carousing image.

In the early '70s, before the "outlaw" movement turned country music upside down, the Nashville Sound had reached its

apex. **Joshua**, the first No. 1 single in Dolly Parton's fledgling career, was inspired by an old banjo player she recalled from her Smoky Mountain childhood, though the romance angle was sheer fantasy. Producer Billy Sherrill, along with frequent partners Carmol Taylor and Narro Wilson, created **He Loves Me All the Way** as a happy, up-tempo change of pace for Tammy Wynette.

Loretta Lynn wrote **Coal Miner's Daughter** as a nine-verse bluegrass song while waiting around the WSIX-TV studios in Nashville. She declined to cut it for a year, believing nobody would be interested in such transparent autobiography. But with three verses deleted and a new mainstream country arrangement, it became her calling-card song, and the title of the subsequent book and movie based on her life. Joe South titled **Rose Garden** after a popular psychology book, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*, by Hannah Greene, and tucked it away on one of his proto-Southern rock albums. Lynn Anderson covered it with a modified Jamaican ska beat against the wishes of her husband-producer, Glenn Sutton (who felt it was a man's song). Columbia Records president Clive Davis, in Nashville from New York for a convention,

happened to hear Sutton mixing the track and ordered it to be Anderson's next single.

Don Gibson, once a leading tunesmith, turned to ex-rocker/evangelist Gary Paxton for **Woman (Sensuous Woman)**, whose title was taken from a titillating sex manual. **Behind Closed Doors**, another sexy adult love song, made Charlie Rich a superstar after years of working in styles that didn't lend themselves to easy country radio formatting. Kenny O'Dell, who also penned Rich's first country top-10 hit, *I Take It On Home*, delivered this tune at the request of producer Sherrill, and played guitar on the record. Ben Peters wrote **Kiss an Angel Good Mornin'** for his daughter Angela, and Charley Pride took one listen and "couldn't wait to get into the studio." The song made Pride the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year. But for George Jones, whose marriage to Tammy Wynette was on its last legs, **Loving You Could Never Be Better** proved wishful thinking. Sonny James's **Empty Arms** had been a 1956 R&B hit for balladeer Ivory Joe Hunter, whom James had befriended on Ed Sullivan's television show; James had recently scored with Hunter's *Since I Met You Baby*.

Conway Twitty wrote **Hello Darlin'**

back in 1960, when he was still rocking, and had thrown the demo in a box where he kept all such material. When Twitty went country, he played it for producer Owen Bradley, who got him to speak the first two words (which are never heard again in the song). Jerry Reed hit on the idea for **When You're Hot, You're Hot** after ad-libbing that line to cover up a flub during his appearance on Glen Campbell's network television show. Tom T. Hall based his **The Year That Clayton Delaney Died** on a small-time local picker (whose real name he disguised) in the Ohio-Kentucky border region where Hall grew up. Hall credits the man, who died young of tuberculosis, with inspiring his own career. Jerry Lee Lewis' 23-year marriage to his distant cousin Myra Gail (which had nearly driven him out of the music business) was ending when producer Jerry Kennedy and publisher Bill Hall reluctantly presented him with **Would You Take Another Chance on Me**. They feared it might hit too close to home, but Jerry Lee embraced the song, and even improvised the "Think about it" admonition that would turn up in many of his subsequent records.

Out West in California, schoolteacher Donna Fargo wrote **The Happiest Girl in**

the Whole U.S.A., her debut single, after failing to rhyme "The Happiest Girl in the World." Journeyman Freddie Hart's **Easy Loving**, which began life as "Easy Loving Teenage Hearts," gave him his biggest hit ever, but not right away. The song was buried on an album called *California Grapevine* that went nowhere, and his label dropped him before an Atlanta DJ began playing *Easy Loving*. After it was released as a single and soared to the top of the charts, he was re-signed.

Buck Owens and Merle Haggard were doing the most to keep the Bakersfield sound thriving, though **Made in Japan** turned out to be Owens' last No. 1 hit. Owens and his brilliant bandleader, Don Rich, devised the guitar harmony lines based on pentatonic scales, then Rich overdubbed a similar fiddle line. As for Hag, his **The Fightin' Side of Me** was contrived as a follow-up to *Okie from Muskogee*, a semi-joke he had tossed off in minutes that became a patriotic anthem during the turbulent Vietnam years. After *Fightin' Side*, Haggard rejected the jingoism, partly because he feared it was hurting him with the new young fans country music was attracting, thanks to artists like Kris Kristofferson.

— John Morthland

DISCOGRAPHY

*Indicates highest Billboard country chart position

1. The Fightin' Side of Me Merle Haggard and the Strangers • Music and lyrics by Merle Haggard. Tree Publishing Company, Inc. CBS Music Group. BMI. Capitol 2719 (1970). Courtesy of Capitol Nashville, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 1*

2. Coal Miner's Daughter Loretta Lynn • Music and lyrics by Loretta Lynn. Sure-Fire Music Co. BMI. Decca 32749 (1970). Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

3. Easy Loving Freddie Hart • Music and lyrics by Freddie Hart. Bluebook Publishing. BMI. Capitol 3115 (1971). Courtesy of Richard Davis Management. No. 1*

4. Woman (Sensuous Woman) Don Gibson • Music and lyrics by Gary S. Paxton. Acoustic Music. BMI. Hickory 1638 (1972). Courtesy of Hickory Records, Inc. No. 1*

5. Hello Darlin' Conway Twitty • Music and lyrics by Conway Twitty. Twitty Bird Music Publishing Co. BMI. Decca 32661 (1970). Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

6. Would You Take Another Chance on Me Jerry Lee Lewis • Music and lyrics by Jerry Foster and Bill Rice. Jack and Bill Music Co. ASCAP. Mercury 73248 (1971). Under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 1*

7. He Loves Me All the Way Tammy Wynette • Music and lyrics by Norro Wilson, Carmol Taylor and Billy Sherrill. Algee Music Corp. Epic 10612 (1970). No. 1*

8. Loving You Could Never Be Better George Jones • Music and lyrics by Earl Montgomery, Charles Montgomery and Betty Tate. Allam Music Corp. BMI. © 1972 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Epic 10858 (1972). No. 2*

9. Empty Arms Sonny James • Music and lyrics by Ivory Joe Hunter. EMI Unart Catalog Inc. BMI. Capitol 3015 (1971). Courtesy of Capitol Nashville, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 1*

10. Help Me Make It through the Night Sammi Smith • Music and lyrics by Kris Kristofferson. Combine Music Corporation. BMI. Mega 0015 (1971). Courtesy of Dominion Entertainment, Inc. No. 1*

11. For the Good Times Ray Price • Music and lyrics by Kris Kristofferson. Buckhorn Music Pub. Co. BMI. Columbia 45178 (1970). No. 1*

12. Joshua Dolly Parton • Music and lyrics by Dolly Parton. Owepar Publishing Inc. BMI. RCA 9928 (1971). Courtesy of the RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc. No. 1*

13. Kiss an Angel Good Mornin' Charley Price • Music and lyrics by Ben Peters. Playback Music. BMI. RCA 0550 (1971). Courtesy of the RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc. No. 1*

14. The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A. Donna Fargo • Music and lyrics by Donna Fargo. Prima Donna Music Corp./Algee Music. BMI. © 1972 MCA Records, Inc. Dot 17409 (1972). Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

15. Made in Japan Buck Owens • Music and lyrics by Bob Morris and Faye Morris. Tree Music Publication. BMI. Capitol 3314 (1972). Courtesy of Buck Owens Enterprises. No. 1*

16. Behind Closed Doors Charlie Rich • Music and lyrics by Kenny O'Dell. House of Gold Music, Inc. BMI. © 1972, 1973 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Epic 10950 (1973). No. 1*

17. When You're Hot, You're Hot Jerry Reed

• Music and lyrics by Jerry Reed Hubbard. Vector Music Corporation. BMI. RCA 9976 (1971). Courtesy of the RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc. No. 1*

18. Rose Garden Lynn Anderson • Music and lyrics by Joe South. Lowery Music Co., Inc. BMI. Columbia 45252 (1970). No. 1*

19. Lead Me On Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn • Music and lyrics by Leon Copeland. Shade Tree Music, Inc. BMI. Decca 32873 (1971). Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

20. The Year That Clayton Delaney Died Tom T. Hall • Music and lyrics by Tom T. Hall. Newkeys Music Inc. BMI. Mercury 73221 (1971). Under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 1*

21. Why Me Kris Kristofferson • Music and lyrics by Kris Kristofferson. Resaca Music Pub. Co. BMI. © 1972 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Monument 8571 (1973). No. 1*

22. Sunday Morning Coming Down Johnny Cash • Music and lyrics by Kris Kristofferson. Combine Music Corp. BMI. Columbia 45211 (1970). No. 1*



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Sonny James

