

LARRY GATLIN & THE GATLIN BROTHERS

Over 40 years ago, Larry, Steve and Rudy Gatlin started singing in their hometown of Abilene, Texas, and from there went on to make music history. Over the course of a four decade career that has taken The Gatlin Brothers from dusty Texas stages to White House performances, from Broadway to Grammy Awards, to the top of the country charts, there has been one unifying element, music. There's no harmony quite as pure as family harmony.

"Gatlin harmonies spin with high and light precision and their music bleeds and screams of love and a lot of living." *Country Capsule* in New York.

After high school Larry went to the University of Houston on a football scholarship. He majored in English and quickly developed "a love affair with the English language" that later served him well in his songwriting. On the strength of his songwriting talents and exceptional vocal ability, the legendary Dottie West who saw gold just under the unpolished surface of young Gatlin changed his life. The early 70's found Steve and Rudy in college while Larry, aided by West, moved to Nashville to write songs that would be recorded by names like Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, Barbra Streisand, Tom Jones, and yes, Elvis Presley.

In 1972, Larry landed a solo deal with Monument Records through friend Kris Kristofferson and invited his siblings up to Nashville to sing backup on his first two albums – 1974's The Pilgrim and 1975's Rain Rainbow. The release of The Pilgrim landed Gatlin his first hit with "Sweet Becky Walker," and then found himself at #1 on the charts the next year with "Broken Lady," a song that captured him a Grammy in '76. The same year all three brothers were inducted into the Grand Old Opry. 1977's High Time, credited "Larry Gatlin with Brothers and Friends," featured the No. 1 hit "I Just Wish You Were Someone I Love." The success of this album encouraged the brothers to become an official trio and in 1979, they signed a group deal with Columbia Records. When demand from hit records sent them on the road, The Gatlin Brothers proved more than capable of fulfilling the musical call on their lives. In concert, their performances were simply magical events, filled with incredible family harmonies, total professionalism and downright fun for both the trio and their audiences. Over the next decade the Brothers scored more than a dozen Top 10 hits, including "Denver," "Houston (Means I'm One Day Closer To You)," "The Midnight Choir," "She Used To Be Somebody's Baby," "Don't Want To Cry," "Statues Without Hearts," "What Are We Doing Lonesome," "I've Done Enough Dyin' Today," "Take Me To Your Lovin' Place," "Night Time Magic," "Love Is Just A Game," "The Lady Takes The Cowboy Every Time" and "Talkin' To The Moon." It was also in '79 that Larry Gatlin won the ACM's *Top Male Vocalist*, Straight Ahead won *Album of the Year*, and "All The Gold In California" won *Single of the Year*.

Larry, Steve and Rudy love to sing together. Raised on Gospel music, the brothers first began entertaining audiences in churches and appearances on the Slim Willet radio and TV show in Abilene when they were 2, 4 and 6 years old. "Rudy could barely sing at the time and we all dressed in cowboy suits and looked real cute," recalls Steve. While their talents have since blossomed far beyond just looking cute, the brothers still maintain their passion for the music they were reared on. "Gospel music was our first love and always will be. It is where we learned to sing," says Rudy. Larry says their history as "Gospel music junkies" came from those early roots. "Our folks took us to those Southern style quartet concerts and it was love at first sound! My first hero was James Blackwood of the Blackwood Brothers Quarter. I just knew somehow from that moment that I

wanted to be a singer for the rest of my life,” says Larry. The Gatlin Brothers paid tribute to their roots with the release of Gatlin Brothers Gospel, a CD of six standards and six originals penned by Larry. “Do you like the title?” deadpans Steve. “It took me hours to come up with that!”

Throughout the 70’s and 80’s, The Gatlin Brothers lit up major marquees and packed concert halls across America. Then, in 1992 after much soul searching and prayer, the brothers made a decision to stop touring. They ended with “The Adios Tour” along with an accompanying album release of the same name, and it gave the boys a chance to say goodbye to their fans and for the fans to say goodbye to The Gatlin Brothers. Explains Larry, “We just thought our time in the spotlight was probably over. We had a great run and are thankful for it. We felt it was someone else’s turn in the spotlight.”

As Larry says, “You know what Bob Dylan said...times they are a changin’.” According to Larry, a promoter in Dover, Delaware “made us an offer we couldn’t understand...so we took it!” Since then a popular ground swell, maybe not a large popular ground swell, but a ground swell nonetheless, has arisen that has persuaded us to do some selected dates that we are calling ‘The Gatlin Brothers Never Ending Reunion Tour.’”