

Mp3 Leland Martin - Leland Martin The Early Years

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Traditional Country, from funny to Honky Tonk to tear jerkers. 12 MP3 Songs in this album (40:47) !

Related styles: COUNTRY: Honky Tonk, COUNTRY: Traditional Country People who are interested in Merle Haggard George Jones Keith Whitley should consider this download. Details: Leland Martin Bio Leland Martins voice hits you like a drum roll, alerting you that serious emotions lie ahead. He sings the hard life hes experienced on his pilgrimage from the sawmills and honky tonks of southern Missouri to the spotlights of Nashville. Martin was born in the small community of Houston, Missouri. He and his eight brothers and sisters grew up in the even tinier and improbably named settlement of Success. What Martin lacked in material comforts, he made up for with a vivid imagination. My main influences as a child, he says, were the Elvis Presley movies Id see on TV. That was a big treat. When Id see him perform and I was just a little tyke Id think, Man, that is so cool. Thats what I want to do. Every time I could save up three dollars, Id go buy me an Elvis record. But Elvis wasnt the only star twinkling on Martins young horizon. He also immersed himself in the Merle Haggard and Buck Owens albums he found in his moms record collection. When he was 11 or 12, as he recalls, his mother bought him a guitar for Christmas. I tried it, and I quit, he confesses. I didnt like it. It was too hard. So I threw it in the closet. Still, the need to make music tugged at him. So, after a few months, he dug the guitar out and tried again. This time, he caught on. I just kind of taught myself, Martin notes. Id watch somebody play and ask them questions. Then Id go home and work on it. The first song he learned to play was Haggards Okie From Muskogee. It was so easy, he says. It had two chords. The songwriting that inspired me as I got older and learned how to play was the stuff like Haggard wrote. Once Martin had his basic guitar techniques down, he taught his older brother to play. The two of them wound up playing in a bar band when Martin was only 15. There were guns going off outside and fights and brawls inside, he remembers. It was scary for a 15-year-old kid. It was even scarier in the next bar they worked in. When the bottles started flying, he explains, which was practically every night, wed have to turn the speakers around on the stage so that the glass would hit the backs of them. The first time I played in a bar that didnt have a fight all night, I thought, This is alright. When Martin reached the point that he was making \$15 a night two nights a week, he quit high school, a

decision he still regrets. I've struggled awful hard because I didn't stay in school and get my education. In 1974, three days shy of his seventeenth birthday, Martin got married. To support himself and his bride, he began working in the local sawmills and cut back his performing to the weekends. This was my way of life for years, he says. During his early years, Martin had tried to write songs but was never satisfied with the outcome. Then, in 1980, he finally wrote a couple that sounded good to him, good enough, in fact, that he decided to record them. They were T-Bird Heaven and Tribute To Patsy Cline. Money was still scarce, though, so he and his buddies spent two or three hot summer days cutting a whole load of cord wood. Together, they earned \$1,100 and gave it all to Martin to pay for 1,000 copies of a 45 single of his two songs. Except for some local airplay, the record went nowhere. By 1983, Martin was working at a shoe factory in Houston and still playing nights in clubs. A local musician, Bobby Burkhead, who now works with George Jones, was putting together a band for Freddie Hart. Bobby came out to the club and watched me and said he wanted to hire me to play lead guitar for Freddie, Martin recounts. Two days after he went to Nashville to rehearse with Hart, Martin's son was born. It was 10 days before I got back home, he says. That was tough, not getting to see your new baby. Touring with a big star, Martin soon discovered, wasn't what he hoped it would be. I didn't like it, he says flatly. Freddie and I are still friends and he taught me valuable lessons in songwriting, but we would play a couple of dates and then come home and sit a couple of weeks. I wasn't getting paid except when I went out. I wasn't making any money. So I quit and went back to working and playing, and I ended up with my own band again. One day, while he was hauling propane gas, Martin had an inspiration. I was in a hurry to get somewhere, he says, and I thought, If you people will just keep your pants on, I'll be there in a little while. That gave me the idea to write a song called Keep Your Pants On. I thought it was so darn good that if somebody would hear it I might get somewhere. So me and a friend got enough money to demo it, along with one more song I'd written called I Just Want To Sing. This burst of creativity happened just as compact discs were coming into vogue. Figuring that radio stations would be more impressed by a CD than a cassette, Martin spent a hard-earned \$160 for just two CD copies of his songs. It turned out to be a wise investment. The owners of a local trucking company heard Keep Your Pants On on the Houston radio station and invited Martin to sing at a company picnic. After the show, he says, the owners came up to me and told me I was really great. They said they'd like to help me get into the music business. Thus was born his first album, Keep Your Pants On. We got the album done but we couldn't do anything with it, says Martin. We couldn't get

much airplay. But while we were working the album, I wrote the song, If I Had Long Legs (Like Alan Jackson). That became the really big turning point in my life. CDX, the compilation-album series, serviced Long Legs to radio stations across the country and netted Martin his first national attention. His next album Home Is Where The Honky Tonk Is came in 1998 with a new recording of Long Legs. Between albums and investors, Martin continued to work his day jobs and play the bars at night. His reputation, however, was spreading. Invited to play a songwriters night at Nashvilles famed Bluebird Caf, he not only wowed the room but attracted the attention of producer Michael Burns. At first, Burns was interested simply in recording some of Martins songs. But after Burns co-producer, Doug Wayne listened to the singers demos, they asked to produce an album on him. That album Simply Traditional came out in May 2002 on IGO Records. Simply Traditional included a third version of Long Legs, as well as a duet with Freddie Hart. This time around, Long Legs had legs. It charted in both Billboard and Music Row. It got me a lot of attention, Martin muses. Radio loved it. The next single, Stone Cold Fingers, charted even higher. During this period, Martin also filmed a series of music videos that gained him great visibility, among them Stone Cold Fingers, Our American Heroes and the holiday favorite, Flags On The Christmas Tree. Now comes Leland Martin, a magnificent listening experience that showcases the singer in all his vocal versatility. Issued on Magnet Records, the album boasts stunning new material by Harley Allen (whose credits include Tough Little Boys and Awful, Beautiful Life), Sterling Whipple (of Blind Man In The Bleachers fame) and Red Lane (Til I Get It Right, Miss Emilys Picture) as well as eight songs from Martins own pen. Theres also a nod to country musics glorious past via powerhouse covers of the folk classic, Wayfaring Stranger, and Del Reeves 1965 smash, Girl On The Billboard. Another real standout is Martins silk-smooth duet with Chalee Tennison on the country shuffle, Same Ol Song And Dance. Believe it or not, theres even a tune here that was originally recorded by the Bee Gees. Every song is a keeper and a lesson in style.

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