

Lee Ann Womack Is All Over *Nashville Scene*'s Critics Poll *The Way I'm Livin'* for Album + Single, Womack for Female + Artist



(Nashville, TN) — January 22, 2015 — “She digs in like she’s making up for lost time,” wrote *The Wall Street Journal* previewing the title track of Lee Ann Womack’s *The Way I’m Livin’*. Almost seven years since her last release, the Grammy-winning vocalist made a record solely from her heart, including songs from noted artists/songwriters Chris Knight, Julie Miller, Hayes Carll, Mindy Smith, Mando Saenz, Bruce Robison and Neil Young.

The Wall Street Journal begat raves in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Rolling Stone* and NPR’s “Fresh Air.” Major profiles popped up in *Texas Monthly*, *Lone Star Music*, *Tennessean*, and *Los Angeles Times*. Year end lists from *Esquire*’s all-genre Top 10 on down saw Womack’s cut-live-on-the-floor meditation on the human condition in the higher reaches. Right behind Lambert for Female Vocalist of the Year, she was singled out as the #5 Artist of the Year by the 90 critics across America who regularly cover country music for various publications.

“This has been such a different experience,” Womack said. “It’s more removed and at the same time, more right here... but it feels like there’s a place in the world for this music I love! People do want to hear it, and have albums like this to listen to. When John Prine introduced me to a sold out house as someone who sings real country music, that did my heart proud.”

In the essay accompanying today’s Country Critics Poll, Geoffrey Himes wrote of Womack’s return, “Lee Ann Womack, who won Best Album and Best Single in 2000 and 2005, nearly

matched those victories...a terrific album rooted in traditional country's willingness to confront the realities of addiction, adultery, bad romantic choices and small-town blues."

As Himes quoted Womack, "There was a time when Tammy Wynette sang about 'D-I-V-O-R-C-E,' and George Jones sang about a 'Cup of Loneliness.' And it wasn't just those two; country music in general sang about real problems. It was before we all started thinking our lives were so perfect. In this Facebook world, people try to construct a version of their lives as being so pretty. The music business is going along with that, but that's not what life is really like. There's nothing wrong with optimism, but it would be nice to have more than one side represented."

With a Grammy nomination for *The Way I'm Livin'*, Womack followed her heart and came home a winner. Whether taking part in PBS' fundraising "Rock My Soul" with traditional gospel's Fairfield Four and the McCrary Sisters with guests Amos Lee, Buddy Miller and Lucinda Williams; singing "Galveston" on David Nail's *I'm A Fire*; joining Steve Earle, Alison Krauss, Kris Kristofferson and Sheryl Crow at Emmylou Harris: Life & Songs; co-hosting the International Bluegrass Music Association Awards with Jerry Douglas or CMT's "Crossroads" with John Legend, Womack is taking country music to new avenues, new fans and new places.

With six Country Music Association Awards – including a pair of Single and Vocal Event of the Year, as well as Album and Female Vocalist – Womack is grateful when music's recognized. She confesses, "I get so much from music. Clarity, hope, the chance to cry when I need to...I'd like to make music that will do that for someone else. I think that's why all vocalists do it: to look at the world, try on emotions to see if they fit, and see if anyone else has felt that way, too. When something like the *Nashville Scene* Country Critics' Poll happens like this, I know I'm not alone. I know a bunch of other people out there have felt just like that, too. That fires me up!"

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About Sugar Hill Records:

Founded in 1978 by Barry Poss, Sugar Hill was recognized as "one of twenty-one labels that changed the world ... reinventing country music" by *Pulse*. Now, part of the Welk Music Group and with its headquarters in Franklin, Tennessee, Sugar Hill has deep roots in bluegrass and Americana genres. The label's 2014 releases include Lee Ann Womack's label debut, Don Williams' *Reflections*, Black Prairie's *Fortune*, Bryan Sutton's *Into My Own* and more. From festivals to record stores and all points in between, music fans will recognize the artists on Sugar Hill for their musicianship, energy and integrity.

For more information:

Holly Gleason

Torchlili@aol.com / 615-269-3238

Ken Weinstein, Big Hassle

Weinstein@bighassle.com / 212-619-1360

Megan McNair, Sugar Hill Records

Mmcnair@sugarhillrecords.com / 615-465-6763

Ashley Moyer, Sugar Hill Records

Amoyer@sugarhillrecords.com / 615-465-6782

www.leeannwomack.com