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Grammer co-headlining Artists Series concert

By DAVE LAVENDER
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Courtesy of the Marshall Artists Series Sunny pop radio rocker Andy Grammer joins Gavin DeGraw for a co-headlining concert at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 21, at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center in Huntington as part of the Marshall Artists Series.

What's better than running around the country playing your hit songs to packed out audiences?

That would be getting to run around the country playing your hit songs to packed out audiences while traveling with your friends.



For sunny pop radio rocker Andy Grammer, this current tour with fellow multi-platinum recording artist Gavin Degraw, which closes out in November after hitting "Austin City Limits," has been just that type of fun.

Come 7:30 p.m. Oct. 21, they turn on the Friday night lights as the double-headline concert tour comes rolling into the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center as the Marshall Artists Series continues to celebrate its 80th anniversary.

"We have been out for a while, and it just works out that we are really good friends and some of his band members have been in my band and so it is like a family vibe - like a big sleepover," Grammer said by phone. "I am a fan of his stuff, and we have become closer over the years, so to be able to run around the country as friends is really special."

Tickets to see the double-header of Degraw and Grammer with special guest Wrabel range from \$30.75 to \$73.55 and are available by calling 304-696-6656 or online at Ticketmaster.com. You can also visit the box office in the Joan C. Edwards Playhouse on the Marshall University campus from noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Grammer said he appreciates everyone who buys a ticket, and everyone who opens up to hear their music, because - as he found out in the beginning of his music career as street performer on the Santa Monica Promenade - busy people can easily walk on by.

Grammer, a graduate of California State University, Northridge, with a bachelor of arts in music industry studies, used the street to hone his craft, which has been featured on four EPs and two full length LPs.



That blend of industry smarts and street game paid off for Grammer, whose dad is internationally touring singer/songwriter Red Grammer.

In 2011, Grammer became the first male pop star in a decade to reach the Top 10 at Adult Pop Radio on his first two singles.

"It really is the essence of it, and it is the same that you have to do something special to make people stop," Grammer said of what he learned from playing on the streets. "Just because you are playing music - it is not enough. I learned that early on when I started when nobody cared so now when people come to hear you, you have to be like ... (the) expectation of what they need to feel you learned on the street."

For Grammer and Degraw, they try to give their fans all the feels through all the hits as well as new music presented in a vibrantly produced show topped off a string of Degraw's hits like "I Don't Want To Be," "Follow Through," "Chariot," "In Love With A Girl" and more.

Grammer said the night gets off to a great start as they've got 27-year-old Long Island, New York, native Wrabel

who comes out and lays such power-packed and personal songs as "11 Blocks" and "Gimme Your Love" onto the crowd, drawing them in.

"Wrabel has been amazing and so as far as getting your ticket's worth it is packed from the moment you get there," Grammer said. "It is a lot of good music."



Grammer, who is known for such hits as "Honey, I'm Good," "Good to be Alive (Hallelujah)" "Keep Your Head Up," "Fine By Me" and more, said he blends up tunes from his first two albums with songs he is writing for his third album, off of which he has already released a single, "Fresh Eyes."

"We have a brand new set. We had been playing the same set for about a year, but before the tour we revamped it, and it has been going pretty well," said Grammer, who plays guitar, piano and trumpet. "I like to cater to what we are and what is happening, so I will switch it up nightly."

While Grammer has gotten a wider circle of audience performing with other popular artists of the millennial generation such as Taylor Swift, Train and Colbie Caillat, he also got launched out to multi generations last fall. On Oct. 27, 2015, he performed the national anthem before the opening game of the World Series between the Kansas City Royals and the New York Mets, and last fall he also made it to Week 8 on ABC's "Dancing With the Stars" with his partner, Allison Holker.

Grammer got rave reviews, including a standing ovation and straight 10s from the judges after they danced "Good Mornin'" from "Singin' in the Rain."

"I actually danced with Gene Kelly, and I'd be happy to dance with you any time," said guest judge Olivia Newton-John, who worked with the legendary dancer in 1980's "Xanadu."

Grammer even made a splash last Nov. 24 on the finale getting to perform his latest single, "Good To Be Alive (Hallelujah)."

Grammer said pouring himself into "Dancing With the Stars" was a good thing as he had just lost his mom.

"It was a cool thing to do because it was so intense and it felt like the right thing to do as I had just lost my mom about a year ago, and I got to do the whole thing in her honor," Grammer said. "So personally it was really sweet to be able to do it. I also know some people had heard my music and had hummed my music but didn't really know my name so that was a really good thing too."

And all of that intense dancing has definitely upped Grammer's stage game.

"For me when you do those intense movements for that long you are more than ready to do more movement on stage," Grammer said. "Now, we don't do any ballroom, but we do so some cool Motown moves, and I think that is really entertaining in parts."



If you go

WHAT: Multi-platinum recording artists Gavin Degraw and Andy Grammer are performing live in concert

along with special guest Wrabel.

WHERE: The Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center, 925 4th Ave., Huntington.

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 21.

GET TIX: Tickets for Gavin Degraw and Andy Grammer with special guest Wrabel are \$73.55, \$57.50, \$46.80 and \$30.75. Contact the Marshall Artists Series Box Office at 304-696-6656 or order tickets online at Ticketmaster.com. You can also visit the box office located in the Joan C. Edwards Playhouse on the Marshall University campus. Box office hours are noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

SPONSORS: Gavin Degraw and Andy Grammer are sponsored by Student Activities, City National Bank, ZMM Architects, Glockner Auto, Ransbottom Law Office, Dr. Jeff and Mrs. Brooke Leaberry, Jeff and Amber Biedeman, KEE 100, WSAZ, The Herald Dispatch, Marshall University and The Marshall Artists Series.

ON THE WEB: Go online at www.marshall.edu/muart and on Twitter @muarter.

ON DECK @ MAS:

n The Fall International Film Festival will take place over four days - Oct. 27-30 - at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center. Featured films include: "Mustang" (Turkey); "Prescription Thugs" (USA); "The Lady in The Van" (UK); "VIVA" (Cuba); "A War" (Denmark); and "The Last Diamond" (France). Tickets are \$8 per film.

n Making a stop on its 20th anniversary tour, the smash hit Broadway phenomenon "Rent" returns to the stage of the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10. Tickets are: \$94.95, \$78.90, \$68.20 and \$61.78.



n Direct from South Africa, The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir comes to the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17. Tickets are \$68.20, \$52.15, \$36.10 and \$26.47.

n Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra present Big Band Holidays at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8, at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center. Tickets are \$84.25, \$73.55, \$62.85 and \$52.15.

Welcome to the discussion.

Keep it Clean. Please avoid obscene, vulgar, lewd, racist or sexually-oriented language.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CAPS LOCK.

Don't Threaten. Threats of harming another person will not be tolerated.

Be Truthful. Don't knowingly lie about anyone or anything.

Be Nice. No racism, sexism or any sort of -ism that is degrading to another person.

Be Proactive. Use the 'Report' link on each comment to let us know of abusive posts.

Share with Us. We'd love to hear eyewitness accounts, the history behind an article.

