



Charlie Craig

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THE FINE LINE

with Lesa Fine

CHAD BRADFORD "Cornbread Fed" www.chadbradford.com

Portions of this article pertain to Songwriter Charlie Craig

For decades, Alabama has graced the music industry with some amazingly talented artists from all genres. Studios such as FAME and Muscle Shoals Sound are well known words to the music industry and it's vocabulary. Chad Bradford of Hatton, Alabama is no exception to the talent that has come from the Shoals and I'm sure that his name will soon be within the spectrum of that vocabulary amongst the great artists of country music. Chad was influenced by gospel, country and the Shoals R&B sounds since he was born. The wonderful combination of those sounds apparently in his blood, are heavily reflected in the music he performs.

Chad Bradford - Acoustic Guitar/Lead Vocals
John O'mary - Lead Guitarist/Vocalist
Jackie Blevins - Drums/Vocalist
Quinn Messer - Bass/Vocalist
Jeff Sanford - Keyboard/Vocalist

Chad started out in his music career by playing every venue that would allow him to sing. He even sang at karaoke nights, won first place in the national talent contest sponsored by Jimmy Dean, which was a big plus for Chad as that is where he was heard by Rodney Hall (FAME Publishing).

Chad took a break from music and pursued a medical degree from the University of Alabama in Birmingham, where he received his Bachelors in Medical Tech. Shortly after graduating, Walt Aldridge gave Chad his first shot in the studio. Chad moved to Nashville in 2000, he remained there making contacts while gaining a closer viewpoint and perspective on the country music industry. He moved back to his hometown of Hatton and shortly after moving home, a friend of Chad's was down in Spring Hill, Florida working on a computer for the JD Jam Music offices. Chad's friend, wearing a t-shirt promoting Chad, was questioned by Joe Danna, president of the label about the artist on the shirt. Chad's friend quickly told Joe all about his buddy and Chad later sent Danna a CD of his work. Joe was taken by Chad's talent and a couple of days later he flew Chad down to the studios to talk a bit more about his career. Within two weeks, Chad was signed to the JD Jam label. An ambitious and motivated artist was signed with a label and on the fast track to his music career.



In speaking with Joe Danna, he is thrilled to have Chad join the JD Jam Records family, and stated that Chad is a pleasure to work with. Joe has some great things in store for Chad and is busy with plans for the new year. Danna also informs me that Chad has just completed filming for WE tv. and Pilgrim Films, Inc. Chad performed "Cornbread Fed" and his next single release "He Still Draws Them Together" for the show "Girl Meets Cowboy", which will be aired on the shows 6th and final episode of the series on November 18th, 2007 at 10:00pm eastern

(9:00pm central) on the WE channel. Danna also states Chad is currently on tour performing 115 shows in 214 days. It will take him through the state of Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Florida, Missouri, Wyoming, Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, Georgia, Montana and Tennessee.

Chad's self titled debut album "He Still Draws Them Together" was produced by one of Nashville's finest, Charlie Craig. Recognize the name? No? Then you need to catch up on a little homework. Charlie's songwriting and producing talents is second to none. Charlie has written and produced for Johnny Cash, Alan Jackson, Randy Travis, Dolly Parton and the list goes on. Charlie states he has been familiar with Joe Danna for the past six years or so. Charlie felt Danna was a great promoter, had integrity and was planning some exciting things for Chad's career. He said they produced the CD in about three segments and said Chad was very easy to work with in the studio. He was very open to suggestions. We spoke a bit about Chad and his attributes on stage as a performer. Charlie's reply was that Chad was a "handsome young man and that surely doesn't hurt him on stage. He has a good sound and a good shot" in the music business.

Ricky Pierce, songwriter and musician from the Doghouse Rose band also had a hand in Chad's new CD. Pierce and Tom Glasgow co-wrote "Cornbread Fed", which was then sent to Chad for a bridge according to Pierce, and the song was complete. Pierce states the lyrics in the song are in fact based on a true story regarding the high school prom queen shooting a 9 point buck. Pierce also had very positive things to say about Chad. Amongst those comments, "Chad is a great performer", "he has a great sound", he then added, "you know you write a song, and think, hey that's a good song, then Chad records it and it's a great song". Pierce feels the JD Jam label has a sure bet on their hands.



We touched on the subject of his new video "He Still Draws Them Together" filmed at Hatton Elementary School, which Chad attended as a child. Mrs. Jones, a teacher at Hatton and seventeen children from the school are also in the video. The video is a very touching piece of work. It's about a little boy whose parents are divorced. The school was so excited to participate and help with the video and there will be a special performance on December 18th 2007 at 1 p.m. to honor the video and the school for their participation on the project. There will be a no entry fee for the event. The video will be on sale with portions of the proceeds going back to the school. The performance will be a great opportunity for the community to see their hometown star for free. Chad will be working on his next video "Cornbread Fed" soon and it is slated for a release in early 2008.

I discussed an overseas tour with Joe Danna he states he is close with Ruth Landers (Landers Sisters) who is very interested in aiding Chad's career abroad. Things are in the works and plans are being laid for that venture presently. His music is catching on all over the world and he has sold CD's to fans in Europe, France, Hawaii and even in Ireland. So a 2008 tour abroad is a huge possibility and something his team is working diligently to make a tour possible.

What is a typical day off for Chad like? "Well, of course I rest, answer emails and I like to answer all of them personally. I love to hunt and deer season opens soon and of course I fish". He enjoys the outdoors very much and is just a typical Southern country boy. His favorite meal would be "pinto beans, onions, fried potatoes and cornbread". Joe Danna had to add a bit of his personal opinion on the dinner subject and quickly stated that Chad's family are some of the finest people he had ever met. Chad's Mother "Ruby" is "a phenomenal cook", Danna adds with a giggle. "He gains 10 pounds on every visit", there is a short pause and Danna said, "I try to make it up there about every two weeks just for her cooking". I could tell he was thinking about Miss Ruby dishing out the food on the Bradford family table. Kudos to you Mrs. Bradford, that's a sure bet way to get Chad home when you are missing him, although you may have to set up a cot in the back room for Joe. As far as Mr. Bradford, well Chad's father Gerald was a bit resistant in the beginning of Chad's interest in the music industry. He really wanted to see him pursue a medical career, although I understand after speaking to his son in depth, Mr. Bradford has changed his mind a little and Chad's intentions are to have his father (who will be retiring soon) join him on the road to help him with his personal affairs. I'm sure his assistance will be a wonderful life experience for both of them. I wish you both a ton of fun as father and son on the road!

Chad informed me during the interview that he had recently loaded over 3000 songs on his new ipod, which includes artists from Led Zeplin to George Jones and of course a little Lynard Skynard and The Temptations were in the mix. We also spoke of icon influences in Chad's life. Elvis was the major icon for Chad and he proudly informed me that he has "just about every video and DVD Elvis has made or that has been produced".

He's a huge fan. He also mentioned Merle Haggard "a great songwriter and singer" as well, Alan Jackson whom Bradford has huge respect for, as Jackson stayed with his vision and succeeded with his efforts. We spoke about him meeting Big & Rich at a North Dakota state fair, where the popular duo played as the headliner band for the evening. Chad spoke of how fun it was that John Rich sat in with Chad and the band on stage. Chad feels they are wonderful artists. In my opinion, this only further shows the strong connection between artists large and small in the industry and how they can be such a positive influence on each other in many ways. Something I'm finding is quite common in the Country music family is this friendliness amongst the artists. I view the folks in country music world to be most helpful to others usually, lending a neighborly hand or positive word, especially to those entering into the industry.

Any pointers to a new artist? "Play anywhere that will allow you to perform, karaoke bars, contests, hole in the walls, stages small to huge. If they will listen, then play". He said that in his earlier years with the Jimmy Dean Contest he gained a lot of confidence. Luckily, Rodney Hall was there, liked his sound and introduced him to Walt Aldridge, a huge influence in the music industry in the Shoals area. "You never know who will be there listening and who may connect you up with people." The Jimmy Dean contest and getting the connection with Aldridge was a perfect example of that.

I personally found Chad Bradford to be a very caring man, very much a gentleman, he believes in giving back through his music for those in need and to those who have helped him. I think his small town upbringing has a lot to do with the level of respect he seems to have about others and the industry. This young man doesn't appear to be forgetting where he came from, nor the people (no matter how small or large) who helped him get to this point in his career. One thing I did want to mention before the conclusion of the article is to make note of a very worthwhile project. The Chad Bradford Foundation is in the works, the foundation's first effort and project will be aiding veterans and soldiers from the Iraq war. Chad believes in charitable organizations and all they do. In his opinion, it is so important to assist where it is needed. His foundation will prove to be a great aid in many ways, as well as for the soldiers returning from Iraq and reconnecting with their families and friends.



I will say that Chad has his head and heart in the right place. Great people behind him, wonderful things being said about his work, his music is gaining accolades of reception with the fans and CD sales are going well. With hard work, effort and the massive support of his fans he seems to have on his side, chances are very good to make that onward climb.

To end this article, I would like to share something Charlie Craig said to me that has become my daily mantra of sorts. Something we should always remember as we walk the walk to success in any career. "To be successful, you have to surround yourself with successful people". Good advice, from a very knowledgeable man in the industry. I feel honored and blessed to have met such wonderful people during this interview and I find that I have already began using the advice from Charlie; surrounding myself with just that, successful people.

Wishing all the artists out there tons of devoted fans, a blessed label, an insightful producer and promotion team, and their successful spot in the music industry they have earned.

Request Chad's music through your local radio stations to show your support and purchase his music at the following locations: ChadBradford.com, CDBaby and your local Wal Mart.

Until next time...Lesa Fine