

The Gordons to play bluegrass festival

BY VINCE HOFFARD
THE SOUTHERN

Gary and Roberta Gordon just keep getting better

The recently released "Time Will Tell Our Story" compact disc by the Perry County husband and wife duo is packed with 14 solid cuts. It's a solid chain with no weak links.

The material tackles taboo subjects. The music is very intense and personal.

"This is where we are now," says Gary Gordon in the liner notes. "There is a story behind each song inspired by people in our life, our experiences both happy and sad."

The Gordons have steadily improved musically since they began recording together in 1976.

The quality of their live performances have earned them a spot in the popular Salem Bluegrass Festival.

The Gordons are the featured act tonight at the three-day event. The legendary Ralph Stanley will headline Saturday's show.

Historians record past events with books. Songwriters take the same circumstances, condense it into three minutes and document the same memories with vivid musical expression.

A perfect example is "Cottonmill." You can feel the pain in Roberta's voice as she sings about the false hopes and dreams of migrant workers in American sweat shops and the cruelty of child labor.

The vocals are haunting when she harmonizes with the tune's writer Holly Tashian. Katsuyuki Miyazaki adds a perfect touch of mandolin.

Gary Gordon personally wrote eight of the songs. Roberta contributed one, as did son Noah Gordon, a very successful country songwriter now living in Franklin, Tn., a suburb of Nashville.

The best cut on the album is "Better Place." Gary Gordon wrote the lyrics and also provides lead vocals. He tackles the problem of a family's name being forever scarred by the action of a single individual.

Lines like "when you're a little kid, it's hard to understand; why people judge



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a family by the deeds of just one man" and "the roads have took me far away and there's one thing I found, strangers treat you better than the folks in my home town" are powerful.

There are definite overtones of faith and Christian beliefs woven into many of the songs. Roberta sings of the path a son must follow to "cross over" and meet his mother in heaven in "Follow Mother Home."

Throughout the entire recording, the instrumentation is clear and uncluttered.

The lyrics are included in the liner notes, but are not needed because the vocals on

every song are extremely clear and easily identifiable.

Nearly three decades of performing bluegrass has given The Gordons great ears. They produced the project using a perfect amount of mandolin, banjo, and fiddle on each cut.

The album is available on Blueberry Hill Records.

When not playing on the road or overseas, The Gordons are still owners-operators of Alligator Music in Sparta. The new recording is available at live performances by The Gordons. To acquire a copy, call Alligator Music at 618-443-5051 or e-mail Gary Gordon at garybluegrass@yahoo.com.

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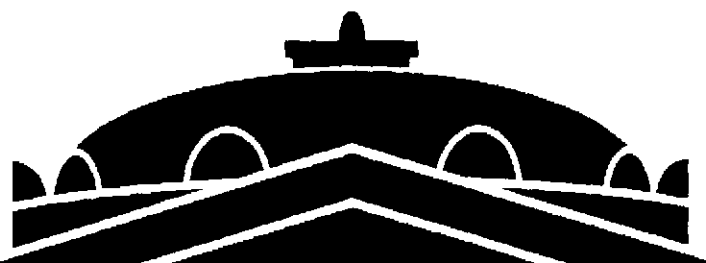
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