

SPOTLIGHT



David McClester

THE GREENCARDS

A devoted fan following helped inspire and finance a new album, brick by brick

Carl Miner, Tyler Andal, Carol Young, Kym Warner

BEING A BLUEGRASS BAND IN Australia isn't exactly a lucrative profession. Ask the Greencards' mandolin player Kym Warner how they dealt with that dilemma, and he offers an obvious answer. "Well, we're here, aren't we?" In this case, "here" is Nashville, where Warner and Greencards co-founder, singer and bassist Carol Young, have chosen to call home for the last several years. It's also where we find the amiable Aussie only days before embarking on a series of summer-festival dates touting *The Brick Album*, the band's fifth and latest release.

The new album is characteristically diverse, blurring barriers between contemporary and traditional sounds. "Luckily, we have a fan base that doesn't require us to fit into any particular genre," Warner

says. "At the same time, we tried to put together a collection of material that sounds unified. Hopefully that's what we achieved."

The Greencards are no strangers to achievement. Warner's dad Trey was a renowned bluegrass guitarist, and he followed in those footsteps by netting the Australian National Bluegrass Mandolin Championship trophy four years running. In 2003 Warner and fellow bluegrass prodigy Young made the move to America, where they formed the Greencards in Austin with fiddler Eamon McLoughlin. He left in 2009, after the group's move to Nashville.

The Brick Album features the group's newest recruits, award-winning guitarist Carl Miner and fiddle virtuoso Tyler Andal, as well as guest appearances from vets Sam Bush and Vince Gill. It also marks the band's first

entirely independent offering. Fans financed the album and in return got to see their names inscribed on the bricks pictured on the album sleeve. "When we launched the campaign, we didn't know if anyone was actually going to jump on it," Warner admits. "That was the scariest part. But fortunately, people really got behind it."

Making its new music in such an innovative fashion has brought the band satisfaction on several levels. "It's great that we could acknowledge our fans' role in making this record," Warner says. "It's also quite humbling. These people donated their money before they even heard the music. We had this thing hanging over us. We thought, 'Wow, we better come up with something good!' And that's what we set out to do."

—Lee Zimmerman

COLBIE CAILLAT | WEIRD AL | JOSS STONE | MARC BROUSSARD

M
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Kentucky fried

DEF LEPPARD
Rock of ages

BÉLA FLECK
Beyond banjo

JOURNEY
A classic-rock giant returns to glory in the 21st century

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INSIDE GLEE
GO TO 11