

Billboard

COVERING COUNTRY FROM MUSIC CITY (615) — CHUCK DAUPHIN

Lady Antebellum Reach Live Milestone, Talk Next Album & Meeting Springsteen

by Chuck Dauphin, Nashville | October 01, 2012



Lady Antebellum has been a force on the charts since their 2008 debut single "Love Don't Live Here Anymore," but according to the trio's Charles Kelley, 2012 was definitely a year where they felt that they took their career to the highest level yet. The Capitol Nashville act celebrated a year on the road as a headlining act — selling over one million tickets in eleven countries, all during an eleven month span.

"This has definitely been our year to take the tour to the next level for us in our career," Kelley told *Billboard* in an exclusive interview. "We've had a lot of success selling records, and that's all been great, but I don't think we truly felt like we had made it as artists until people came out to the shows. I think that's where the rubber hit the road as an artist, putting butts in the seats. It's been a pretty overwhelming year for us in terms of excitement to see the fans filling up these arenas. We didn't know what to expect because we've always been opening for people. It was exciting, and got us thinking about the next record and what songs will translate to a live audience, and making the album a lot more live song driven."

The group's Hillary Scott said it was a year to remember for the CMA nominees, as they sold out shows here and abroad in such places as Radio City Music Hall, Chicago and Frankfurt. Another highlight was selling out the Staples Center in Los Angeles, as they had a little bit of history there.

"All of the shows were special, but being able to sell out the Staples Center — the room where we were honored to take home the Grammys, and to think about what a milestone that is in any artists' career to sell out places and big and famous as those places. Then, to take it overseas into Europe. We never dreamed that we would be doing this so early in our career."

Another thing they are thankful for was the examples that were shown to them by the acts they opened for. Dave Haywood says they tried to take what they learned and apply a "little bit from each of them."

"We started off opening for Martina McBride and had the chance to open for Kenny Chesney, Jason Aldean, Tim McGraw, and Keith Urban," Haywood said. "I feel there are little moments within our show that are inspired by some of those. I remember that Keith Urban's acoustic moments during his show was one of our favorites to watch. We tried to emulate parts of those. When you watch Jason Aldean and how high energy he is, the way he enters his show, he runs straight out. We picked up those things and tried to apply them to our show as well."

They definitely tried to pick up as many tips as possible when meeting Bruce Springsteen at one of their European dates. Scott admits she was quite nervous that night.

"I was a nervous wreck," she admits. "We've had the opportunity to meet a lot of people we look up to and admire and who have influenced us in our careers. There have only been a few times where I have been so nervous, but he has this way of putting you at ease."

Next up for the trio is their first full-length Christmas CD, "On This Winter's Night," which hits stores on October 22. Haywood said recording an album of such standards is a tough process. "Picking songs for the album was a fun challenge. We made a list of our favorite Christmas songs, and there were a couple that each of us were passionate about. Picking songs that have such classic arrangements is tough, but there were a couple that we tried to put our own spin on it."

by *Taboola*