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## KIP MOORE ISN'T CHASING ANYTHING, BUT COMMERCIAL SUCCESS IS PRETTY COOL FOR THE COUNTRY SINGER



It's been some time now since [Kip Moore](#) had a smash single on country radio. But then again, commercial success never really mattered all that much to him. "I'm never chasing anything," said the Georgia-raised singer, whose sound was always a bit more Southern rock than traditional country and who at heart considers himself a classic singer-songwriter. "We live in a plastic generation," the 38-year old added. "Everybody is just trying to latch on: whenever something is popular everyone is just trying to do that. But I've always just trusted my gut. It's nice knowing that I've never sold out at any point in my career and I've stayed authentic in my feelings and my artistry."

Calling from his adopted hometown of Nashville, Moore said he's never felt more fulfilled than he does at this moment in the near-decade since he broke out with his sole Number One single, and arguably his most country-pop song to date, 2011's "Somethin' 'Bout A Truck." That's because the singer is set to kick off the second leg of his wildly successful "Room to Spare Acoustic Tour" at the Copernicus Center on Thursday behind last year's unplugged album of the same name.

“And I’ll tell ya, I go out onstage every night and I’m so relaxed,” Moore explained of an acoustic show that sees him playing songs across his entire discography albeit in a stripped-down fashion. “I’m playing these songs the way they originated and there’s such a peace in that for me. It’s the same way it felt when I was making and creating these songs. There’s no lights and no bells and whistles. It’s all about the music.”

It helps, Moore admitted, that his fanbase is along for the ride. The musicians said so dedicated are his fans that following his least successful album to date, 2015’s “Wild Ones,” which arrived in the wake of his more pop-friendly debut, 2012’s “Up All Night,” rather than see his audience dwindle his listenership only became more rabid. To be a Kip Moore fan then suddenly became a marker of your having a certain refinement in your country-music taste.

“There’s a big difference between a smoke-and-mirrors fanbase that’s predicated solely on how well you’re doing commercially at that moment and a fanbase like mine that’s truly there for the music,” Moore offered by way of explanation. “Nothing else.” To that end, for the three years leading up to “Room To Spare,” Moore had been inviting 150 fans every night to attend a V.I.P. acoustic gig before each of his gigs if only to present some of his more lyrically heavy songs in their original form. “And in these pre-show acoustic sets, first of all, it’s always sold out, and I could tell the fans were really craving that kind of thing. I’d been seeing that for so many years. And every time I’d do it one of the questions I’d always get from the crowd was, “When are you going to make an acoustic record?””

Last year, following the release of “Slowheart,” his third LP and most critically acclaimed album yet, Moore decided it was time to convince his record label to green light an acoustic LP. They did, and the singer now said he couldn’t be more thrilled he did. “Because it gives me a whole different feel when I play acoustic,” he said. “As an artist you have to know whether your music is going to translate acoustically. Is there going to be a maturity to the melodies and the lyrics? I’ve always felt like my records lent themselves to acoustic versions of the songs. A lot of these songs have a lot of meat on the bone. I’d just been itching to play them this way.

“The thing about an acoustic show is you have nothing to hide behind,” he added before noting how several “Slowheart” songs including “Sunburn” and “Bittersweet Company,” carry more emotional weight when played acoustic. “Your song is completely exposed,” Moore continued. “And if your song is a turd everybody is gonna know it. Your songs have to stand up. I love that.”

So energized is Moore from his acoustic endeavor that he’s nearly finished with his next LP. “I think this is hands down the best thing I’ve ever done,” he said. “It’s the most stretching of my legs

musically. This is hands-down the most musically interesting, the most lyrically interesting and melodically interesting project that I've done to date."

And as he prepares to kick off his next round of acoustic shows, Moore admitted he feels nothing if not supremely pleased for where he sits in life. Having a tried-and-true fanbase like his, he noted, is reason alone to be feeling proud.

"Through all the ebbs and flows of commercial success the question you ask is are [the fans] showing up? Have you created something real and something tangible? Can you touch it? Can you feel it? I have that kind of fanbase. They're going to be with me for 20-30 years from now. It's not a fleeting thing. There's something to hang your hat on with that. And I've been able to rest my head on my pillow at night knowing I've built something that's true and lasting. That's what feels so special."