

Gretchen Peters – Bio

Gretchen Peters was born in Pelham Manor, New York on 14th November 1957, and grew up in Westchester County, New York along with her three siblings. Gretchen's father was a writer and producer, but aged eight her parents split up and Peters moved with her mother to Boulder, Colorado. Peters wrote her first song "Weeping Willow" with her sister, at the age of five. The following year, with help from her father, Peters began playing guitar, and by the age of fifteen was a regular performer in local Boulder clubs. At the age of nineteen Gretchen won the Boulder Music Weekend local music competition after submitting a tape of her songs. In 1983, while still resident in Colorado, Peters began visiting Nashville to check out the music scene. Gretchen's daughter was born in 1985, and in 1988 Gretchen, young Caitlin and her husband, Green Daniel, moved to Nashville where she scored a writing deal, within three months of arriving in Tennessee, with the Oak Ridge Boys Silverline/Goldline Music.

Gretchen has, in the past, acknowledged her songwriting influences as Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Gram Parsons, Emmylou Harris, Joni Mitchell, Bruce Springsteen, Dolly Parton and Leonard Cohen. Apart from Parton and Harris, the latter are mostly *song poets* and not Nashville establishment writers. Although she is thoroughly capable of penning a "*boy/girl, moon in June*" lyric, there's a literate thread to Peters' writing that marks her out as a non-typical Nashville scribe. In 1991, Randy Travis recorded Peters' "High Lonesome" and Lionel Cartwright cut "Susannah" as album tracks, the former was also the album title, while Larry Boone enjoyed a Top 40 hit with her "To Be With You."

In 1992 Peters signed a song publishing deal with Sony-Tree, and that year George Strait scored No.1 Country single with "Chill Of An Early Fall," a song Gretchen co-wrote with husband Green. The song later won ASCAP's "Country Award" and "# 1 Song Award." In the ensuing years, more hits followed. In 1992 "Golden Years" gave Holly Dunn a Top 60 Country song, and Martina McBride cut "When You Are Old," but the track was never issued as a single. In 1993 "Let That Pony Run" scored a # 5 single for Pam Tillis, and the following year Martina McBride enjoyed a # 5 single with "My Baby Loves Me," while Patricia Conroy took the song to # 1 in Canada. In 1995 Gretchen scored her first "*Song of the Year*" Grammy nomination for "Independence Day" which had been cut by Martina McBride and reached the Top 10 on the Country Chart. The song, which took Gretchen 18 months to complete, also won the CMA "Song of the Year." McBride and Bryan Adams shared the same manager, and that year Peters began working on songs with the Canadian rocker. Bonnie Raitt's live collection "**Road Tested**" [1995] featured the Adams/Peters co-write "Rock Steady."

Produced by Green Daniel, Imprint/Curb Records released Gretchen's debut solo disc "**The Secret Of Life**" [1996] and the guest musicians included Steve Earle, Raul Malo and Emmylou Harris. That year Peters received another "*Song of the Year*" Grammy nomination for "You Don't Even Know Who I Am" which Patty Loveless took to # 1 on the Country Chart. In 1995, the song won the NSAI "# 1 Award," CMA's "# 1 Song Award" and Sony's "Golden Tree Award." The UK only compilation "**Viva Americana**" [1997] included Peters' "Nobody's Girl" which has, to date, not appeared on any other recording. "When You Love Someone," performed by Bryan Adams, and co-written by the late Michael Kaman, Adams and Peters appeared on the soundtrack of the Sandra Bullock/Harry Connick Jr. movie "**Hope Floats**" [1998]. In 1998 Faith Hill's album "**Faith**" included "The Secret of Life" and the song peaked at # 4 on the singles chart, and made # 1 on the video chart. The Bryan Adams album "**On A Day Like Today**" [1998] featured seven co-writes with Gretchen.

The new millennium saw the arrival of Peters self-titled sophomore album, co-produced in this instance with her husband, and it was first issued in the UK and Europe on the independent Grapevine imprint. The album later surfaced in North America on Valley Entertainment. From the aforementioned album, Suzy Bogguss had previously covered the opening cut "Souvenirs." "Like Water into Wine" was covered by Patty Loveless, although on her reading, Loveless dropped the controversial closing verse. Never a conventional scribe, another album cut, "Picasso and Me," was penned from the viewpoint of Picasso's cat.

In 2003 Peters received a Golden Globe nomination for her musical contributions to the DreamWorks animated movie, "**Spirit : Stallion Of The Cimarron**" [2002]. "Here I Am" co-written by Gretchen and Bryan Adams was the first single to be released from the movie soundtrack in the Spring of 2002. Published in the summer of 2003, Susan Tucker's book "**The Secrets Of Songwriting**" [ISBN 1581152787, Allworth Press] featured a chapter on Gretchen. Based on interviews with songwriters,

those featured included Hugh Prestwood, Mike Reid and Allan Shamblin. Peters first two albums were reissued in Europe with one extra track each, by Curb, in late 2003. **“The Secret Of Life”** included the mega-hit “Independence Day,” while **“Gretchen Peters”** featured “I Saw Your Light.” Gretchen’s third solo album, **“Halcyon”** was released by Curb in late May 2004. The live Gretchen Peters CD **“Trio”** originally planned for release in late 2004, was released via Gretchen’s web site in early May 2005.

Curb Records UK issued **“Burnt Toast And Offerings”** in early April 2007 and this twelve song collection, recorded in Nashville, was produced by Gretchen and Patty Griffin collaborator, Doug Lancio. The album featured ten Peters penned originals, a co-write with David Mead [a New Yorker, he has recorded solo albums for RCA Victor and Nettwerk Records] and a cover of the Mercer/Arlen classic “One For My Baby.” **“Northern Lights”** was a Christmas song collection that merged Peters’ originals with well known seasonal numbers [“Coventry Carol” and “Silent Night”] and covers such as Gordon Lightfoot’s “Song For A Winter’s Night.”

Recorded in Austin, Texas over four days in June 2008, the album **“One To The Heart, One To The Head”** featuring Gretchen Peters with Tom Russell was released in early February 2009. In her January 2009 Newsletter, Peters’ described the fourteen track collection as a *“western mood piece.”* Opening with the Barry Walsh penned instrumental “North Platte,” which is later reprised, the dozen songs – all covers - included Russell’s new composition “Guadalupe.”

Discography :

Solo : **“The Secret of Life”** [1996] ; **“Gretchen Peters”** [2000] ; **“Halcyon”** [2004] ; **“Trio”** [2005] ;
“Burnt Toast And Offerings” [2007] ; **“Northern Lights”** [2008] :
with Tom Russell **“One To The Heart, One To The Head”** [2009] :

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