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Whisperin' Bill Anderson: An Unprecedented Life in Country Music (Music of the American South Ser.)

Bill Anderson

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Whisperin' Bill: An Unprecedented Life in Country Music presents a revealing portrait of Bill Anderson, one of the most prolific songwriters in the history of country music. Mega country music hits like "City Lights," (Ray Price), "Tips Of My Fingers," (Roy Clark, Eddy Arnold, Steve Wariner), "Once A Day," (Connie Smith), "Saginaw, Michigan," (Lefty Frizzell), and many more flowed from his pen, making him one of the most decorated songwriters in music history. But the iconic singer, songwriter, performer, and TV host came to a point in his career where he questioned if what he had to say mattered anymore. Music Row had changed, a new generation of artists and songwriters had transformed the genre, and the Country Music Hall of Fame member and fifty-year Grand Ole Opry star was no longer relevant. By 1990, he wasn't writing anymore. Bad investments left him teetering at bankruptcy's edge. His marriage was falling apart. And in Nashville, a music town where youth often carries the day, he was a museum piece—only seen as a nostalgia act, waving from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry. Anderson was only in his fifties when he assumed he had climbed all the mountains he was intended to scale. But in those moments plagued with self-doubt, little did he know, his most rewarding climb lie ahead. A follow-up to his 1989 autobiography, this honest and revealing book tells the story of a man with an unprecedented gift, holding on to it in order to share it.

Known as "Whisperin' Bill" to generations of fans for his soft vocalizations and spoken lyrics, Anderson is the only songwriter in country music history to have a song on the charts in each of the past seven consecutive decades. He has celebrated chart-topping success as a recording artist with eighty charting singles and thirty-seven Top Ten country hits, including "Still," "8 X 10", "I Love You Drops," and "Mama Sang A Song." A six-time Song of the Year Award-winner and BMI Icon Award recipient, Anderson has taken home many CMA and ACM Award trophies and garnered multiple GRAMMY nominations. His knack for the spoken word has also made him a successful television host, having starred on "The Bill Anderson Show," "Opry Backstage," "Country's Family Reunion," and others. Moreover, his multi-faceted success extends far beyond the country format with artists like James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Dean Martin, and Elvis Costello recording his songs. Today, thanks to the support of musical peers and a few famous friends who believed in him, Anderson continues to forge the path of lyrical integrity in music, harnessing his ability to craft a song that tells a familiar story, grabs you by the heart and moves you. Modern day examples include "Whiskey Lullaby" (Brad Paisley & Allison Krauss), "Give It Away" (George Strait), "A Lot of Things Different" (Kenny Chesney), and "Which Bridge to Cross" (Vince Gill).

A product of a long-gone Nashville, Anderson worked to reinvent himself, and this biography documents Anderson's fifty-plus-year career—a career he once thought unattainable. Richly illustrated with black-and-white photos of Anderson interacting with the superstars of American music, including such legends as Patsy Cline, Vince Gill, and Steve Wariner, this book highlights Anderson's trajectory in the business and his

influence on the past, present, and future of this dynamic genre.

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