



Joe Biography - *DoubleBack: The Evolution of R&B*

When Joe surveyed the landscape of modern R&B, the award-winning artist didn't necessarily like much of what he saw. So with *DoubleBack: The Evolution of R&B*, the accomplished singer-songwriter-producer brings the music he loves back to its roots.

"I'm going back to that old school feel, back to the elegance and class of what R&B represented back in the day," Joe explains of his tenth studio album. "You look at the pictures from that era and they represent something very stoic. They're beautiful photos, beautiful moments, beautiful memories. I want to get back to the beginnings of it, the humbleness of it, the way it was before with real stars, real celebrities, real entertainers who actually wrote a lot of their music and performed it with great intensity and passion. That's what the essence of *The Evolution of R&B* is all about."

Classic R&B also told memorable stories, something Joe is keenly aware of. That's why *DoubleBack: The Evolution of R&B* follows Joe through his search for true love.

Joe kicks his new LP off with the gorgeous "I'd Rather Have A Love." Accented by soothing guitar, finger snaps and lush harmonizing, the song traces the evolution of a man who goes from woman to woman into a man who realizes the power, joy and value of finding a woman he loves.

As the album progresses, though, Joe takes a number of detours. On "Magic City," for instance, he looks for love in all the wrong places. With the eyebrow-raising "Baby," he details how he's in love with two women at the same time.

Then there's "Mary Jane," a mid-tempo tune that serves as a metaphor for having someone that releases all the stress and pressure of life. Showing the duality of life, he details the other side of a relationship on "Walk Away," where he deals with the haters in his realm.

Elsewhere, Joe finds his match on "Love And Sex," an impassioned duet with Fantasia. Here, the two talented singers go back and forth about the wide range of emotions they're feeling toward one another. "We're going to town," Joe says. "We're emulating the feelings and the emotions of the difference between love and sex. It's very classic and feels like something you've heard before. It has beautiful, touching lyrics and a beautiful story, too."

Beyond the rich storylines and dynamic storytelling, what makes *DoubleBack: The Evolution of R&B* remarkable is that Joe played all the instruments on the tracks he produced. In addition to having a more intimate relationship with the music, Joe decided to play his own bass, drums, guitar, and piano to show other artists how live instrumentation brings an extra element to music.

"I think it's important the younger generation sees more of that," he explains. "They rely too much on just mechanical things, like synthesizers, beat machines. Picking up and using an instrument can change the whole mood of everything. Anytime I play around the house or on stage, it's a completely different vibe,

a different zone that I'm in. It's really nice to expand yourself if you're an artist, to branch out and be more than just a singer and a dancer."

Kedar Massenburg of Massenburg Media adds, "There's a resurgence of real R&B and Soul music as evidence by the new talent that is out there, and Joe although a 90's star is a part of that evolution which has always kept him current and relevant musically."

Growing up in the rural South, Joe Thomas was in a dramatically different zone than the one he currently occupies. He often went on the road with his father, a traveling evangelist. As he followed his father, Joe regularly carried a guitar with him and would play a piano whenever he came across one.

Even though his parents were poor, they instilled a strong set of values in their children. "I've been blessed to have the right foundation, the right fabric," Joe says. "My parents were always focused on their kids doing the right thing and making sure we did something with our lives. I credit my success to my parents."

Joe got his initial musical training in church, developing his singing and his proficiency with the guitar there. After graduating from high school, he moved to New Jersey to pursue a musical career. When he started making inroads in the mid-1990s, his background provided Joe with a different perspective, one that made his earnest, respectful and mature brand of R&B distinctive. It was respectful toward women and focused on making a true, emotional connection with a woman rather than simply a physical one.

"The importance of manners was something that was always stressed in our family, being the son of two preachers," he explains. "So was being loyal, faithful and committed. It was part of my parents' message, especially my mother."

By the 2000s, Joe had become one of R&B's most accomplished and popular singers. Such singles as "All The Things (Your Man Won't Do)," "All That I Am," "No One Comes Close" and "I Wanna Know" established Joe as a bona fide hitmaker who sold more than 10 million albums worldwide. Moreover, his work with Mariah Carey ("Thank God I Found You"), Big Pun ("Still Not A Player") and G-Unit ("Wanna Get To Know You"), shows that Joe is a much sought-after collaborator with some of music's biggest and best artists.

As Joe became an R&B superstar, his status around the world also grew. He developed loyal fans throughout the globe and regularly performs in Japan, Australia, Europe and Africa, in addition to North America.

Now that he's provided an elegant, gentlemanly sonic ride with *DoubleBack: The Evolution of R&B*, Joe looks forward to the next phase of his still-flourishing career.

"This is a new beginning for me," he says. "I've put out 10 albums in 20 years. I'm starting over now. This is the new chapter. I'm hopefully on to a lot of bigger and better things."

The *Evolution* continues.