

For Sylvia, being an artist is not only about singing. It's also about listening deeply: to herself, to others, and to the stories that want to be told. That's what first led her to discover her love of music as a child and, subsequently, to enjoy more than two decades of a successful and multifaceted career as a singer and songwriter. But listening is also what brought Sylvia to a crossroads in 2002, when she heard a new call and made the conscious choice to pivot away from music. Since then, Sylvia has enjoyed a successful second career as a certified life and career coach, employing her long-held personal values of compassion, curiosity, and non-judgment to help business executives, artists of all genres, small business owners, and non-profit organizations realize productive self-discovery.

Yet throughout this time, Sylvia never stopped evolving and engaging in her own process of self-discovery as an artist. As a result, this fall she will release *It's All in the Family*, her first album in 14 years and the first ever on which she is a co-writer on the majority of songs. Throughout the album, Sylvia touches on the choices, challenges, and turns in the road that have brought her to where she stands today and delivers her most personal material to date, combining her skill as a vocalist with her heart as a storyteller.

*It's All In The Family* is brimming with songs that evoke precise places, times, and emotions. Whether it's the clawhammer banjo and old-time music influence on the opening track, "Every Time a Train Goes By," or the Irish tin whistle and strong imagery on "Immigrant Shoes," listeners are invited into dozens of specific, formative, and intimate moments in the lives of Sylvia and her family. But like all great stories, *It's All In The Family* doesn't feel limited to the bounds of its particular characters, images, and events. Each song touches and builds on a collection of themes that connects the listener with that which is universal.

Perhaps the most pervasive theme on the album is that of family. On the title track, "All in the Family," one of four songs co-written with John Mock and Thom Schuyler, Sylvia illuminates both the positive and painful ways we are bound to family with a series of simple yet striking images: a wedding dress worn by three generations, a family recipe handed down, a mother protecting her children from hardship, and a family member lost too soon to alcoholism. On "Somebody's Daughter," she offers a gentle but compelling reminder that the tenderness we feel for those we love most is neither illusion nor weakness; the ties of love that bind us to our parents and our children are real, and are in fact the very same ones that connect us to our broader human family.

On "Cumberland Rose" and "Hope's Too Hard," two songs specifically selected by Sylvia for the album because of their resonance with its themes, she explores another ubiquitous facet of the human experience – the inevitability of loss and grief and the question of how to face them. While the album doesn't offer a clear-cut, facile answer, it consistently bears witness to the transformative power of acknowledging our wounds, facing our fears, and accepting our past. Sylvia shows that surrendering to what is beyond our control is not the same thing as giving up – it takes profound courage and strength, and it's necessary in order to realize new possibilities.

As Sylvia recounts these moving stories that span generations, the interplay between the past, present, and future emerges as another strong motif. Sylvia fully acknowledges the irrevocable influence of the past; "Grandpa Kirby Runnin' the Hounds" features her grandfather's actual fiddle and banjo in a warm callback to the barn dances he played at in the early 1900s. But at the same time that she honors her roots, she boldly celebrates the beauty of the present and potential of the future. In "Leave the Past in the Past" and "I Didn't Know What I Was Missing," two of four collaborations with Bobby Tomberlin, she offers metaphors that illustrate what it would look like to physically overcome that which holds us back. Whether it's clearing all the

chairs from the kitchen to make room to dance or climbing a mountain to gain a new perspective from the top, through these songs we experience what it feels like not to regret or dismiss the past, but to let it go in order to make room for what is coming next. In several songs, including the powerful closing track “Do Not Cry For Me,” Sylvia embodies the voice of someone who is looking back with a deep sense of peace, gratitude, and all-encompassing love that will transcend time.

Just as Sylvia speaks from many different perspectives and with many different voices from track to track – yet ultimately delivers an album with strong, resounding lyrical themes – a range of musical styles on the album produces a cohesive sound that defies neat categorization. The collaborations on the album – between co-producers Sylvia and John Mock, between co-writers, and between the cadre of other exceptional musicians featured on each track – truly feel organic, with distinct influences of folk, country, bluegrass, classical, and Irish music coming together naturally to produce something that feels both new and deeply rooted in tradition.