DIXIE CHICKS

THEY STARTED OUT ON A STREET CORNER AND TOOK COUNTRY MUSIC TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH

BY BONNIE RAITT PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLEN VON UNWERTH

BONNIE RAITT: **This is amazing, isn't it?**

MARTIE SEIDEL: Hi, Bonnie. Thanks for doing this.

BR: **Finally somebody's gotten us together in the same place other than the Grammys. Listen, I love your new record, *Home* [Open Wide/Monuments/Columbia]. It's been a long time coming [the trio have been in a protracted legal battle over royalties with Sony for the past few years], but I'm so glad you did this kind of bluegrass record!**

NATALIE MAINES: Really? Thanks!

BR: **It's great to see you stretch out on *Home*.**

MS: You know, at the time we left our label, all of us moved back to Texas—well, Emily never left. It felt great to get into the studio and do something without even thinking about what anybody at the label [would say]. It all just came from our hearts. Emily and I grew up around bluegrass—it's in us. It had to come out eventually.

BR: **It's interesting what effect adversity in the music business has on people. You're almost forged in the fire of how pissed off you can get, and it has a defining effect that gets you even closer to yourself.**

NM: I'm not sure we'll ever get to make an album this freeing again. At first we thought we were making demos. There was no question about "How many singles do we have? Is radio going to play this?" Luckily, it turned out that we still made a pretty mainstream sound and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* happened when we were making this, and that opened doors for an album like ours.

BR: **The success of the *O Brother* soundtrack is the most exciting thing in the music business. It kicks everybody's ass when people don't get any radio airplay and they still sell. Do you think country radio changed when you blasted onto the scene, in terms of how traditional the music could be?**

NM: People have credited us with that, but I'm still disappointed in our genre. I wish I felt like we had made a dent in what country music could sound like. I think it's more formulaic than ever.

EMILY ROBISON: It's pretty desperate for new music right now.

NM: The only thing I can see possibly saving it is this satellite radio, because then there will be good programming and people can choose. When satellite radio takes off, people could be influenced by so much other music.

BR: **How was that [VH1] *Divas* show?**

NM: A lot of fun. We love Las Vegas. You know, so often we perform for television audiences and industry awards shows. It just stunned me because there were fans in this audience, and when we walked out, we got a standing ovation.

BR: **I love that Stevie Nicks sang "Landslide" with you on that show. I just can't wait to sit in and play with you.**

MS: We can't wait, either! Someday it'll happen.

BR: **A couple of years ago, when none of us had new albums to promote, Shawn Colvin, Jackson Browne, Bruce Hornsby and David Lindley and I decided to go out together for six weeks as a band.**

NM: That's awesome.

MS: You can win awards and sell out tours, but to keep us going creatively, that kind of thing is the ultimate.

BR: **So, can you guys walk around Austin without getting too bugged by fans?**

NM: The great part about living in Austin is that people are so used to seeing people in the music business that it doesn't phase them. When I lived in Nashville I definitely felt like the tourists were everywhere, even in the supermarket. You just realize, "OK, chain restaurants are out. I can't go to Chili's."

ER: For me it's not so much like, "Oh, will I get recognized?" It's feeling like you have to look a certain way if you decide to go out, as opposed to just being able to be as scum bag as you want.

BR: **How is it for you guys keeping relationships together when you're traveling? Is it easier now that you're married?**

NM: Well, two out of the three of us have been divorced, so that's how we're doing it. But now all three of us have finally found our soul mates. And I'm old-fashioned in that I believe men should be the breadwinners. I see it as a natural instinct for a man to want to feel like he's making the way for his family. So it's all a balancing act.

BR: **I want to thank you guys for cutting "Give It Up Or Let Me Go" [a song written by Raitt in 1972] on *Wide Open Spaces*. I have this guitar program for girls in the inner cities, and we were able to open up 40 more clubs with the money from that song.**

MS: That's so honorable! We so appreciate that.

BR: **Well it's all going back. Money's like manure—it starts to stink if you don't spread it around.** *[all laugh]*

Bonnie Raitt is on tour all summer. Right (clockwise from top left): Natalie wears a top by MAJA. Emily wears boots by STEPHANE KELIAN. Martie wears a dress by PRADA. Following spread (from left): Natalie wears shoes by CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN. Emily wears a corset by AGENT PROVOCATEUR and boots by STEPHANE KELIAN. Martie wears a skirt by AGNES B and boots by STEPHANE KELIAN. Cosmetic colors: L'OREAL. Hair-styling products: STUDIO LINE by L'OREAL. Styling: JOANNA JACOVINI. Hair: CHUCK AMOS/Jump. Makeup: BILLY B./Streeters. For fashion and photo details see page 127.