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MICHAEL W. SMITH AND AMY GRANT WRAP SUCCESSFUL '2 FRIENDS' TOUR WITH SOLD-OUT SHOWS, RAVE REVIEWS

Longtime Collaborators Eagerly Clear Calendars For Fall Tour Reprise

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – March 11, 2011 – It's not even spring yet, but multi-platinum recording artists **Michael W. Smith** and **Amy Grant** have already experienced one of their highlights for 2011: touring alongside each other as longtime friends and creative partners. The pair's recently-wrapped run of shows called the **"2 Friends Tour"** brought back a flood of memories not only for fans, but for the performers as well.

"Touring with Amy was absolutely awesome," Smith says. "Our friendship runs deep and my respect for her as an artist has always been off the chart. But to see her every night – the way she performs and communicates and connects with the crowd – it's just amazing."

"I loved standing beside Michael every night," Grant adds. "I loved watching his amazing, God-given gifts. His smile is as familiar as my childhood and I have missed seeing it close up, standing shoulder to shoulder. I loved singing with him as he brought each crowd into worship. He is someone I trust and I'm never wary about going somewhere he wants to go creatively or spiritually."

Grant and Smith split the "2 Friends" evening, each performing complete sets of their own material, but also came together for songs they wrote together or are deeply associated with, such as the show-opening "Stay For Awhile" from Grant's 1986 *The Collection* compilation, the seminal anthem "Lead Me On" and Smith's signature breakthrough hit "Friends." That interplay, combined with the timelessness of each artist's song list, made for a concert experience *The Grand Rapids Press* called "a three-hour trip down memory lane, with songs triggering thoughts of times well spent with faithful friends." *The Orange Country Register* noted "Smith and Grant blended their voices perfectly, a satisfying touch that would return throughout the show…A fast-paced mix of material that pleased the capacity crowd."

The tour generated double-digit sold-out shows, including Rocklin, Calif; Anaheim, Calif.; Redlands, Calif.; Phoenix; Holland, Mich.; Omaha, Neb.; Franklin, N.C.; Nashville, Tenn.; Columbus, Ohio; New York City and Lancaster, Pa. The response was so overwhelming, Grant and Smith have agreed to do what many fans unable to see the show this go-round hoped they would do: they're taking it back out this fall.

"I don't think we were out of rehearsals before we were talking about going back out in the fall!" Smith says. "Thankfully, people showed up – there were a lot of sold-out nights and we're going to do it again this fall. I can't wait!"

"I loved every aspect of this tour – the music, the bands, the camaraderie, the joy and the crowds," Grant says. "It was a real gift and I'm excited to do it again next fall."

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That's not to say these two busy artists are looking past the spring and summer, which are already packed. Smith will head out on a 20-25 date spring tour in support of ***Wonder*** (more details forthcoming) before embarking on an active schedule of summer appearances at major festivals around the country. Grant will be spending time at home this spring, writing and recording material for a new album. She will perform several charity events and concerts throughout the summer, and will be featured nationally at several Women of Faith events in the coming months.

About Amy Grant: Amy Grant's career spans over 30 years and stretches from her roots in gospel into an iconic pop star, songwriter, television personality and philanthropist. Grant has sold more than 30 million albums and won six GRAMMY® Awards in multiple categories, beginning with the platinum selling *Age to Age* in 1982. She also has six #1 hits, including "Baby, Baby," and "Every Heartbeat" and is one of only two Christian artists to be awarded a star on the legendary Walk of Fame in Hollywood.

Grant released her first live recording in 25 years with *Time Again...Amy Grant Live* in September 2006, and then announced her first ever label shift to EMI Music Group where her entire music catalog was re-mastered. In March of 2010, Grant released ***Somewhere Down The Road***, a collection of songs about the journey of life and faith. The album debuted at #2 on the iTunes Christian music chart and the first single, "Better Than A Hallelujah," was a Top 10 Christian radio hit and #1 on the iTunes Christian singles chart. For more information, go to www.amygrant.com.

About Michael W. Smith: Throughout his 28-year career as a recording artist, Michael W. Smith has amassed an impressive catalog of achievements. His prior 21 albums have garnered multiple honors including an American Music Award, three GRAMMY ® Awards (from 13 nominations), 44 GMA Dove Awards (in addition to 1 nomination in the 41st Annual GMA Dove Awards) and 33 No. 1 radio hits. In addition, he holds 16 Gold, 7 Platinum and 2 Double-Platinum albums for career sales approaching 17 million. **Wonder**, Smith's 22nd career album, released Sept. 28, 2010. Inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2009, Smith has scored several film projects, written 12 books and has been featured by media outlets including "Hannity," NBC's "Today Show," ABC's "Good Morning America," "NBC Nightly News," "Larry King Live," "FOX & Friends," The Associated Press, *Billboard*, USA Today, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Newsweek and more.

Constantly giving back to the community, one of Smith's current projects is Rocketown – a nightclub for teens in his hometown of Nashville, Tenn. – which serves as a safe place for young people to enjoy music and for artists to be discovered. He and wife of 29 years, Debbie, are the proud parents of five children. For up-to-date information on Michael W. Smith, please visit www.michaelwsmith.com or www.providentpress.com.

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For more information on Michael W. Smith, please contact:
Jacquelyn Luttrell |Vice President, Public Relations, Provident Music Group | Sony Music Entertainment, Inc.
Ph: 615-261-6439 pr@pmgsonymusic.com
For artist info 24/7: www.providentpress.com | Follow us at: www.twitter.com/providentpress

For more information on Amy Grant, please contact:
Velvet Kelm or Courtney Hyder | the media collective
Velvet@theMcollective.com | Courtney@theMcollective.com
Ph: 615-591-7989 | Via Twitter: @themcollective

For more information on the 2 Friends Tour, please contact:
Debra Akins | Southside Entertainment
Debra@DebraAkins.com
Ph: 321.747.0078 | Via Twitter: @DebraAkins