



Katy twins April and Amy Rankin are skyrocketing to the top of the Texas country music charts - and have no plans of stopping there





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SINGING DOUBLE

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Katy's Rankin twins have twice as much to celebrate after discovering how to turn headaches and heartbreaks into country music hits

Written by Tassie Hewitt | Photography by Lisa Woods

For most people, a breakup with a boyfriend and a brain tumor would not be something to sing about, but for Amy Rankin and twin sister, April, it was music to their ears. These days the Katy sisters are traveling the country singing their hearts out in front of hundreds of fans, as part of a Texas-sized dream come true.

Headaches and Heartbreaks

When Amy and April Rankin graduated from Texas A&M in 2004, neither dreamed that a few short years later, life events would cause them to quit their day jobs and catapult them into the country music world.

"In 2006, my boyfriend from college broke up with me," says Amy, an event that inspired her to write her first song. "My mom got me guitar lessons to help me figure out what I was going to do next." The lessons led to her playing a show with her guitar teacher in Katy. "After that, I called April and said, 'We're going to start a band,'" says Amy who realized there was a niche for Texas country music.

The twins took vocal lessons, went to Austin to make a demo record, and put together their band, the Rankin Twins. Their first show was in Dallas at the Sons of Hermann Hall in 2008.

Shortly after, Amy was diagnosed with a brain tumor. "That really put a break in things, but in a sense, it really got things going," says Amy, who has since recovered with the support of family and friends. "It made us realize what was important to us. I wrote the song 'Headaches and Heartbreaks' right after my surgery. It came to me so easily, I thought maybe I could actually do this."

Before her diagnoses, the twins were unsure what they wanted to do with their music. "The first line of 'Headaches and Heartbreaks' is 'I'm going 90 to nothing, and I can't slow down.' I think God prepared me for this slow down so we could reevaluate our lives and make a plan," says Amy. "Headaches and Heartbreaks' is about the break up and the headaches of the tumor. It's about seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and going for it." The sisters have been going for it ever since, and traveling down that country road together has been an adventure.

Background Music

"We love being twins. It's like having a built-in best friend," says Amy. "We've always been close, but we're closer now than we ever were." Although music may not have been a major part of their lives growing up, the sisters entertained their family and friends from a young age. "Every Christmas

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we would get with our neighbors and put together a performance for our families,” says Amy. “We’ve been performing since we were little bitty.”

Staying in Tune

There is power in being a pair, but the twins recognize their individual strengths and weaknesses, too. “April is more of a melody person, and I’m more of a lyricist,” says Amy. “Each of us has our own role, and we’re both really supportive of each other. We used to joke if we could only marry each other, we’d be set.”

The twins are living life to the fullest. They have a new album, *Good Vibes*, and two top 10 singles on the Texas music charts, “Rain” and “Holdin’ Pattern.” They became one of the top three finalists on NBC Universal/Cozi TV’s reality series, *Next Great Family Band*. The twins have a busy touring schedule and have performed at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and other local venues.

“Every day is something different. We never get bored. It’s so much fun,” says Amy. But the twins’ greatest reward as musicians is when someone plays one of their songs or dances to their music. “Every sacrifice we’ve made along the way is so worth it for that one moment.” **KM**

TASSIE HEWITT is a freelance writer who loves country music but only performs in her car where no one can hear.



See the Rankin Twins

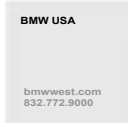
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