

# SHOWCASE

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## Gregg Allman now makes the news for his music

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In many ways, Gregg Allman has come full circle.

After a simple start playing music with his late brother Duane in Florida garage bands, Allman became the primary vocalist — and contributed a major part of the *sound* — of the premier Southern rock band, the Allman Brothers.

(Allman will be performing his blend of blues, country and rock at an Antelope Valley Fair performance in the Redman Grandstand tonight.)

Now, many years after a sensationalized romance with Cher and a bout with drug addiction for which the tabloid set remembers him best, Allman has again made rock 'n' roll news with a musical contribution worthy of attention.

On his latest Epic LP, *I'm No Angel*, Allman re-recorded his song, "It's Not My Cross to Bear," which kicked off the the Allman Brothers' debut album.

But he's also included many fine new compositions, which more than prove his musical viability in the late '80s.

Yet the album trails his last album, *Brothers of the Road*, by more than six years.

During that time, Allman was busy overcoming a few demons.

"I was going into a bit of a writing slump — quite a big one, actually," said Allman in a phone interview. "And I was just getting my life together, trying to conquer certain chemical problems."

"After I reattained some peace of mind, it all started coming back."

*I'm No Angel* is the result.

Of that LP, he said, "It's just

kind of like, there'll be no wine before its time. You can't just put together a bunch of contrived crap, you know, and put it on your record, because you've got to live with that stuff."

The album also enabled him the opportunity to go before the video camera — something of which he'd previously been reticent.

"Throughout my career, it scared me pretty much. But this last video we did, it came a whole lot easier than it ever has," he said.

However, "If we'd have had to say words and dialogue, I think we'd have been out of luck."

"We learned a whole lot from it," he said. "It was strange seeing yourself walk for the first time on camera, you know. I thought, 'Yeah? I walk like that?'"

"I'm starting to get used to the cameras," Allman said. "I might

just keep with it. I've thought about trying to possibly do a picture — it's just a thought."

But he's worked with at least one person who's very comfortable in front of a camera: "Miami Vice" star and musician, Don Johnson.

Their friendship goes back to 1973, and some of their songwriting collaborations have ended up on Allman Brothers' albums such as *Enlightened Rogues*.

Allman and Johnson are together again on "Evidence of Love," a cut from the new LP, which was recorded in Miami's Criteria Studios.

About five or six days into recording, Allman got a call from Johnson.

"He said, 'Hey, bro', you need some help with that record?'"

"And I said, 'Sure, come on down and sing.'"

"So I messengered him out  
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two songs, and a couple days later, he showed up," recalled Allman.

"Hard workin' man."

But it was the record company's idea to re-record the medley of the Spencer Davis Group's "Don't Want You No More" and Allman's "It's Not My Cross to Bear" from the Brothers' debut album.

"We walked into the studio, and it was about 9:30 at night. And we picked up our instruments and did it one time. And that's what you're hearing, that first take," relates Allman.

He was pleased with the result. "The feel of it came off so good, it just kind of found its way onto the record."

Currently, Allman is nearing the end of a 6½-week tour which began in Memphis, Tenn., and concludes in Maui, Hawaii.

The six-piece band performs new material, as well as plenty of Allman Brothers songs, such as "Whipping Post," "One Way Out," "Please Call Home," "Trouble No More" and "Statesboro Blues."

At the time, Allman said he never realized the impact the Brothers would have on rock.

"I had no idea," he said. "It's always seemed to me that there's quite a bit of competition out there."

"Still does."



GREGG ALLMAN has re-recorded "It's Not My Cross to Bear" on his newest album, *I'm No Angel*. New compositions on the album prove his viability in the 1980s.