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**Shania's**  
**back!**

She vanished to Europe and became a mom. Now Shania talks about her reclusive ways—and her rockin' new album

Shania Twain

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☐ The 36th Annual CMA Awards airs Wednesday, November 6, 8 P.M./ET, on CBS.

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COVER STORY

Since giving birth last year, Shania Twain has focused on feeding time and changing diapers. Now, with the release of her new album, the country superstar gets back to business—with baby on board

BY JENNIFER GRAHAM

# Still the One

Take a winding country road past vineyards and villages, shoreline and sky. Drive up, up, up around pastures and mountain passes. See the late September sun as it drops behind the Alps, dragging its glittery tail over the sailboats and bobbing whitecaps of Lake Geneva. Go on past the wrought-iron gate, the sunken driveway and the well-appointed crush of wildflowers. Just beyond all those crimson and russets and yellows, you'll find Shania Twain's hidden chateau.

Three years ago, Twain, 37, and her husband-producer, Robert John "Mutt" Lange, moved to this quiet spot on the Swiss Riviera and fashioned a private Eden in its hills. Since then, she's been lying low. Up high. So now might be a good time to consider the title of Twain's last album: *Come On Over*. Did she mean

it? Can people just show up? And would she have made that titular invitation back in 1997 if she had known that *Come On Over* was going to become the highest-selling CD ever by a female artist? Probably not. So don't barge in, please. She'll meet you at your hotel.

Fame "has been a kick, but I think when you are doing something that's not really that natural to you, it's stressful," says Twain, looking casual-chic in a Dolce & Gabbana denim jacket and camouflage-print pants on the mountain-view terrace of the Montreux Palace. "And that's a big reason why I make my personal life as private as possible. I'm not known as a famous person [in Switzerland], and I like to leave the celebrity behind." In fact, there is no Shania Twain here; she answers to Eileen Lange (Eileen is her given name). "I will be very happy someday when I am just writing songs and not a star at all."

But that day has yet to be scheduled, and on November 19, Twain the global entertainer will release her fourth CD, called *Up!*. She says this latest batch of country, pop and rock songs is "the best album I've ever done"—and that the title perfectly describes it. "The lyrics are kind of fun," she says. "There's a bit of comic relief there that's very conversational, very matter-of-fact." She's also about to make her first appearance on network TV since 1999, performing on the 36th annual Country Music Association Awards. And on November 15, Country Music Television will feature her on its biography series, *Inside Fame: Shania Twain* (8 P.M./ET). "There is a huge, pent-up anticipation" for

Twain's next release, says Brian Phillips, the senior vice president and general manager of CMT. "And not just on the country side but across the whole spectrum of the music business worldwide."

Twain, who has five Grammy awards and a CD that has sold 34 million copies, likes the sound of that. "When you're in your own little world making music, you wonder, 'Does anyone care anymore?'" she says, laughing. "I forget about who I am, which is what I want. I'm just myself. I'm nobody special." But even in modesty, Twain has a confident air and a quiet, determined spirit. She is a woman with opinions, whose every decision—from the music she creates to the way she spends her free time—is deliberate and purposeful. As a result, she gives the impression of one who holds sway over life's goings-on. During her recent pregnancy, even her body seemed to obey her wishes.

In August of 2001, while they were writing songs for *Up!*, Twain and Lange had a baby boy, Eja (pronounced "Asia"). Her pregnancy had been so smooth that Twain hardly felt like a mother-to-be. "It was really nothing," she says. "I didn't eat differently. No morning sickness. Nothing was different." Giving birth was also a breeze. "Labor? It was painful, but not so painful," she says. "I was very fast. From my very first labor pain to the time I delivered, it was five and a half hours. Mutt was in the room. He was a great help. We were a team, and it was all very easy."

And while she'll never allow magazines to photograph her son—"You could throw

\$10 million at me and I'm still not going to do it"—she will discuss him. "He's like a little man now," she says. "His personality is very evident. He's just like my husband. He has a lot of energy, but it's a quiet energy. And he loves music." Eja is spoken to only in French by his nanny, though of course he'll learn English, too. He'll most likely be raised as an only child—Twain has no plans for more—

and in Switzerland, but he'll travel extensively with his parents in the years to come. "He will have so much more experience and education than we ever had," Twain says. And not just in greenrooms. "Eja won't be hanging around backstage," she says. "He'll be off at a science center or something like that. There's no point in him staying in a hotel and playing in a lobby. I don't care how luxurious it is or how much service you have. What kind of life is that for a kid?"

Eja, in fact, was already traveling while in the womb. "I just started to feel a little bit stuck and that we needed to get out a little," Twain says of the months during her pregnancy. So she and Lange traveled around Europe—visiting galleries, taking in the sights, recording songs in rented studios. "A lot of it was for creative inspiration," she says. "If I'm at home, I'm worried about, what am I gonna make for dinner? What do I need to go shopping for? I'm totally in domestic mode."

Nearly all of Twain's actions could merit a "totally." Whether tourist, superstar or housewife, she always means business. "I'm very hands-on with everything," she says. "I like to keep a very tidy, clean house. I love to cook. Very healthy



A star is born: Twain around age 9 (above); her home in La Tour-de-Peilz, Switzerland.



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PHOTO: JEFF WOODRUM/GETTY IMAGES; TWAIN: JEFF WOODRUM/GETTY IMAGES



eating. I make all of Eja's food myself. He's never eaten packaged or processed food ever. He eats everything fresh." Twain and Lange also forgo meat, dairy and eggs. "Nothing," she declares, "that had to die." In this way, Twain more or less governs her health as well. "I don't want to say I'm never sick," she says, "but the reality is I have not had a cold or flu in six or seven years." When not in the studio, the couple hikes or skis or rides horses (they own five). "We came here totally new, not knowing anyone," she says. "But we enjoy each other's company. We absolutely could just be together all the time. Really, without anything else, that's all you need."

From a creative standpoint, too, the isolation suits them. Though Lange has worked with a number of stars, including Britney Spears, he doesn't speak to reporters. And the couple doesn't get caught up in what other musicians are doing. "I haven't heard a recent country

**Twain reaction:**  
Performing  
on the German  
TV show *Bet It*  
in October

record in a very, very long time," she says. "I'm not even aware what the Dixie Chicks are doing." (Note to Shania: The Dixie Chicks' new album, *Home*, debuted at No. 1 on the pop charts.) Twain's got her own distinct brand: country-sounding songs with a heavy dose of pop. "This isn't a bluegrass record," says CMT's Philips with a laugh. "She [didn't] reinvent herself. These are hugely catchy songs that are instantly recognizable as Shania."

Still, she insists, the line-dancing crowd will not be disappointed. "I've got stuff that's really more country sounding, more like 'Don't Be Stupid' with a lot of fiddles," she says. "And I told Mutt that I'd also like to have a lot more banjo on this record."

Pop music lovers have also claimed Twain as their own. "With the last album, so many new fans came on board when I released 'That Don't Impress Me Much' and 'Man! I Feel Like a Woman!,'" she says. Now more than ever, pop and country fans can talk music at cocktail parties—to Twain's immense benefit. "I think the boundaries of country music are much wider than they were," says Luke Lewis, chairman and CEO of Mercury Nashville, Twain's label. "Country music radio stations play everything from Shania to the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* [soundtrack]." That's exactly why *Up!* will include two discs, each with the very same songs: one a twangy country version and the other a polished pop version. "I just have such a wide fan base," Twain says, "that I feel like I have a lot of people to write music for."

The flirty spirit of *Up!*'s first single, "I'm Gonna Getcha Good!" may be aimed at a man, but Twain might as well be speaking to her fans. "Our relationship is only as good as the music," she says. "And if they're waiting out there and the music is as good as I think it is, then we have a great thing coming on." This time, though, she stops short of inviting them over.