

**Dan Colehour**  
***Straight To The Highway***  
**Street Date: August 14, 2007**  
(Carnival Recording Co./Universal)

Born smack-dab in the heart of America, singer/songwriter Dan Colehour grew up on the very same pastoral, Eastern Iowa turf that inspired and harbored iconic Americana painter Grant Wood.

It's an evocative, serene layout of easy rolling hills stamped by patchwork-quilt fields dotted by farms, sporadically tacked-down by humble towns, which in turn are laced together by a network of two-lane blacktops that not only provide connection, but also offer a way out.

*Straight To The Highway*, Colehour's debut on Nashville-based Carnival Recording Co./Universal, is a poignant, heart-thumping collection of heartland rock and earnest, down-home balladry that explores the restlessness and desires that not only make a young man venture out into the large world, but can also bring him back, full circle, to find a big part of the solution parked right where he left it—in his family and home.

Steeped in the tried-and-true populist rock of Springsteen and Mellencamp with long, strong threads of Jackson Browne and the Eagles snaking through, Colehour has arrived at a slightly more rural-oriented, western approach to an amalgam of the signature styles of all the aforementioned, informed—of course—by personal experience.

Growing up in Mt. Vernon, Iowa provided Colehour with a balanced, blue-collar upbringing rooted in hard work, family and an abiding notion that events play out across the globe, but it's how they shake down on the home front that ultimately drives hearts and minds.

“I was raised in the Midwest work ethic,” Colehour emphasizes. “I’ve never been afraid of a job or a hard days work—that’s one of the things that my mother and father gave me.”

During those formative years, Colehour played drums in several country, rock and polka cover bands before he started to sing and write his own songs.

“Singing was something I enjoyed as much as anything and the idea of writing songs seemed like a natural progression for me,” Colehour says. “So I was drawn to learn a more melodic instrument that I could write on, and when I was 12, my sister gave me a few guitar lessons—both my sister and mother were taking guitar lessons at the time. My older sister, Amanda, is responsible for most of my musical influences. Her room was directly below mine in our old house and she

had an exceptional stereo. Consequently, whatever she was listening to, I was listening to as well. When I was 13, she got me Springsteen's *The River*, and it floored me. It wasn't so over my head that I couldn't figure it out, but at the same time it challenged me. The vast and varying lyrical landscape and sonic quality of the recording almost overwhelmed me. It was an epiphany to me...a very pivotal moment to say the least. To this day, it is THE record that I go back to consistently."

At age 21, Colehour packed up his guitar and songbook and hit the highway, settling briefly in Southern California. "I lived in the Valley for a couple of years, and it was like a suit of clothes that never fit me. After a couple of years there, his parents relocated to San Antonio Texas and he followed them. It was there that Colehour seemed to find the musical community that he was looking for.

"I had been in Texas for about a month and a friend of mine suggested I check out Joe Ely at the Southwest Craft Center in downtown San Antonio," Colehour says. "Butch Hancock opened for Joe that night. I had no idea what I was in for. They practically blew the doors off the place. I spent the next seven years in Texas working on my songwriting and playing singer/songwriter rooms. I was a Kerrville New Folk finalist in '93 and '94. I moved up to Austin in '90 after singing with a publisher, Bitsy Rice of Lighthouse Music. Bitsy got me hooked in to Austin and shortly there after began sending me to Nashville to get my feet wet."

At 29 Colehour arrived in Nashville, where he quickly became friends with Frank Liddell and Travis Hill of Carnival Music Publishing and Carnival Recording Company. A publishing deal with them followed shortly and the opportunity was a godsend for the fledgling artist, providing work, guidance and friendship all in one fell swoop.

The singer/songwriter's music steadily garnered support in the industry, and a recording deal with DreamWorks jump-started the making of what would eventually become *Straight To The Highway*. When Universal bought DreamWorks, priorities shuffled, and the record biz's same-old-long-story-short...the record was set aside. All of that changed when a co-venture agreement was reached between Carnival and Universal to release the record.

Recorded with a stellar core band of electric guitarists David Grissom and Kenny Greenberg, bassist Glenn Worff and drummer Chad Cromwell, *Straight To The Highway* presents ten muscular tracks, all written or co-written by Colehour, that speak with honesty and humility to issues and values that anchor middle America.

Liddell serves as executive producer with co-producer David Grissom (Joe Ely, John Mellencamp, The Dixie Chicks), and co-producer/engineer Mike McCarthy (Patty Griffin, Spoon, Fastball, You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead).

At its root, Colehour's music grabs that mixture of escapism and unadorned commonality that drives heartland/populist rock and left-of-center country. Clear-eyed, direct and remarkably irony free, it's about honor and character. Hope and redemption. Summed up in that nightly ritual acted out under the streetlights in Anytown, U.S.A., all to answer the most-asked question in everyone's lives, which is "What are we gonna do tonight?"

For the confused among you, here's a working plan – head *Straight To The Highway*.

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