

CELEBRITY AT HOME ■

Perched on her front porch, guitar in hand, Amy Grant is rockin'—but not in the musical sense.

“My favorite thing to do is just sit in a rocking chair and spread my life out in my lap like an old blanket,” the 36-year-old gospel singer-turned-pop star reflects. Everything in sight—from Ork, the big German shepherd asleep at her feet, to the cool evening breeze stirring the tall grass—suggests some serious R and R. Grant sighs. “I just love the peace and quiet when I can be alone with my thoughts.”

The tranquillity is interrupted by a trio of giggles erupting behind her. Matt, ten, Millie, seven, and Sarah, five, know a cue when they hear one, and they immediately demand Mommy’s undivided attention. “Then again,” Grant says, laughing while being ▶



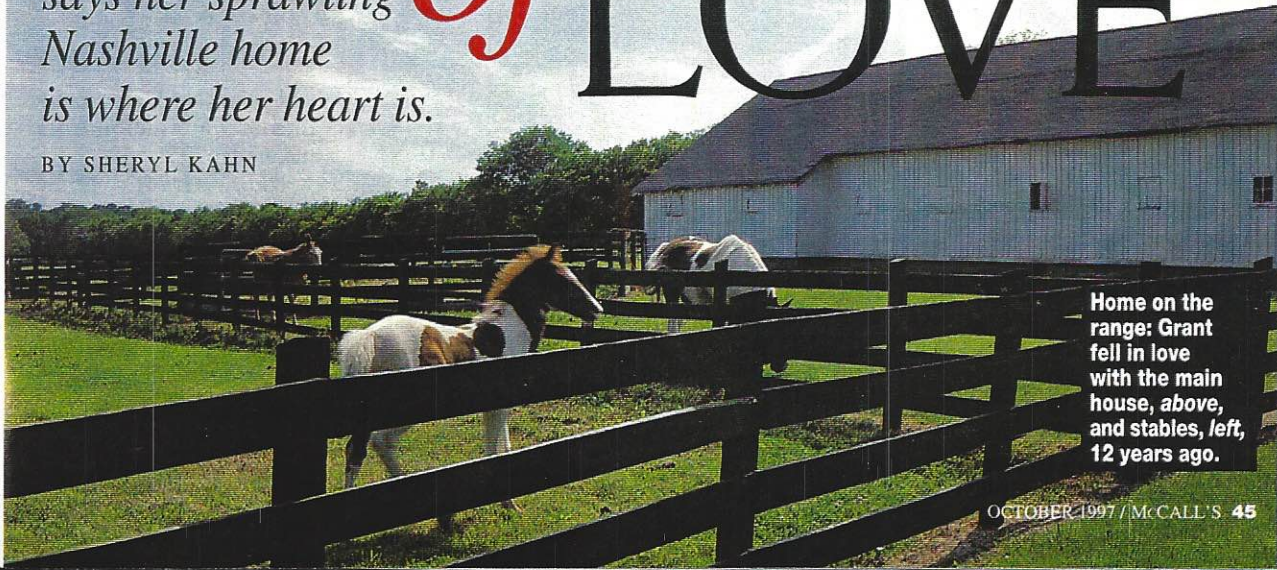
Musical mommy: “My kids bring laughter to my life,” says Grant, with, left to right, Millie, Matthew and Sarah.



HOUSE *of* LOVE

Singer Amy Grant says her sprawling Nashville home is where her heart is.

BY SHERYL KAHN



Home on the range: Grant fell in love with the main house, above, and stables, left, 12 years ago.

TOP TO BOTTOM: PHOTOGRAPHED BY PETER NASH (2); HAIR AND MAKEUP: CHRIS TURK; STYLIST: TAMARA HEMBY; PHOTOGRAPHED BY NANCY LEE ANDREWS

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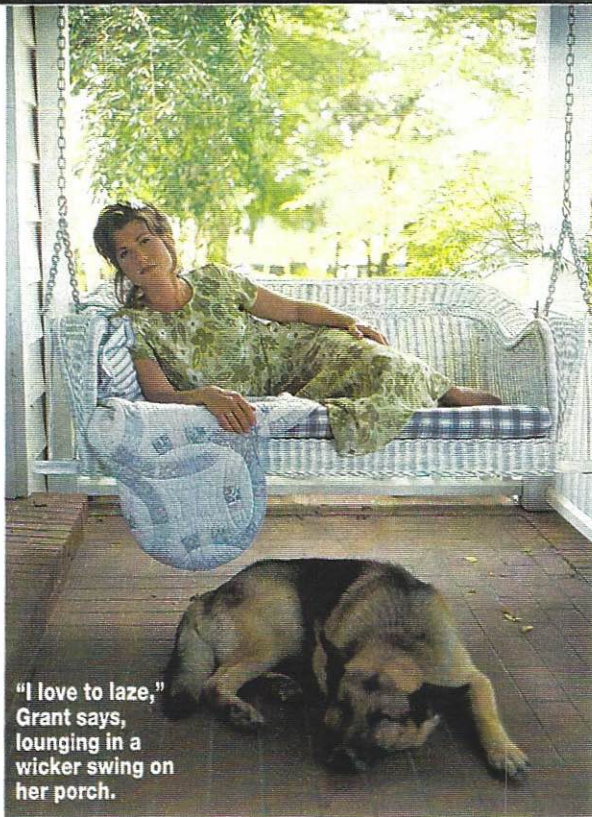
"This is my family room," Grant says—which is why she's covered the bookshelves and tables with photos of her clan.

A portrait of the artist hangs in the formal dining room, right.

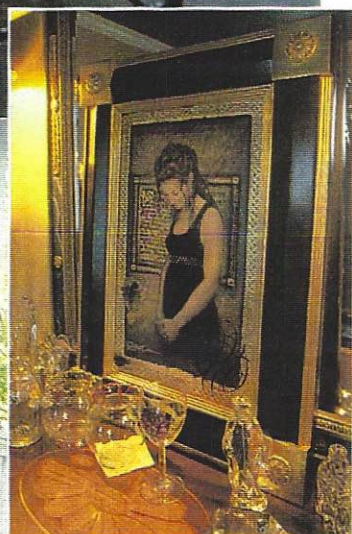
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tugged this way and that by her boisterous brood, "there's a lot to be said for chaos and noise!"

For Grant, family always comes first: That's evident in nearly all of the 15 rooms of the home on her rustic 250-acre Nashville farm. The fridge is covered with photos of her 18 nieces and nephews as well as with Millie's latest artistic masterpieces. Tintypes of Grant's great-grandmother Lilly and childhood mementos decorate mantels and tabletops.

"When I was a little girl, Lilly's old, white clapboard farmhouse used to be the focus of our family activities," she says. "There would sometimes be 100 people there on a Sunday afternoon. Everyone would bring homemade fixin's—green beans with ham hocks



"I love to laze," Grant says, lounging in a wicker swing on her porch.



and onions, and fresh tomatoes or watermelon from the garden."

Today Grant's home functions as Family Central: One of her four older sisters is usually in the kitchen "just chattin'," or her father-in-law, Terry Chapman, is out riding one of the eight horses on the property.

"My loved ones are my strength and support," ▶

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Five-year-old Sarah added "lots and lots of bunnies" to her bedroom.



(continued from p. 46) she explains. "I need to have them around me."

It's not surprising, then, that family members often inspire Grant's music. She wrote "Baby, Baby," her chart-topping hit, in 1991 for her daughter Millie, and "Missing You," a song on her just-released album *Behind the Eyes*, is about her nephew Logan's leaving for college.

Soon Grant will be taking off as well—on a three-week promotional tour. "It breaks my heart to say goodbye to my kids," she admits.

But, as always, a member of her clan comes to the rescue. "Sarah said, 'Don't worry, Mommy. We'll have lots of new things to tell each other when you come home again,'" Grant says.

"Now, I ask you," she marvels, "just who needs whom more?" ■

Family ties

"The past is the key to the future," Grant says. Here's how to encourage your kids to embrace their heritage.

- **Start a scrapbook.** Have your kids fill it with photos, ticket stubs and drawings.
- **Tell a bedtime story.** Instead of reading a book, recount an exciting family adventure.
- **Cherish traditions.** Grant loves to serve her great-grandma's recipes—fried chicken and summer-squash casserole.



Her husband, Gary Chapman—a singer and songwriter in his own right—created this guitar room.



"We used to swim in the pond," Grant says. "But 150 geese took it over—so we put in a pool."