

**Thursday, March 21, 2020:**

**Twenty-Five DFW Music Artists Join Forces to Release Legendary Willie Nelson Song Benefiting Area's Struggling Refugee Community**

[Video](#) Release for "Living in the Promiseland" by the Fort Worth Musicians Choir

**Fort Worth, Texas** - Though the Covid-19 virus has drastically affected independent musicians, canceling months of concerts and gigs, and decimating their ability to earn money, twenty-five DFW musicians have banded together to help raise money and awareness for a population of people with even greater struggles than their own. The group of singer-songwriters, along with notable band and orchestral musicians, have joined forces as the Fort Worth Musicians Choir, to support the area's struggling refugee community, with the release of their grand version of the Willie Nelson classic "Living in the Promiseland."

All proceeds from the song and video, as well as an upcoming benefit concert scheduled for June 21st in Fort Worth, benefit [Refugee Services of Texas](#), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to finding homes and jobs for, educating, and acclimating the area's refugee population.

"Living in the Promiseland" speaks of the struggles of refugees and immigrants to America, referencing the words at the base of the Statue of Liberty," says singer-songwriter Dan Johnson who arranged and conducted the orchestra and choir. "These folks aren't illegal immigrants. They're families with children who have waited an average of 7 years in refugee camps and gone through all the proper legal channels and background checks, to try to pursue the American dream of freedom and build a better life for themselves and their children." Johnson is best known for his 2018 concept album/book project *Hemingway*, another non-profit endeavor which funded a two-year tour of veteran suicide prevention concerts and speaking engagements, dedicated to the memory of his father, a veteran who died from suicide when Dan was ten years old. Johnson says recently he became aware that funding and support for refugee services in Texas had been cut off. His own family, having been impoverished and homeless at times when he was a child, left Dan with a heart for displaced and struggling families, and he has volunteered with refugee support services over the years. "These are good, hard-working people and innocent kids, and they deserve a chance at freedom," Johnson remarks.

Ashley Faye, Development Director for Refugee Services of Texas (RST) commented, "Since the onset of the virus quarantine, funding has dried up even more, and so many of their jobs have been lost. This support means more than ever, during this difficult time." The organization also cares for and empowers victims of human trafficking. They've responded to 293 cases of sex and labor trafficking in our area, 32% of which are children under the age of eighteen. Additionally RST provides support for individuals with Special Immigrant Visas. Recipients of

these visas have put their own lives at risk to work with the US Armed Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, serving as translators and interpreters. Because of their help with the US forces, they are no longer safe in their home countries, and the US welcomes them to build a safe and secure life for their families, here in the States.

Johnson reached out to friends in the music community and asked if they would be willing to put together a benefit to help the regional organization and was blown away by the response. The group, equally comprised of male and female artists, even includes two musicians who came here as refugees themselves through the RST organization, from the Congo and Iran. Producer Grant Jackson Wilborn, noted for his work with famed Texas artist Ryan Bingham, offered his services and studio, 7013 Records, in Fort Worth for the production. Vocalists in the fifteen-member choir included local favorites like Big Joe Walker and Andrew Sevener, recently acclaimed for his long run to the final four on NBC's *The Voice*. Musicians in the ten-piece orchestra included the likes of Aden Bubeck, Miranda Lambert's longtime bass player and lead guitarist Ryan Tharp, revered for his work with artists like Bonnie Raitt. Full credits below.

Streaming and purchase of "Living in the Promiseland" is currently estimated to be available by the end of May, as distribution services are facing challenges of their own in the virus-restricted age.

For information on how to donate or help, go to [www.rstx.org](http://www.rstx.org).

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Fort Worth Musicians Choir:  
Please direct any inquiries to Dan Johnson  
[danjohnson@danjohnsonmusic.us](mailto:danjohnson@danjohnsonmusic.us)

Refugee Services of Texas Mission:  
Guided by the principles of human compassion and dignity, Refugee Services of Texas welcomes refugees, immigrants, and other displaced peoples and supports them in integrating and thriving in their new communities. [www.rstx.org](http://www.rstx.org)

Please direct Media inquiries to Chris Kelley [chris@kelleynotes.com](mailto:chris@kelleynotes.com)

Living in the Promiseland  
Written By David Lynn Jones  
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Originally Performed and Recorded By Willie Nelson

Produced By: Dan Johnson, Grant Jackson Wilborn

Produced At:  
7013 Records  
Fort Worth, TX

Instrumental Arrangements: Dan Johnson

Vocal Arrangements: Dan Johnson, Casey Wilson

Conducted By: Dan Johnson

Recording Engineer: Grant Jackson Wilborn

Orchestra: Ryan Tharp: Lead & Rhythm Guitar, Clint Kirby: Drums, Danny Stone: Electric Bass, Esmaeil Zarghami: Acoustic Guitar , Isaac Dusabamahoro: Piano & Guitar, Cello: Chris Bassett, Jared Sullivan, Sarah Nichole Rogerson, Double Bass: Aden Bubeck, Jeremy Hull.

Vocalists (In Order of Appearance):

Skylar Payne, Aubrey Wallace, Hannah Owens, Jessi England, Andrew Sevener  
Jackie Darlene, Big Joe Walker, The Pour Brothers (Casey Wilson & Mike Webb), Isaac  
Dusabamahoro, Melinda Adams, Dan Johnson, Keegan McEnroe, Joe Savage, D. Anson Brody

Video Produced By: Steve Pitman, Videographers: Steve Pitman, Gabriel Campos, Still  
Photography: Scott Cook, Crew Support: Lauren Ellis