



Photo: Peggy Sirota

NEVER SURRENDER

HOW A MONTREAL SINGER-SONGWRITER CAPTIVATED A WORLDWIDE AUDIENCE BY STAYING TRUE TO HIS HIGHEST VALUES

By Suzanne Alyssa Andrew

FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 24, 1985

Billboard **HOT 100**

A ranking of the top 30 singles by sales and

		SALES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	
1	2	NEVER SURRENDER	
2	3	THE POWER OF LOVE	
3	1	SHOUT	
4	5	I WOULD HAVE SOMEBODY SET THEM FREE	
5	4	FREE OF LOVE	
6	6	MY FIRE (MAN IN MOTION)	
7	7	I DON'T NEED ANOTHER HERO	
8	8	SUMMER OF '69	
9	9	EVERYTIME YOU GO AWAY	
10	10	WHAT ABOUT LOVE?	
11	11	WHO'S HOLDING DONNA NOW	
12	12	WHY SPIN ME ROUND (LIKE A RECORD)	
13	13	INVINCIBLE	
14	14	CHERISH	
15	15	MONEY FOR NOTHING	
16	16	POP LIFE	
17	17	YOU'RE ONLY HUMAN (SECOND WIND)	
18	18	DON'T LOSE MY NUMBER	
19	19	DARE ME	
20	20	STATE OF THE HEART	
21	21	GLORY DAYS	
22	22	SMOKIN' IN THE BOYS ROOM	
23	23	ROCK ME TONIGHT	
24	24	FREEDOM	
25	25	GET IT ON (BANG A GONG)	
26	26	MYSTERY LADY	
27	27	PEOPLE ARE PEOPLE	
28	28	I WONDER IF I TAKE YOU HOME	
29	29	SAY	

In 1981, when he was 18 years old, Corey Hart recorded four songs on six cassette tapes and sent them to the Montreal Forum to the attention of Billy Joel and his touring band mates. It was an audacious plan, but when he got a callback from the band's saxophone player, he didn't hesitate.

Hart jumped in his car spent that summer in Long Island, where he recorded demos at famed recording studio Kingdom Sound, met his idol Billy Joel, played gigs with members of the Billy Joel band and started performing solo. He also wrote songs at a prolific rate.

He was no stranger to the music industry. He started performing as a singer when he was 11 years old, landing appearances with Tom Jones and Paul Anka, and he represented Canada at the World Popular Song Festival in Tokyo in 1980 with Dan Hill.

But what he dreamed of to launch his career was a recording contract.

In the early 80s there were only a handful of Canadian recording artists, including Joni Mitchell, The Guess Who, Gordon Lightfoot and Anne Murray, who had achieved major commercial success stateside.

"It was still an uphill climb for a domestic act to break through in America and convince a skeptical Canadian industry that we were legitimate," says Hart. "Nowadays Canadian artists dominate, but it was not the norm then . . . I believe my chart successes south of the border and internationally, along with several other notable Canadian artists of the 80s, really kicked open the doors for good."

He landed the record deal: His debut album, *First Offense*, was released in 1983 to modest sales in Canada to start, but picked up momentum in the U.S. and internationally, becoming a massive hit. Through the 80s and 90s he continued to release successful albums and write songs that resonated with a wide and appreciative audience.

After selling over 16 million records around the world, landing nine consecutive singles on the U.S. Billboard top 40 and 11 top 10s in Canada and receiving numerous accolades including Grammy nominations and ASCAP, ADISQ, SOCAN and Juno awards, Hart is recognized as one of Canada's most successful singer-songwriters.

Of his storied career Hart remains grounded and philosophical: "It's all wrapped within a magical alchemic combination of creation, talent, transformation and a little good luck," he says. "If you can summon the internal confidence without fear or regret, your imagination will improvise the rest. Seeing something through until the end, no matter how daunting, offers you the sweetest gratification."

Hart cites his greatest musical achievement not as a particular hit record or bestselling album but "from the fact that I was able to remain authentic to my artistic vision by being the sole architect of my words and music."

Corey Hart's advice for Canadian musicians starting out:
Never surrender.
Love and respect your craft.
Give nothing less than everything you've got.

Hart lives with his wife Julie Masse and their four children in the Bahamas. After his eldest daughter was born in Montreal, he and his wife decided to raise their family outside the spotlight. He also wanted to reach out to his father who moved to Nassau in 1973, when his parents separated.

Montreal is still his hometown, though. "I'm extremely proud to be a Canadian and also a Quebecer," he says, noting he misses "that distinctive smell in the air of a crisp Montreal September afternoon, which wistfully harkens back to my youth and gearing up for another season of Habs hockey games."

These days his focus is on raising his family. Yet he's still president of Siena Records, a joint label venture with Warner Music Canada created by legendary Sire Records CEO Seymour Stein.

