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PRESS RELEASE

The 26-year-old Norwegian singer whose voice has been compared to Iris DeMent and Loretta Lynn makes her solo debut with Hardships and Hope

What makes some of Norway's most respected country and americana musicians put their own projects on hold to join a 26-year-old debut artist from the small mountain village of Dombås in the recording studio?

The answer is Hardships and Hope – Martine Haugen's long-awaited debut solo album.
Featuring eleven songs—nine original compositions and two heartfelt interpretations of classics by Lee Clayton and Ernest Tubb—Hardships and Hope is firmly rooted in traditional country music while embracing a fresh, contemporary americana sound.

A voice beyond her years

Martine Haugen is only 26 years old. Yet she writes songs that sound as though they've been lived through over decades.
Her voice immediately brings to mind the great storytellers of country music. When renowned Norwegian music critic Egon Holstad reviewed Jesse Tomlinson's album featuring Martine, he described her as "the strawberry on top of the cake." Others have compared her voice to a blend of Iris DeMent and Loretta Lynn. Now, that distinctive voice carries an entire album on its own.

Listening to Hardships and Hope, it's easy to imagine a seasoned artist with decades of life on the road behind her. The songs are filled with broken hearts, betrayal, hope, longing and hard-earned wisdom, delivered with a sincerity that has made some of Norway's finest country musicians stop and take notice.
Yet behind these songs stands Martine Haugen from Dombås—a 26-year-old singer-songwriter with a rare gift for telling timeless country stories in a way that feels both authentic and unmistakably her own.

A week where the music came alive

Hardships and Hope was recorded at Farm Studio in Høland, Norway—a beautifully restored old barn transformed into a modern recording studio, surrounded by forests, fields and complete silence.
Over seven days, the secluded farm became a creative sanctuary where long recording sessions blended with shared meals, laughter, storytelling and a mutual passion for making honest music.
Joining Martine were some of Norway's most respected musicians within country and americana.
Several members of the acclaimed band Country Heroes appear on the album, alongside guest artists Freddy Holm, Krissy Mary and Elin Glende.

The result is an album built on genuine musical chemistry, outstanding musicianship and deep respect for the traditions that inspired it.
The album is a collection of stories about life's highs and lows—mostly the latter—the lessons learned along the way, and the quiet strength found in allowing yourself to be vulnerable

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About the album

Hardships and Hope is an album about love. About broken hearts. False hope. Long, lonely nights. The fear of stepping into the unknown. But above all, it is about hope—the belief that love is still worth believing in, even when experience suggests otherwise.

The album is a collection of stories about life's highs and lows — mostly the latter — the lessons learned along the way, and the quiet strength found in allowing yourself to be vulnerable.

An artist to watch

Over the past few years, Martine Haugen has quietly established herself as one of Norway's most promising new voices in country music.
With Hardships and Hope, she steps fully into the spotlight as a solo artist.

The album effortlessly blends classic country traditions with contemporary americana, creating a sound that feels both timeless and deeply personal. It bridges the rich heritage of Nashville with a new generation of Scandinavian singer-songwriters.

Martine grew up in Dombås, where she still lives today.
From an early age she knew that singing and playing guitar were where she belonged. Today she is an accomplished singer-songwriter who has performed on stages across Norway, both large and small.
For several years she toured with the Johnny Cash tribute band Get Rhythm, while frequently sharing the stage with respected artists including Kenneth Norum and Jesse Tomlinson.

Alongside her music career, she works as principal and teacher at the Lesja and Dovre School of Music and Performing Arts.

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FACTS

Artist: Martine Haugen

Album: Hardships and Hope



11 tracks
9 original songs written by Martine Haugen
2 cover songs written by Lee Clayton and Ernest Tubb

Musicians:
Martine Haugen – vocals, acoustic guitar
Tore Blestrud – pedal steel, dobro, banjo, mandolin, guitars
Daniel Vidarson Gullien – guitars
Thomas Nessheim – guitars, mandolin, percussion, backing vocals
Ivar Brynildsen – bass, backing vocals
Bjørn Haglund – drums, backing vocals
Freddy Holm – fiddle
Krissy Mary – vocals
Elin Glende – vocals

Producer: Thomas Nessheim
Co-producers: Magne Hellesjø & Martine Haugen

Recorded at: Farm Studio, Høland, Norway

Label: Tam Tam Music
Digital Distribution: The Orchard





Release Information

Album release: Friday, September 4
Available on gatefold vinyl, CD with booklet, and all digital streaming platforms.

Singles:

August 7 – I Knew I'd Be in Trouble

August 21 – Border Affair

www.martinehaugen.no