Born in Como, Mississippi with the spirit in their veins, sisters Della and Angela and cousin Ester Mae express their passion through what’s most familiar to them. Music has filled their lives for more than 50 years, through the church and the uplifting sound of their grandfather’s guitar that pulled them through times of turmoil. “Back then you had to go to church, it wasn’t a choice you made,” says Ester Mae. “We would go and sing in the choir but they didn’t have a pianist. That’s why it comes easy for me to sing without background music. I grew up without it.”

The Como Mamas share the Gospel through powerful and compelling vocals, driving both passion and grace into the words they sing. Such emotional and spiritual intensity conveyed through unaccompanied voices is a rare phenomenon, and therefore has garnered much interest over the past years, especially from New York field recorder Michael Reilly and Daptone Records. After hearing the Mamas sing during his first visit to Como in 2005, the only word Reilly could muster up in response was “wow.” Ester Mae knew immediately that it wasn’t his last visit – “The spirit had spoken to me, and sure enough they came back.” Since then the Como Mamas have released two albums with Daptone Records: “Como Now: The Voices of Panola County, Mississippi” in 2008 and “Get an Understanding” in 2013.

With two albums already under their belt, the Como Mamas certainly haven’t slowed down. Most recently, Daptone brought the Mamas to New York to try something new and record with the Menahan Street Band. Such an opportunity was truly exciting for these small town a cappella musicians accustomed to only the echo of their own voices among the church walls. They felt a connection with the band immediately, and fell right into sync with the music. Della was particularly impressed by the band’s great skills; “They were awesome. They knew so much about the music and how to add in all sorts of sounds. They really knew what they were doing.”

Though it wasn’t necessarily what they had planned for the session, Reilly remembered hearing them sing “Well, Well” and “Out Of The Wilderness” when he was in Mississippi, and asked them to give it a try with the band. It didn’t take long to realize that they’d found something special. “We learned these songs growing up in church, but the beat really adds something to our music that I think everyone will love, especially the younger folks,” said Della. Much to the Mamas’ surprise, Angela’s son Kevin who is part of a rap group in Como (music quite different than their own), after hearing these songs for the first time, responded, “You’ve definitely got a hit.”

This opportunity to deliver the message of their music to a larger audience has the Como Mamas beyond excited. “It’s different, but I think this kinda music will open the ears of the young folk,” claims Ester Mae. “We’re trying to capture everybody. We all need to know about Jesus and what He does for us every day.”

The Como Mamas continue to further their career with Daptone Records who in 2014 partnered with the Music Maker Relief Foundation out of mutual interest to keep this musical tradition of gospel alive.