

CLAUDIA NYGAARD BIO

When **Claudia Nygaard's** high school guidance counselor called her into his office during her senior year, he handed the former C+ student her report card filled with straight A's and said, "Claudia I think you might be a late bloomer." Little did either of them know how true those words would still be decades later.

Once described by a concert promoter as "Will Rogers without the rope", Nygaard is an entertainer known for her quick wit and an affable connection with her audience. She is an incredible storyteller, not just as a songwriter, but also in the charming tales she spins between her songs. She earned that skill as she fought to hold an audience's attention night after night and year after year in some dive bar, rowdy honky tonk, or noisy fairground. That's also where Claudia learned how to sing. Her rich, warm alto has a resonance and power that can't be found in younger vocal chords. It is a voice that has learned phrasing from Frank Sinatra, belting from Janis Joplin, subtle nuance from Joni Mitchell, and breathing from an opera coach.

But as strong as Claudia Nygaard may be as an entertainer and singer, it is her love of writing that has kept her going. After winning several songwriting competitions on the west coast, Claudia loaded everything she owned into a U-Haul and made the move to Nashville, Tennessee. Landing a job as a staff songwriter on Music Row, Nygaard felt as though she was on her way up until the manager who had signed her was let go, and the company began to decline. Shortly after, Capitol Records developed an interest in her as an artist, and once again she felt she was finally gaining ground until they decided that rather than sign new artists they needed to slash their roster. She has had some up times too, winning the coveted Kerrville Folk Festival "New Folk" songwriting competition, and being chosen an "Emerging Artist" at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, but there have been plenty of times when the long road she has traveled has seemed all uphill and she has been confronted with the choice to hang it up or go on. Each time, her passion for writing has made her choose to go on. While her fans have never lost faith in her and she has always had the support of her peers, it is only now, with the release of her new album "Let The Storm Roll In", that this "late bloomer" has finally achieved that long overdue respect from radio and press.

And the respect has been impressive. A review from **Maverick Magazine**, a well-known roots music monthly in the UK, gave the CD five stars, saying "*What a find this is! There are twelve real stunners here...impossible to pick a favourite...*" **No Depression**, an equally significant roots magazine in the United States had this to say: "*the immigration saga that accompanies "Big Country" and the naiveté of youth recalled in "J.C." are relayed from both a tender and touching perspective. Yet Nygaard's also got a scrappy side to her as well. Her sympathetic homage to Miss Kitty of TV's "Gunsmoke" fame is absolutely hilarious... Nygaard is a knowing soul and Let The Storm Roll In offers a torrent of wisdom and reflection.*" Blogger Wildy Haskell, of **Wildy's World** called it "*one of the finest singer/songwriter/storyteller collections in recent memory.*" And in the newspapers, Jeffrey Sisk, of In Tune, **The Daily News** in Pennsylvania called it "*Nothing short of amazing... Comprised of a dozen equally excellent tunes, "Let The Storm Roll In" reveals Nygaard to be one of Americana music's hidden gems.*"

Radio has embraced it just as warmly, and the eclectic CD has cross-platformed to land on three different radio charts. The opening track "Big Country" climbed to **#8 on the Folk DJ chart** and "Let The Storm Roll In" stayed on the chart an unprecedented four months with EVERY track getting airplay. The CD went to **#26 on the Roots Music Americana chart**, and then went to the enviable **#1 on the Roots Music Country chart**. It has been warmly received in Europe as well, and has recently been added to the **in-flight play list on Lufthansa Airlines**. Claudia Nygaard may have been a long time coming, but she has definitely arrived.

For photos and more information:

<http://www.claudianygaard.com/epk.html>

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