



"Songs that rival the likes of Guy Clark and Ian Tyson". Sing Out Magazine

CLAUDIA NYGAARD is a mesmerizing storyteller and cinematic lyricist whose songwriting reveals a daredevil's vulnerability and a complete lack of self-censorship. Her songs range from the heartfelt and tender accounting of the death of her father in "His Left Side", to the hilarious pitfalls of dating in "Dumped By A Dweeb", the sensual and intimate "I Want To Touch You", and the scrappy defiance of "Me Too". Her songs are humorous, irreverent, romantic, hopeful, heartbroken, insightful, and sometimes joyously silly. She writes about life, all of it.

Nygaard has just finished recording **"To Race the Wind"**, a new album due to be released in early **2027**. The recording is gorgeous, with cinematic lyrics, heart pounding melodies, stunning tracks provided by Nashville A-list musicians, and the best vocals of Claudia's career so far. Many of the songs on this album are stories told in western metaphors, but this is not your grandfather's western music. The daughter of a California rancher, Claudia writes with a raw authenticity, and the stories have more in common with the series "Yellowstone" than a Roy Rogers film. The songs on this album are about endangered Mustangs, people who have been hurt so much they are afraid to risk love again, and people who have to make tough choices.

"Nygaard is fearless. She often says in song what many of us would be reluctant to admit in conversation".

Country Standard Time

And Claudia's storytelling isn't limited to her songwriting. The songs come sandwiched in between outlandish, funny and frequently self-deprecating monologues that are delivered by a lush amber honey voice that is powerful, resonant, and deeply emotional. Claudia is an engaging and captivating performer who connects to an audience with humor, warmth, and vulnerability.

"The Old Sloop Coffeehouse audience loved Claudia Nygaard. Her heartfelt songwriting and engaging stories moved the audience from laughter to tears."

Old Sloop Coffeehouse

Nygaard worked her way through college as the **weather anchor for the nightly news at KNTV television** in San Jose, California. She was 22 when she met her first love, Chuck McCabe, a performing songwriter. A month later she was laid off, and two months later she traveled with Chuck to Cape Cod Massachusetts where she thought it would be fun to play music for the summer. Apparently that summer never ended, but after a few years their love affair did and she decided to drag her broken heart to Los Angeles. She had caught the songwriter bug from McCabe by then, and in L.A. it became a raging fever. She had a gig playing in Hermosa Beach, and began sliding a few of her own songs into her shows. Encouraged by the response, Claudia began entering songwriting contests – and winning them. **She was chosen one of the top ten songwriters of the year by The Los Angeles Songwriter's Showcase, followed by wins from the American Song Festival, Music City Song Festival, and a Wrangler Star Search competition.** She also won the talent competition at the world-famous **Palomino Nightclub** in North Hollywood, and began playing there frequently. It was where she received her first encore and standing ovation. Her band was also honored that year, picked as **one of the top three bands in Southern California by Music Connection Magazine.** The validation emboldened Claudia to pitch her songs to music publishers in Hollywood. Impressed with her writing they encouraged her to move to Nashville, informing her that anything she pitched them would just be forwarded to their Nashville office.

Meanwhile, Claudia's parents met the manager of the Amador County Fair at a bull sale in Reno, Nevada and gave him a cassette tape. He invited Claudia to perform at the fair and Nygaard discovered a way to make a living singing that didn't include noisy drunks and cigarette smoke. She performed **at over 250 fairs and festivals** all over the United States, sharing the stage with Glen Campbell, The Marshall Tucker Band, Marty Stuart, John Anderson, Tracy Lawrence, John Michael Montgomery, Shenandoah, Mel McDaniel, Riders in the Sky, Comedian Jerry Clower, The Forester Sisters, David Frizzell and Shelly West, Faron Young, Kitty Wells, Bobby Bare, Jimmy Rodgers, Jim Stafford, The Drifters, and the Ventures. Then she got her heart got broken again, so she sold everything that wouldn't fit into a 5x8 U-Haul and left L.A.

In Nashville, Nygaard spent three days curled up in the fetal position, and then steeled her resolve and began wearing out the sidewalks on Music Row. She finally **landed a job writing songs for Greenwood Music Publishing.** As a salaried writer she enjoyed being able to laser focus on her craft, but discovered she missed the connection with a live audience. She also missed the freedom to write songs without trying to second guess what country radio would play. Nygaard was further disenchanted with her job when Greenwood's owner fired the manager who signed her, and put his young and very inexperienced daughter in charge. Taking advantage of a "key man" clause in her contract, she bought her songs back, and got back behind the wheel, performing at over 250 fairs and festivals across the United States.

Claudia had long dreamed of touring Europe, so she was delighted when shortly thereafter she was invited to perform in a showcase at "Midem", a music conference in Cannes, France for international record labels. The morning after her showcase, as she walked through the convention trade show and passed the Ireland/UK booth, she was greeted with an eruption of spontaneous applause. She was quickly **signed by the UK record label Round Tower Music** who released her first commercial album **"Somewhere Else To Go".** The collection of all original material charted in the **top five on the European Americana radio charts**, and was also one of **the top twelve records of the year in 2001** for

the UK magazine Country Music Roundup. In December of that year, CMRU chose Claudia for the cover of the magazine. Claudia has now performed in a dozen foreign countries... a dream come true, and she has since performed in a dozen foreign countries.

Returning home, and back out on the open road, there was always a notepad on a clipboard laying on the passenger seat next to her. One day rolling down a highway, a song idea hit her so hard she pulled over to the shoulder to write it. The song was "J.C.", and written about the hired hand of her childhood. She won the Texas Kerrville Folk Festival Songwriting competition with "J.C." and a song titled "Georgia Boy", and the win changed her life by introducing her to a network of festivals, venues, and radio shows that support singer-songwriters. With a dozen new songs she was excited about, (two of them having just won the contest,) it was time to make another album, and "Let The Storm Roll In" was born. Storm received incredible reviews as it rose to **#1 on the Cashbox Roots/Country Chart**. Well known reviewer Gary Von Tersch wrote in legendary folk music magazine "Sing Out" that her songs *"rival the likes of Guy Clark or Ian Tyson"*. Other reviews had this to say:

"The whole disc is a sheer delight and a far cry from the mainly faux country material coming out of Nashville these days... this is exceptionally good." FIVE out of five stars!"

Maverick Magazine

"One of the finest singer/songwriter/storyteller collections in recent memory."

Wildy's World

Claudia has performed at countless fairs, festivals, theaters, concert halls, listening rooms and clubs in all fifty States and a dozen foreign countries, but she had never thought of that as a huge accomplishment until one night when she ran into John Prine at a movie theater in Nashville. He asked her how she was doing and she replied "Well I'm not playing venues the size you are, but I'm making a living singing my own songs". "You're a big success then aren't you?" Prine replied, to which she thought for a moment and then responded "Yes, I'm a very lucky girl." Later that night when she arrived home **she penned a song titled "Lucky Girl" that won the Tumbleweed Music Festival Songwriting competition**. The song became the title cut of her third album, and charted at **#3 on Folk Radio**. The Lucky Girl album received generous airplay on Roots and Americana radio stations and charts across the country, and some very lavish praise...

"Any one of these songs could emerge as a country standard."

Lee Zimmerman / Goldmine

"A powerful and honest set of country songs. An impressive set from a master musician"

Jeremy Searle, Maverick Magazine

With a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theater it was just a matter of time before the idea for a musical would pop into Nygaard's head. When it did, it took the form of a children's show based on the beloved fairytale **"Little Red Riding Hood"**. So in October of 2023, Claudia added playwright to her list of accomplishments when it was presented by the Academy of Performing Arts in Massachusetts.

The musical is a modern interpretation of the timeless fairytale, and Claudia has woven life lessons into both the songs and the narration.

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