

CHRISTOPHER WYZE & THE TELLERS



STUCK IN THE MUD

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STUCK IN THE MUD

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Get to know Christopher Wyze & the Tellers and *Stuck in the Mud*

Christopher Wyze

Hailing from the southern hills of Indiana, singer-songwriter Christopher Wyze draws his music from the story-rich *musicsphere* of the Mississippi Delta. Wyze and his songs spring forth from a life thoroughly lived, and well-imagined.

Two decades a blues standards frontman, Wyze has paid his dues on the way to becoming a formidable songwriter and singer of his original works. His lyrics cover the full spectrum of blues emotion – from hope, harmony and humor – to hard times and utter, soul-wrenching calamity.



Wyze penned all 13 stories in Clarksdale, Mississippi. “In the Delta,” he says, “songs seem to write themselves.” A co-writer joined Wyze for each song: Producer Ralph Carter, Cary Hudson, Gerry Murphy and Eric Deaton. Wyze handles lead vocals the whole way, backed by some stone-cold mojo from the “the Tellers.”

Stuck in the Mud, Christopher Wyze’s debut release, represents the sophomore album issue for Big Radio Records. But they’re no newcomers. The label, from preeminent Memphis music distributor Select-O-Hits, can trace its roots to the rockin-est era in American music history. Founded by renowned Sun Records and Studios hit-maker and producer Sam Phillips in 1960, Select-O-Hits is still run by the Phillips family.

With *Stuck in the Mud*, Christopher Wyze is earning distinction as an ascending lyricist, vocalist and recording artist. In December 2023, Nashville Songwriters Association International named Wyze a “One to Watch” rising songwriter.

***Stuck in the Mud* Recording Sessions**

Muscle Shoals, Alabama – Ten of the album’s tracks (1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) were recorded and mixed at Ivy Manor at the Shoals in Muscle Shoals (Sheffield). Sessions took place over five days: May 23-27, 2022.

Clarksdale, Mississippi – Three tracks (2, 4, 8) were recorded in the Juke Joint Chapel at the Shack Up Inn in Clarksdale on March 18, 2024. *Hard Work Don’t Pay* (8), was written by Christopher Wyze and Gerry Murphy the night and morning before the session and was recorded live. *Stuck in the Mud*, the video single release, was filmed during the session. Clarksdale tracks were mixed at Ivy Manor at the Shoals.

Featured Artists

Eric Deaton is torchbearer for the North Mississippi Hill Country Blues. He plays acoustic, electric and slide guitars on the Muscle Shoals sessions. He and Christopher Wyze co-wrote *Good Friend Gone*. Eric has recorded and played with blues luminaries R.L. Burnside, Kenny Brown and T-Model Ford – also with Robert Finley and Hank Williams, Jr. Deaton has been a key contributor to the Grammy winning sound of The Black Keys, notably on their hill country blues album *Delta Kreme*. He joined the band for their 2022 U.S. Tour.

Cary Hudson is a singer-songwriter, and former front man for the beloved rock band, Blue Mountain. His many solo albums include *Ole Blue*, *Hobochitto*, *Town and Country* and *Bittersweet Blues*. He and Christopher Wyze co-wrote *Stuck in the Mud* and *Soul on the Road*. He plays acoustic, slide and electric guitars on the Clarksdale session. Called “a national treasure” by Jason Isbell, Hudson was named 2023 Music Artist of the Year by The Southland Music Line. Cary continues to tour, write and record songs in a career spanning 30 plus years.

Ralph Carter produced *Stuck in the Mud* and co-wrote eight tracks with Christopher Wyze (1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13). Carter is an accomplished multi-instrument musician, composer, producer and performer. He reached rock and roll prominence early in his career as tour Musical Director, bass player and song co-writer with Eddie Money. Ralph co-wrote the smash hit *Shakin* and half the songs on Money’s acclaimed *No Control* LP. In the blues world, Carter has written, toured, recorded, performed and/or produced with Sugar Ray Rayford, Franck L. Goldwasser (Paris Slim), Douglas Avery and Jon Gindick.

Three Hours from Memphis

Headed south, on my way
Started out years ago there today
Said you wanna make it, you gotta play
Down in Memphis – where you make your hay.

I had big dreams to be a big thing
Whiskey and women my full-time fling
They talked about me, said this kid can sing
But he ain't Elvis – he won't be the next King.

Three hours from Memphis,
a million miles from home
Fifteen years of paying dues, I did it on my own
Gonna be makin' hit songs, yeah, that's a fact
I'm three hours from Memphis,
and I'm not turning back.

Kids don't dig those Blue Suede Shoes
The rappin' beat that's what they choose
Ya' ask me that groove's old news
I sing the real stuff, I sing the blues.

Mr. Music Man you know we haven't met
You said you liked my YouTube set
And what you see is what you get
So, sign me up you won't regret.

Three hours from Memphis,
a million miles from home
Fifteen years of paying dues, I did it on my own
Gonna be makin' hit songs, yeah, that's a fact
I'm three hours from Memphis,
and I'm not turning back.

City lights twinklin' in the distance
Those Beal Street neon lights
are gonna shine for me.

On the road in my run-down car
In the back my run-down guitar
Said I wouldn't get here, I wouldn't go far
But I'm almost to Memphis – gonna be a star.

Three hours from Memphis,
a million miles from home
Fifteen years of paying dues, I did it on my own
Gonna be makin' hit songs, yeah, that's a fact
I'm three hours from Memphis,
and I'm not turning back.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*

Stuck in the Mud

No steps forward, no steps back
Struggle now and have a heart attack
Broke and busted, don't have a dime
I'm goin' down slow, Lord I'm doin' my time
After the flood, I'm stuck in the mud.

Stuck in the mud, stuck in the mud
I said I'm stuck in the mud,
said I'm stuck in the mud
After the flood
I'm stuck in the mud.

Stuck in the mud, stuck in the mud
I said I'm stuck in the mud,
said I'm stuck in the mud
After the flood
I'm stuck in the mud.

Tried and tried, ain't nothin' brewin'
Nothin' to show, but my undoing
Pulls ya down, down below
Under the ground, nowhere to go
After the flood, I'm stuck in the mud.

Stuck in the mud, stuck in the mud
I said I'm stuck in the mud,
said I'm stuck in the mud
After the flood
I'm stuck in the mud.

Out of gas, I admit
I'm done fightin', I quit
Six feet down, no denyin'
End of the show, I'm done lyin'
After the flood, I'm stuck in the mud.

Stuck in the mud, stuck in the mud
I said I'm stuck in the mud,
said I'm stuck in the mud
After the flood
I'm stuck in the mud.

Stuck in the mud, stuck in the mud
I said I'm stuck in the mud,
said I'm stuck in the mud
After the flood
I'm stuck in the mud.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Cary Hudson
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI) and Cary Hudson (BMI)*



Cotton Ain't King

Have you been down to the Delta?
Have you seen the cotton grow?
Spreading out on wide horizons,
almost hear it, ain't it so
But close your eyes
and listen for the truth that can console
Close your eyes and listen to the blues,
it makes you whole.

Sprouted down near Clarksdale,
in the rumblin' Delta soil
Sprung up from fertile ground,
and heat, your blood'll boil
But close your eyes
and listen for the truth it can unspoil
Hear the sound of cotton,
music wrung from pain and toil.

Can you hear it growing
Echoes through a cotton boll?
Songs of blue, restoring life
Crying from the soul.

Can you hear it growing
Echoes through a cotton boll?
Songs of blue, restoring life
Crying from the soul.

The work it had a lyric, rockin' gentle,
movin' slow
The work, it had a rhythm, bale hook and a hoe
But close your eyes and listen,
for the truth that can bestow
A life worth stickin' round for, for music,
free from woe.

Now looking back on hist'y, a life and time of lore
An old world built from cotton,
mostly gone, so most ignore
But close your eyes
and listen to the stories from before
The lasting bounty men raised up
is the blues forever more.

Can you hear it growing
Echoes through a cotton boll?
Songs of blue, restoring life
Crying from the soul.

Cotton ain't king
Blues is the king.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*



Soul on the Road

I met a fella, he told a story
'Bout life on the road
Of truckin'...totin' boxes
But never carryin' no load
Feet, always movin'
And roots that never grow
A mark never left
No place to go.

I met a fella, he lived his days
Collecting miles, not friends
No wife, no kids
Just a road that never ends
Said he once had dreams
Of a house and a yard
And feet, in one place
9 to 5, workin' hard.

When your life is the road
And the road is your life
You live a windshield movie
And what the heck's an ex-wife?
Regrets, yeah I have 'em
He said: "I am what I am"
A soul on the road
Next stop Birmingham.

I met a fella, he's in a hurry
He said...I gotta go
...cargo to move
This here's the show
Well I'd, like to get to know ya
But those days have passed me by
But don't ya worry 'bout me
Home's the sweet by and by.

When your life is the road
And the road is your life
You live a windshield movie...and brother
What the hell's an ex-wife?
Regrets, yeah I have 'em
He said: "I am what I am"
A soul on the road
Next stop Birmingham
He said a soul on the road
Next stop Birmingham.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Cary Hudson
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Cary Hudson (BMI)*



Back to Clarksdale

Did things I shouldn't tell
Got sick, ain't well
Watched it all go to hell
So, I hide inside my shell.

When I'm gone, I disappear
Where I live, second tier
Had another bad year
Don't know why I live here.

Here it's all what I lack
So, memories I unpack
Of a Mississippi shack
Sayin' come home, come back.

Only place I really know
Only place I wanna go
Not New York or Tennessee
Only place that knows me
Slow down, exhale
Goin' back, goin' back to Clarksdale.

Time is on a slow roll
Feelin free, no toll
Delta air make you whole.
Fill you up, fill your soul.

When I pay my dues
My life is what I lose
Just lay me down in those muddy shoes
Down in Clarksdale, play the blues!

Only place I really know
Only place I wanna go
Not New York or Tennessee
Only place that knows me
Slow down, exhale
Goin' back, goin' back to Clarksdale.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Gerry Murphy
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Gerry Murphy (BMI)*



Muscle Shoals Sessions - Ivy Manor at the Shoals



Ralph Carter



Gerry Murphy



*Justin Holder, Brad Kuhn,
Gerry Murphy*



Michael Shane Wright



Eric Deaton, Ralph Carter

Clarksdale Session - Shack Up Inn



Cary Hudson, Christopher Wyze



Coop Cooper, Cary Hudson, Christopher Wyze



*Gerry Murphy, Cary Hudson,
Christopher Wyze, Douglas Banks*



Ralph Carter, Christopher Wyze

Money Spent Blues

Hey Mr. Advertising Man,
I bought your cigarettes
Tried a pack, smoked a few, ain't quit 'em yet
I got the blues, got them money spent blues
Buy everything you want to sell me,
from my head down to my shoes.

Give me fifteen minutes baby,
then you'll have my full attention
Gonna save fifteen percent,
you know I have the right intention
And the blues, got them money spent blues
When you make a proposition,
you know I can't refuse
Got them money spent blues.

I was always kinda partial to product information
I see a new commercial
and I won't change the station
Fifty bucks at Wal-Mart
could get me through the week.
But I'm broke, I'm down,
I'm busted, on a monetary losing streak
I got the blues, I got them money spent blues
Buy everything you wanna sell me,
from my head down to my shoes
I got the money spent blues.

You may already be a winner,
two for one ends right away
My spending habit ain't my fault,
there's a sucker born every day
I got the blues, I got them money spent blues
When I buy the latest gizmo,
you know it's hardly news
Got them money spent blues.

Gonna buy you a diamond, baby, what I'm gonna do
But I gotta call by midnight,
cause they're gonna send me two
I got the blues, I got them money spent blues
Well, I go out to buy you jewelry
come home with bowling shoes
I got them money spent blues.

Now honey, if my phone rings over there,
don't pick that up
We gotta wait for that check to clear, so that'll be OK
And you know another thing
I want to sort of bring up,
You know that preacher did say this thing
was for better or worse, right?
And wait a minute...oh yeah...
and for richer or poorer
So, you kinda knew what you were getting into.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*

Caution to the Wind

Caution, look both ways
Caution, bow down, obey
Caution, gonna take you there
Caution, damn right, nowhere.

Throw caution to the wind
Or play it safe again
Till the bitter end
The past...is not your friend.

Future, up ahead
But can we change instead?
What is it that we dread?
All gonna, all gonna end up dead.

Caution, a cryin' shame
Caution, that's what we blame
Caution, don't live for today
Caution, steal your life away.

Throw caution to the wind
Or play it safe again
Till the bitter end
The past...is not your friend.

Caution, look both ways
Caution, bow down, obey
Caution, gonna take you there
Caution, damn right, nowhere.

Throw caution to the wind
Or play it safe again
Till the bitter end
The past...is not your friend.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*



Hard Work Don't Pay

Well I once had a job
Work hard every day
Oh well I once had a job
Work hard every day
Gonna tell you what I learned
Hard work, it don't pay.

You sell your soul to the man
Lose your sense of right and wrong
You sell your soul to the devil man
Lose your sense of right and wrong
Well I done cashed me may last paycheck
Sat down and wrote this song.

Break your back, it'll break your soul
Coal dust take your life away
Break your back, it'll crush your soul
Coal dust take your life away
Well I'm through workin' in that hell hole
I done made my get away
I'm gonna go up North.

Well I once had a job
I worked hard every day
Oh well I once had me a job
I work hard every day
Gonna tell you, tell you what I learned
Hard work, it don't pay.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Gerry Murphy
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Gerry Murphy (BMI)*



Life Behind Bars

Sign out front says, "Blues Every Saturday Night"
The singer's a prisoner to darkness,
never glimpses daylight
He's addled and bitter, pasty, drunken and slight
And the dreams that he hoped for have vanished,
gone is the fight.

Years ago, he had hopes and ambition,
loved music and cars
And women and movies and road trips,
he reached for the stars
But the bottle replaced 'em, chased him;
he didn't get far
Now he's playin' for bar tabs and tips
and plays busted guitars.

When it's music, we call the bars measures
When he's drinking, he calls the bars home
So he's locked up and calls
the bars walls that surround him
All it's earned him, is life lived alone.

He ended up nowhere, traded his talent for scars
He said, "12 bars of music's for losers,
not superstars"
Sleepin' in alleys and never with Sallys,
it all turned out so bizarre
Just a free ride to prison, not his decision,
an inmate and not a rock star.

Used to show up and sing,
now he drops in to mutter...and drink
It's a story too old scrawled out in indelible ink
Once celebrated, now inebriated: no work,
no play, he can't think
The bars that remind him,
they chain and they bind him,
he's lived up his life on the brink.

When it's music, we call the bars measures
When he's drinking, he calls the bars home
So he's locked up
and calls the bars walls that surround him
All it's earned him, is life lived alone
All it's earned him, his life lived alone.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*

Looking for my Baby

I'm lookin' for my baby,
fellas don't mean maybe
Been searching for a long, long while
I'm guessing that she's here,
wish she would appear
Then you gonna see me smile
She may not be around,
she's just waitin' to be found
I'm looking for my baby,
hope she hasn't left this town.

Have you seen her fella?
Wearing something yellow
Cutest girl you've ever seen
Man, you just can't miss her,
I can't wait to kiss her
I'll be the King, she'll be my Queen
I search both night and day,
but there's no girl that got away
I'm looking for my baby,
cause I never had a girl, hey, hey.

I'm lookin' for my baby,
fellas don't mean maybe
Been searching for a long, long while
I'm hoping that she's here, hoping she'll appear
Then you gonna see me smile
She may not be around,
but she's just waitin' to be found
I'm looking for my baby,
hope she hasn't left this town.

I'm looking for my baby,
hope she hasn't left this town
I said I'm looking for my baby,
hope she hasn't left this town.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*



Wake Up

Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!
Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!

People! You got to wake up!
People! You got to make up!
People! You got to shake it up!
Move on.

People! Doesn't matter whose fault!
People! Stop the assault!
People! It's all got to halt!
Move on.

Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!
Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!

People! It's time to go!
People! It's time to grow!
People! Get on with the show!
Move on.

Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!
Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!

People! Let's find the way!
People! Enter the fray!
People! Live for today!
Wake up!

Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!
Wake up! Wake up!
You gotta wake up!

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyzę Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*



Good Friend Gone

I was born in Indiana, cross the line from Illinois
I was born in Indiana, cross the line from Illinois
I wasn't such a good kid
Me and my friend were bad boys.

We didn't listen to our teachers,
didn't listen to his Dad
Didn't listen to our teachers,
didn't listen to my Dad
Didn't listen to our preachers
We had the blues, we had 'em bad.

Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone.

Those teenage blues, they drove us crazy
We didn't do the things we should
Didn't do the things we supposed to
But we sure did the things we could.

Didn't take up no profession
He started selling nasty stuff
Hangin' out with nasty people
They were mean and they were rough.

Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone.

There's a moral to my story
There's a lesson to my tale
You get a choice 'tween death and prison
You damn sure better choose that jail.

And now that it's all over
All I can do is go alone
I can't see my buddy now
But I'll see him when I get home.

Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone
Good friend gone.

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Eric Deaton
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Eric Deaton (BMI)*



Someday

I'm leavin' this place, Indiana
Starting a rock and roll band
Up in the hills of Montana
Someday, got it all planned.

Pulled out my notebook a couple of times
Thinkin' through all that I've got to say
The sentences, paragraphs, pages and rhymes
Start tomorrow. Kinda busy today.

The lady, I've seen her, she hasn't seen me
But that doesn't matter at all
She's my kind, my type,
you know I like what I see
Prob'ly marry that woman come fall.

So what if I don't write that letter?
And so what if she don't know my name?
Day after tomorrow, gonna be a go-getter
Someday, someday I'll win the big game.

Sure I got a job, got my eye on another
Be workin' half day for full pay
Drive a truck or a train whichever I druther
I'd run down there, just can't get away.

Most fellas have dreams, but they don't pursue it
Me, I'm the opposite kind
Man of action, a doer, on the move, I don't quit
But don't rush me, got a lot on my mind.

So what if I don't write that letter?
And so what if she don't know my name?
Day after tomorrow, gonna be a go-getter
Someday, someday I'll win the big game.

Someday I'll look back on all I've completed
Won't fit on my big old tombstone
Adventures and riches ten times repeated
Best get started before I'm full grown.

So what if I don't write that letter?
And so what if she don't know my name?
Day after tomorrow, gonna be a go-getter
Someday...someday...

*Written by Chris Wirthwein and Ralph Carter
Christopher Wyze Music LLC (BMI)
and Working Stiff Music (BMI)*



CHRISTOPHER WYZE & THE TELLERS

STUCK IN THE MUD

Muscle Shoals, Alabama Sessions (tracks 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)

Christopher Wyze – Lead vocals, harmonica, backing vocals, hand percussion

Eric Deaton – Electric guitar, slide guitar, acoustic guitar, backing vocals, hand percussion

Gerry Murphy – Electric bass, backing vocals, hand percussion

Justin Holder – Drums, percussion

Brad Kuhn – Piano, Hammond organ, Wurlitzer electric piano

Ralph Carter – Backing vocals, percussion

Brad Guin – Baritone sax (*Lookin' for my Baby*)

Dylan Johnson – Washboard percussion (*Good Friend Gone*)

Producer – Ralph Carter

Engineers – Michael Shane Wright, Colin Lott

Recorded and Mixed – Ivy Manor at the Shoals, Sheffield, Alabama

Clarksdale, Mississippi Session (tracks 2, 4, 8)

Christopher Wyze – Lead vocals, harmonica

Cary Hudson – Acoustic and slide guitar

Gerry Murphy – Electric bass

Douglas Banks – Drums

...and in Muscle Shoals:

Eli Hannon – Hammond organ, percussion

Dana King – Backing vocals

Producer – Ralph Carter

Engineer – Levi Land

Microphones – Gary J. Vincent, The Clarksdale Sound Stage

Recorded – Juke Joint Chapel, Shack Up Inn, Clarksdale, Mississippi

Mixed – Ivy Manor at the Shoals, Sheffield, Alabama

Mastering – Brian Hazard, Resonance Mastering, Huntington Beach, California

Illustrations, Cover & Design – Koldo Barroso www.koldobarroso.com

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Band info, lyrics and more, at: www.christopherwyze.com



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