

CLAIRE LYNCH



"For me, selecting songs is one of the most difficult steps in the process of producing an album. I ask of each song: Is it great lyrically? Does it capture the heart and delight the musical senses? Does it evoke a fresh, inspired interpretation from me and the band? As the list narrowed down to these twelve, surprisingly, I found a common thread weaving through them: choice and consequence. Our lives are a fast-flowing river of choices, from the momentous to the trivial, each choice followed by consequences, predictable or not, intended or not. Whatcha Gonna Do turned out to be the ideal title for this collection of compelling songs. Here they are – I've made my choices! I hope you'll find them not only entertaining, but a worthy soundtrack for your own river of choice and consequence. ~ Claire

1. GREAT DAY IN THE MORNIN'

Dana Cooper — Drunk Eye Music, BMI
Here's to making each day the very best it can be. Special thanks to Paul Craft — who has always known a good song!

2. HIGHWAY

Irene Kelley and Claire Lynch — Chrysalis Music, ASCAP; Universal-Songs of PolyGram International, Inc./Butter and Egg Music, BMI
Funny how heartbreak can turn into a journey of endless freedom...

3. THE MOCKINGBIRD'S VOICE

Pal Alger & Kent Agee — Rosebriar Music/Scout And Jen Songs, ASCAP; Songs of RPM/Lucky Daddy Music, BMI (admin by Songs of RPM)
The first cheatin' song I've ever cut — I love its earbiness. Sad set of circumstances — but a superb song, nonetheless.

4. FACE TO FACE

Donna Ulisse & Claire Lynch — Uncle Hadley Music, ASCAP; Thrill Hill Music, BMI
I may not be able to see God or tangibly prove His existence, but I still believe... and it really feels good.

5. THAT'S WHAT MAKES YOU STRONG

Jesse Winchester — Bug Music, ASCAP
Ever been smitten by a song? I was by this one! You choose to love, become weak, find strength! Thanks, Jesse — not only for having a heart as big as Memphis — but for gracing my album with your voice.

6. WHATCHA GONNA DO

Russ Pahl & Rich Wayland — Cristofori Music/Bright Like The Sun Music, BMI; Russ Pahl Music, BMI
I know one thing I'm "gonna do"... enjoy playing this song!

7. CRAZY TRAIN

Anna Owens, Georgia Middleman & Gary Harrison — Sony/ATV Melody/Treehugger Tunes, BMI; Green Hills Music/Traveler's Ridge Music, ASCAP; Sony/ATV Melody/Frayserman Music, BMI
Many of us have been on a train like this before... it's a hard choice to "jump" — but you may be glad you did!

8. A CANARY'S SONG

Garth Brooks/Buddy Mondlock — Major Bob Music, Inc./EMI April Music, Inc./Sparkling Gap Music, ASCAP
What beautiful language from Buddy and Garth in expressing a miner's mindset of hope and destiny.

9. MY FLORIDA SUNSHINE

Bill Monroe — Bill Monroe Music, BMI
Florida was one of my early musical stompin' grounds. Loved this song from the first moment I heard it on an 8-track tape — eons ago!

10. WIDOW'S WEEDS

Jennifer Kimball & Claire Lynch — EMI Blackwood Music, Inc./Garden Angel Music, BMI; Songs of PolyGram International, Inc./Butter and Egg Music, BMI
Poor Ivy! We all think she's making the wrong choice... Reckon it's up to her, though.

11. BARBED WIRE BOYS

Susan Werner — Frank Chance Music, ASCAP
Susan Werner's eloquent portrayal of a generation of men from the rural Midwest easily translates for me to those in rural Alabama or northern Ohio. Although my dad was a computer programmer, he was very much a "barbed wire boy". His choices blessed me, and it's hard to put a price on that...

12. WOODS OF SIPSEY

Claire Lynch — Thrill Hill Music, BMI
Clara Phillips ("Granny", as we called her) had lived the city life, but preferred her beloved home in the backwoods of central Alabama. There she lived and died with no qualms whatsoever.

CLAIRE LYNCH BAND:

JIM HURST - acoustic guitar, electric guitar, 5-string banjo, mandolin on "Great Day in the Mornin'", vocals

JASON THOMAS - mandolin, fiddle, vocals

MARK SCHATZ - bass, clawhammer banjo

ADDITIONAL GUESTS:

KENNY MALONE - percussion

ERICK JASKOWIAK - percussion on "Great Day in the Mornin'"

JESSE WINCHESTER - vocals on "That's What Makes You Strong"

Produced by **CLAIRE LYNCH**

Production/Arrangement Assistance by **JIM HURST, JASON THOMAS** and **MARK SCHATZ**

JESSE WINCHESTER appears courtesy of **APPLESEED RECORDINGS**

Recorded and mixed by **ERICK JASKOWIAK** at **COMPASS SOUND STUDIO, Nashville, TN**

Additional recording by **KYLE FORD** at **COMPASS SOUND STUDIO, Nashville, TN**

Mastered by **TOBY MOUNTAIN** at **NORTHEASTERN DIGITAL RECORDING, Southborough, MA**

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Album design by **BETH THOMAS**

Notes by **JIM HURST**

ASTONISHING. REMARKABLE. MEMORABLE.

These words are sometimes overused, but in Claire Lynch's case, each word is perfectly suited to give you a hint at what you're about to discover. I'll let you choose your own, and I suggest you start writing them down from the first note. And if you're like me, you'll remember this day.

My first experience hearing Claire's voice was in 1986, and those words came to mind. Astonishing. Remarkable. Memorable. I've never forgotten it. Never will.

ASTONISHING. Her voice so elegantly pure, unlike anyone I had ever heard until that moment. I was immediately taken with the sweetness of her tone and delivery on the ballads and tender songs. I enjoyed her playfulness and energy with the up-tempo tunes and felt the band almost dancing around her.

REMARKABLE. She has a way with words that allows the listener to absorb the story right along with the performance. She seemingly has the ability to convince me that each line of each song is personal to her, as if she lived every word and note, and that adds an extra dimension that can't be bought or sold.

MEMORABLE. Similar to the feelings of a first bicycle ride, a first date, or holding a baby for the first time, Claire's voice has one holding their breath for a few seconds... then a few seconds more. Such a rare occurrence to hear such fresh sounds and tones. It has kept me captivated for a good while now.

Since 1995 (when I was pleasantly surprised by her phone call inviting me to audition for her band), I have shared the stage with Claire across the country and in some parts of the world, and it has been a wonderful musical adventure for me. From my first appearance with the five-member *Front Porch String Band* at a festival in Ohio, until today with her four-

member *Claire Lynch Band*, I have learned, grown, shared joy and art, experienced happiness and angst, and done my best to handle disappointments and successes while sharing this odyssey with Claire and her band members. That *FPSB* quintet was a homecoming of sorts for me personally, as I had played in the bands of some big name country music acts before coming back to bluegrass. And what a way to come home, working with this wonderful artist with this amazing voice and delivery.

Claire is the leader of the *CLB* and she is the reason we are all here. While she is the producer of her last few recordings, she allows our musicianship an opportunity to shine through. She has faith that we'll approach her with a sincere respect for the lyrics, melodies, and her vocal maneuvering while adding our own musical ideas and energy to help complete each song.

Those of you who are hearing her for the first time will want to discover her other recordings and her story. Happily, there is much more to enjoy.

Many of you already know Claire's music and talents, and I'll bet you also remember when you first heard her voice. You are her fans and eagerly look forward to her next musical effort.

Well, here it is: *Whatcha Gonna Do*.

This recording is a stellar display of Claire's breadth of talent as well as her ability to maintain her distinctive musical identity that you've loved from that memorable day one. This is essentially a *Claire Lynch Band* project, with Claire engaged in a musical dialogue with her band members, Jason Thomas, Mark Schatz, and me. Claire has added Kenny Malone on percussion on a couple of songs, and the legendary singer-songwriter Jesse Winchester joins Claire on one of his gems: "That's What Makes You Strong".

While you are listening you'll hear what I hear each and every day - I have a great job - and I think your reactions to the stories, melodies, and grooves will place you in a state of mind that will for a few moments allow you to forget about anything outside of this experience. And, if you're like me, you'll find this occurs every time you listen to Claire's voice. I watch as audience members are deeply immersed in Claire's music and their emotions come to the surface in wonderful moments as they share Claire's art. *Remarkable*.

I'll tell you that people all over the world have the same reaction as I did, and as we all do now. They are elevated by the beauty, intelligence, and sincerity of the lyrics and stories. They are moving and dancing with the grooves and feels. And they are transported to memories and past experiences - real and imagined - while sitting in their seats in concerts, in the car, or at home. *Astonishing*. But, the real one-word description here is *Memorable*. This is something that you'll never forget. This musical experience, this emotional voyage, this audible immersion, this voice, this day... *Memorable*.

Enjoy!

Jim Hurst, 2009

This time around, I set out to make a recording that would showcase the three amazing players who stand by me night after night on stage - Jim Hurst, Jason Thomas and Mark Schatz. This is a magic moment in my musical history, and I am thrilled to be able to document their individual awe-inspiring talents and the synergy that occurs when we collaborate. There are a number of people who have helped to make this happen, so let me give my heartfelt thanks....

...to Jill Stargardt for making sure we're in the right place at the right time!
...to Jennifer Hardiman for pitching in and taking charge
...to Susan Stewart for keeping me STRAIGHT!
...to Nora Jane Struthers for "lackey" detail
...to Beth Thomas for amazing talent and kindness
...to Betty Wheeler for being a genius and granting valuable time
...to Eileen Carson, Judy Hurst, Patti Petow, Suno and Jenchilla for friendship, love and encouragement
...to Jim, Jason and Mark - for the respect, the kindness and care, the talent and sacrifice, the creative ideas, the inspiration, the passion, the commitment, the laughs, the painstaking angst, the hard work and endless travel arrangements... Shall I go on?
...to Team Rouser - for giving me a break as always
...to Erick for turning me on to green curry chicken and that little Greek place... (cha cha cha!) Seriously, though... you're an amazing engineer - I'm honored.
...to Alison and Garry for your generosity and friendship
...to Tim Drake, David Tamulevich and Charlie Daban - for taking us on and keeping us busy!

And a personal thanks...

...to Christy and Kegan - for pursuing your destinies - you make me proud, my loves!

This album is dedicated to two people we lost in 2009 - they were dear to me and I'll always remember...

...Jerry Hinton - my very first bluegrass fan Horsepens 40, 1975 - you never lost your love for the music and all of us!

...Ed Dye - friend, educator, mentor, advocate, humorist. You'll be much missed, Ellsworth!



The Claire Lynch Band
exclusive representation:

THE ROOTS AGENCY
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