

## CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS . NASHVILLE SINGER SONGWRITER PERCUSSIONIST

Singer-songwriter Christopher Williams has always named his cars, and he speaks of them with the personal familiarity of old friends. His 1995 Accord, which he affectionately calls "Grace," was stolen recently. This is never a good thing. It is especially bad, however, for a musician who depends upon travel for his livelihood; and even worse for someone two days away from relocating 1100 miles across the country. As with all things lost though, it is usually the search itself that gives us meaning. And if you've ever heard a song or seen a show by Williams, you may understand that the seeking is only as hard as we make it; the journey is only as meaningful as we let it be; and that Williams' storied search for Grace is, in fact, something upon which he has built his musical career.

With seven years of nonstop national touring and playing more than 120 shows a year, this New York born, Bucknell University Religious Studies graduate and former Seattle pre-school teacher, has built a faithful following of listeners around the country and independently sold more than 21,000 records, primarily off of the stage. Williams writes songs that are honest and confessional, yet never overbearing, and performs with an appealing mix of intense passion and humor. He is a songwriter and an entertainer, engaging audiences with what the Boston Phoenix calls "lush guitar work, sweet soaring vocals," and sometimes the added percussive vulnerability of a single djembe hand drum.

And in a newly discovered, Dylan-esque manner, Williams has begun telling stories from the stage in between songs. "It just started happening, this musical story spilling," Williams explains. "They have always been a part of my show, but never sung spontaneously without direction. Of course, it doesn't always work, but that is the joy of performing. Receiving the grace of an audience there to experience the spontaneity of a real live show...I love those moments."

Armed with this attitude, Williams continues to stay true to his musical course by delivering *When I Was Everything*, his most moving and accessible studio record to date. With a sense of arrival, Williams speaks into the changes that life brings, as rather suddenly life has changed for him in but one year's time; not only with a move (in a rental car no less) from Boston to Nashville and a death in his family, but with finding love and getting married. "This new record's title is dead-on for this time in my life," Williams explains. "Not that I was everything before, because I certainly wasn't. Not that I had everything. I was just living in a way that was very self-focused, and through these life passages, I realized something had to change."

Following Williams' last release, *side streets*, which was hailed by the *Boulder Weekly* as "an impressive recording...(where) with warmth and intimacy, Williams challenges his listener ever so gently while offering familiar images and hard-won wisdom," *When I Was Everything* follows emotional suit, but backs up eleven new songs with a musical and lyrical edge not heard in previous recordings. From a bold Tom Waits cover; to a song about the pain of losing a child in a meaningless war; to the Judas tainted relationship song that speaks to boundaries, Williams sings with a conviction that is refreshingly strong on this new CD. "Trouble is what trouble does/When the stakes are high and that simple kiss comes to shove/I can see why you would sell me out when you could/Your soul was getting lost and the money was getting good/But I did not draw that line for you to cross over."

This consistent passion continues to propel Williams forward and make other musicians take notice. During the last several years, Williams has opened for, and in some cases accompanied on djembe and vocals, such renowned performers as David Wilcox, the Waifs, Peter Himmelman, Patty Larkin, the Subdudes, and Arlo Guthrie, in a wide array of venues ranging from Boston's Sanders Theatre to Nashville's Bluebird Café to San Francisco's Great American Music Hall. He's also brought his music to the main stage at many of the nation's finest folk festivals, including New York's Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, Colorado's Rocky Mountain Folks Fest, Texas' Kerrville Folk Festival, and Oklahoma's Woody Guthrie Festival.

In moving to Nashville, Williams gives up a respectable Boston career, including his penchant for repeatedly selling out three-show nights at Cambridge's famed Club Passim and garnering three Boston Music Award nominations. But, Williams remains confident in trusting the twists and turns his life's journey brings. The morning he crossed the Massachusetts state line to return his rented car and fly back to his new home in Tennessee, he received a phone call from the local authorities. Grace had indeed been found.

## QUOTES

*"the silence in between* ripples with pop smooth urban romanticism." *the boston globe*

"...this man becomes one with his gift of music, delivering one of the fullest and innovative performances i have ever seen...Williams is the real thing." *the gordon chronicle*

"*the silence in between* is an assured, smooth, even lush production. Williams demonstrates delicate finesse. He's a craftsman." *the boston herald*

"Christopher Williams manages, somehow, to be insightful and sensitive without a whiff of sugar or sentimentality. This is refreshing stuff in a world of over-the-top, aren't-I-just-so-deep young writers. Williams is a warm, perceptive individual. What he sees in us, and in himself, is seen through the window of his songs."

*Marilyn Rea Beyer. wumb radio 91.9 fm*

"...these songs offer a sound that is strong, vital and reflective of the heart and soul of Americana...these are songs that people can relate to; that they have lived; that they understand and find comfort in hearing." *indie songwriter magazine*

"With its intimate, late-night vibe and assured sense of craft, Christopher Williams' latest CD lifts him into a gifted field...this collection radiates an understated, elegant quality that tugs the listener by the the heartstrings. Blessed with a warm glowing tenor and the smarts to let his songs speak for themselves, Williams delivers his material in a way that's refreshingly devoid of the overkill characteristic of many up-and-comers." *performing songwriter magazine*

"*the silence in between* provides a prime example of why this former preschool teacher should continue making music for a living. Williams introspective lyrics provide a door through which the listener can walk with him. Both musically and lyrically, *the silence in between* is a strong album, full and rich with detail." *dirty linen*

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