

Bruce Robison – Bio

Bruce Ben Robison was born circa 1966 in Houston, Texas and was initially raised there. He's the second of four children. His older brother, Charlie, is a country music performer/songwriter, and they have two younger sisters, Mimi and Robyn. Robyn is also a musician, and records as Robyn Ludwick. Bruce was relatively young when his family relocated to Bandera in the Texas Hill Country. These days, Bandera is the self-proclaimed Cowboy Capital of the World, with countless dude ranches to be found in the immediate vicinity. Initially Mr. Robison was a high school sports coach [these days he's a rancher], while Mrs. Robison ran a local cafe. Eventually the couple split up.

While still attending high school Bruce and Charlie joined a local garage band and according to Bruce, played "*Rodeos, dances, anywhere they'd let us.*" The band performed a mix of cover songs made famous by rock acts like Bloodrock and Grand Funk Railroad. Following graduation from high school, Bruce, at six-foot-seven-inch tall, enrolled at West Texas State University [in Canyon, Texas] on a basketball scholarship. He spent three seasons there, then dropped out. After trying out at a number of jobs, in 1989 Bruce settled in Austin. Brother Charlie was already living there. It took a few years for the younger Robison brother to seriously start pursuing a career in music. During the early nineties, Bruce and Charlie spent a couple of years playing in the Austin based country band Chaparral, and Bruce began writing songs during this period.

When Kelly Willis cut her final, self-titled MCA album in 1993, her drummer and then-husband Mas Palermo collaborated with Charlie on "One More Night" and with Bruce on "Take It All Out On You." Also circa 1993, ex-Wagoneer Monte Warden's self-titled debut on Watermelon included "The Only One," a tune he co-wrote with Bruce. What's more, on the CD, Warden and Willis performed the latter song as a duet. Bruce released a self-titled disc during 1995 on the now defunct Austin based imprint Vireo Records. The recording sessions took place at Cedar Creek Studios in Austin, and were produced by Rudolph P. Schmidt. Concurrently Mike Niland's Vireo label released brother Charlie's debut recording "**Bandera.**" During the same year Bruce contributed to the compilations "**Austin Country Nights: Rising Stars From The Heart Of Texas**" and "**True Sounds Of The New West.**" On the former recording, released by the now defunct Watermelon label, Bruce sang "Poor Man's Son," while on the latter it – released by Freedom Records – he performed "Angry All The Time." Bruce married the Oklahoma born, Virginia bred, Austin based country singer Kelly Willis during 1996. Charlie married Emily Erwin of the Dixie Chicks, on May 1st 1999. In 1997 Bruce signed a songwriting deal with Nashville based Carnival Music.

Robison's eleven-track sophomore effort, "**Wrapped,**" produced by Lloyd Maines, was initially released on his own Boar's Nest label. The following year Bruce was the first artist to be signed by the Lucky Dog label, a subsidiary of Sony Music. Three new tracks appeared on the twelve-song Lucky Dog version of "**Wrapped,**" including a re-recording of "Angry All The Time" from Bruce's debut album. Recorded at various locations in Austin and Nashville, Robison self-produced his third album "**Long Way Home From Anywhere.**" The ten-song collection, also on Lucky Dog, featured seven numbers written or co-written by Robison, and also contained songs composed by Austin based writers Damon Bramblett and Joe Dickens. The disc also featured a song by Yusuf Islam [aka the sixties British singer/songwriter turned imam, Cat Stevens]. The album featured a reprise of "Travelin' Soldier," from "**Bruce Robison,**" and the song became a # 1 Country hit [# 25 Pop] for the Dixie Chicks during late 2002. The twelve-track Lucky Dog release "**Unleashed Live,**" recorded at Gruene Hall, featured four tracks each by Bruce, Charlie and another Texas based performer, Jack Ingram.

By late last century other artists were covering Robison's songs on a regular basis so he asked to be released from his recording contract in order to concentrate on writing. Unusually, Sony let him go with no strings attached. Numerous artists have covered Bruce's songs - his wife Kelly [on "**What I Deserve**" [1999] covered two, and on "**Easy**" [2002] covered another], brother Charlie, Tim McGraw [in 2001 he scored a # 1 Country single with "Angry All The Time"], Garth Brooks, Lee Ann Womack and Gary Allan. Bruce and Kelly's first child, Daryl Otis [a.k.a. Dodie], was born in 2001, and was followed by twins - Benjamin James and Abigail Esme - a couple of years later. In 2001 Bruce released "**Country Sunshine**" on his own Boar's Nest label. Recorded in Nashville at Jack Clements' Cowboy Arms Hotel and Recording Spa, Robison self-produced the disc. On Boar's Nest, for Christmas 2003, Bruce and Kelly released a seven song seasonal recording "**Happy Holidays.**" Bruce and Kelly's fourth child, Joseph Willis, was born on 10th January 2006. During early April 2006 Robison's "**Eleven Stories**" was

released by the fledgling Texas Hill Country based label Sustain Records. The label is based in Kerrville, Texas. At the end of the year Messrs. Robson and Willis updated their 2003 Christmas release with an eleven-song version of "**Happy Holidays**" which was issued by Willis' label Rykodisc. In May 2006 the Austin based Premium Records label issued the seven-song Bruce Robison mini album "**It Came From San Antonio.**"

Also released by Bruce's Premium label, "**The New World**" was a rich and musically varied ten song collection, nine of which were penned or co-penned by Bruce. Curiously, hot on the heels of the subjectively varied and rather tuneful "**The New World**," early in 2009 Robison released the ten-song, collection of hits "**His Greatest.**" Rather than being a compilation of old recordings, Robison has adopted the premise that his songs are 'living, evolving entities' and as such the disc contains newly recorded interpretations.

Discography

with Charlie Robison & Jack Ingram - "**Unleashed Live**" [2000] :

with Kelly Willis - "**Happy Holidays**" mini album [2003] ; "**Happy Holidays**" [2006] :

Solo - "**Bruce Robison**" [1995] ; "**Wrapped**" [1997] ; "**Long Way Home From Anywhere**" [1999] ; "**Country Sunshine**" [2001] ; "**Eleven Stories**" [2006] ; "**It Came From San Antonio**" mini album [2007] ; "**The New World**" [2008] ; "**His Greatest**" [2009] :

Arthur Wood.

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