

Christy McWilson - Bio

Christy McWilson was raised in Sonoma County near San Francisco, California. Music, and country music in particular, was a big influence on her life as she was growing up. While attending San Francisco State University, McWilson met her husband to be Scott McCaughey. The couple relocated to Seattle in 1980, where McCaughey wrote for a local music magazine and went on to join a local band, The Young Fresh Fellows. As for McWilson, she performed in a series of bands including the sixties inspired, all girl trio, The Dynette Set. They released a few singles and appeared on compilation albums through the opening half of the eighties. The Dynette Set's rendition of McCaughey's song "Seed of Love," was included on the Rhino female only, compilation "**The Girls Can't Help It**" [1984]. When The Dynette Set broke up, for a number of years Christy played in a series of short-lived groups, and also provided backing vocals on Young Fresh Fellows albums. Her voice can clearly be heard on the Fellows radio hit "Amy Grant." A rockabilly band which featured a stand-up drummer and vocalist, Leroy "Blackie" Sleep, had opened for the Dynettes one time. McWilson subsequently formed The Power Moves with Sleep, a Seattle native. Christy has described their music as a cross between "*Little Richard and Wanda Jackson.*" By the early nineties, the Moves had evolved into the quintet, The Picketts. Released by the PopLlama label, The Picketts first recording was a 7" single cover of the Clash's "Should I Stay Or Should I Go" and they followed it with their debut album "**Paper Doll**" [1992]. It featured band penned originals, by McWilson and Sleep, plus covers of Tom Waits' "Heart Of Saturday Night" and the rockabilly standard "Let's Talk About Us." The Picketts also issued a 7" EP featuring instrumental tunes, "**The Picketts Pick It,**" on the Cruddy label. Ken Irwin of Rounder Records signed the band after seeing them perform, *unofficially*, at the 1994 S*SW Music Conference in Austin, Texas. Two albums, "**The Wicked Picketts**" and "**Euphonium**" followed. The latter collection was produced by Steve Berlin of Los Lobos. By the late nineties, The Picketts toured less and less, and fell apart due to apathy rather than any internal dispute. At the close of last century McWilson was approached by one her long time heroes – Dave Alvin – who enquired whether she was interested in making a solo album. Christy had approached Alvin, years earlier, with a proposal that he produce an album by The Picketts. He had turned that offer down. Christy, however, didn't refuse the opportunity Dave offered. At the time she described her feelings as "*flattered, a little scared and thrilled, all at the same time*" - and the somewhat hesitant "**The Lucky One**" was the result of their work in the studio. The album didn't sell well, partly due to projected tours being cancelled. This year, as March merged into April, McWilson undertook a nine-show, eight-city tour with her husband and Dave Alvin to promote the release of her second album "**Bed Of Roses.**" Considering their twenty-year long relationship, it was the first occasion that Christy had been on the road with Scott. In the mid-nineties he became an auxiliary member for R.E.M., while continuing to work in Seattle and elsewhere with the Fellows, Minus Five, and two other bands.

Discography.

with The Picketts : "**Paper Doll**" [1995] ; "**The Wicked Picketts**" [1995] ; "**Euphonium**" [1996]

Solo : "**The Lucky One**" [2000] ; "**Bed Of Roses**" [2002].

Arthur Wood

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