

# MARK LEMHOUSE

## BIOGRAPHY

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Fresh off the bus in Memphis Tennessee, **Mark Lemhouse** arrived in the Home of the Blues armed with a guitar style that echoed Beale Street's acoustic blues legends, but in service to a distinctly contemporary songwriting voice filtering the emotion of Hank Williams Sr. through the attitude of Tom Waits. He quickly set himself apart from the traditionalist pack, earning recognition as a top-shelf songwriter and guitar player. His debut album, *Big Lonesome Radio*, earned two 2004 W.C. Handy Award Nominations (the "Grammy" of the roots Blues genre) for "Acoustic Album of the Year" and "Best New Artist Debut".

He supported *Big Lonesome Radio* with a heavy touring schedule, sharing stages with the likes of Jimmie Vaughan, Junior Brown, Alejandro Escovedo, The Asylum Street Spankers, and Roy Bookbinder. Lemhouse has crisscrossed the country, performing as a main stage act at such festivals as the prestigious Heritage Music Festival, the Portland Waterfront Blues Festival, Pickathon, and the King Biscuit Blues Festival, as well as playing clubs, coffeehouses, dives, honky tonks, and the star-studded 2004 Handy Awards Show – all of it with nothing more than his great songs and outstanding guitar work.

*Big Lonesome Radio* was acclaimed by MOJO Magazine as one of the Top 10 albums of the year in its genre, charted as #4 overall in the Roots Music Radio Report and was heralded by *Sing Out! Magazine* as the work of a "stellar songwriter and guitarist." Lemhouse's haunting waltz "Edwin's Lament" confirmed such an accolade when it was included in John Singleton's ("Boyz 'n the Hood") new film production, "Hustle and Flow." The placement is no small achievement, considering that the film earned both the Dramatic Audience and Cinematography awards at 2005's Sundance Film Festival, and is currently being released nationwide by Paramount/MTV.

Although he's earned acclaim in the blues world and that music lies at the heart of his style, Lemhouse looks far beyond the Delta in his highly anticipated new Yellow Dog release. When someone tries to pin Lemhouse down, asking what type of music he plays, the singer-guitarist often quotes his friend Alvin Youngblood Hart, himself echoing Duke Ellington: "Good Music." *The Great American Yard Sale* is much, much better than good, as the genre-defying guitarist plugs in and heads out to edgy Americana territory, armed with banjo and electric lap steel as well as his deftly fingerpicked National guitar.

Even as he broadens his musical palette, Lemhouse's eclectic formula of songwriting and guitar work places you in the middle of a world that's as confounding as it is redeeming. With material that reflects the eye of a seasoned traveler, his songs run the gamut of love, insanity and hard-won life lessons. As Lemhouse offered in a recent interview, "Well, I just write about things the way they happened... But I lie too. If they don't happen that exact way, I'll start makin' stuff up in a heartbeat... It's a song, not a police report, at least not yet anyway."

**YELLOW DOG**  
RECORDS