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MUSIC / NEW MUSIC

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

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LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III

Haven't Got the Blues (Yet)

(429 Records)

From an enfant terrible, once hailed as a new Bob Dylan, to a wary but not too grumpy older man, Loudon Wainwright III, now 68, has stayed the course for well over four decades, charting his life and times with pungent light verses and biting turns of phrase. As a folk singer-songwriter, he has proved that a sharp sense of humor can make for verses more durable than earnest self-examination. You can't whine about the aging process but you can confront it and soften it with laughter. And on the best songs in "Haven't Got the Blues (Yet)," his 23rd studio album, he faces impending decrepitude with a smile on his face, buoyed by Zoloft.

"Brand New Dance," which opens the album, is a frantic rockabilly swinger in which he announces a new dance craze "sweeping the land," where "First you get out of bed, then you attempt to stand." There's a silver lining. "But that senior discount that's my kind of treat/Cause when I get on the bus, you got to gimme a seat."

As the song continues, the point of view widens to embrace an older person's cynicism on Election Day: "One of them fools is bound to win/But it's the same old same old all over again."

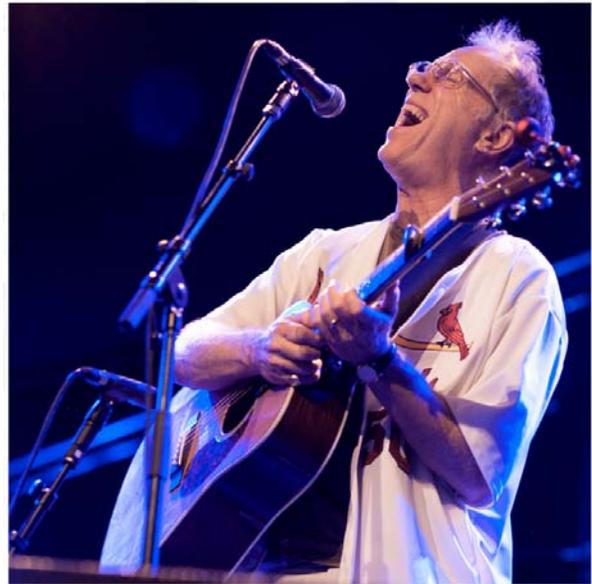
Mr. Wainwright's music hasn't changed significantly. It varies from good-timey folk to spare folk-blues. If his voice has thinned a bit, he still conveys the jovial intimacy of a born storyteller whose public self-mockery exorcises demons.

In the best songs, brilliantly terse turns of phrase transcend chatty humor. In "I Knew Your Mother," he tells one of his children: "So don't forget that I knew her when/Love was the means and you were the end," and concludes, "Yeah, Happy Birthday but I want to be clear/I loved your mother and that's why you're here."

Most honest of all is the album's title song, in which he describes himself as "a leaky supertanker" with a "lot of oil to spill," then adds, "I'm feelin' sorry for myself but if I don't, who will?"

As long as Mr. Wainwright keeps turning out bons mots that incisive, like that, he'll be ahead of the game.

— STEPHEN HOLDEN



Wainwright III
Haven't Got the Blues (Yet)
429 Records

Loudon Wainwright III, now 68, confronting aging on his new album and softens it with humor.
Philip Ryalls/Reddema via Getty Images

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LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III

"Mr. Wainwright has proved to be far and away the most candid diarist among the singer-songwriters who... brought confessional poetry into popular song... Mr. Wainwright wrings more human truth out of his contradiction than any other songwriter of his generation."
- *New York Times*, **Stephen Holden**

*Latest CD - Haven't Got The Blues Yet, featuring fourteen original songs written by Loudon, and was produced by his long-time musical collaborator David Mansfield, who also backed Loudon on 2010's Grammy-winning *High Wide & Handsome-The Charlie Poole Project*. The new album also features banjo master Tony Trischka, saxophonist Steve Elson (David Bowie, Radiohead, Stevie Ray Vaughn), drummer Sammy Merendino (Michael Jackson, Billy Joel, Lou Reed) and bassist Tim Luntzel (Rosanne Cash, Bright Eyes). In addition, Aofie O'Donovan and Loudon's daughter Martha Wainwright lend backing vocals. Out September 9, 2014

*4 CD/1 DVD Box Set *40 ODD YEARS* released May 3, 2011. Produced by Loudon and celebrated writer/director/producer Judd Apatow (Knocked Up; The 40 Year Old Virgin; Undeclared), the set is a career-spanning collection chronicling the wealth of Loudon's work from 1969 to 2010

*Featured on the 2012 GRAMMY Winner (Best Compilation Soundtrack) for *Boardwalk Empire: Volume 1* - performing the Irish folk song "Carrickfergus."

*Loudon's "Days That We Die" from *Older Than My Old Man Now* is featured on Judd Apatow's film, *This Is 40* (2012)

*Featured performer at the 15th Annual Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize Ceremony to honor Ellen Degeneres on October 22, 2012. At the ceremony, Loudon performed "Mark Twain", which he wrote specifically for the occasion

*Loudon's "In C" from his album *Older Than My Old Man Now* was ranked on NPR's 100 Favorite Songs Of 2012. The album itself was ranked on American Songwriter's Top 50 Albums Of 2012

*2010 GRAMMY Winner (Best Traditional Folk Album) for *High Wide & Handsome: The Charlie Poole Project* (Two previous GRAMMY nominations: *I'm Alright*, 1985 and *More Love Songs*, 1986)

*Best Album of 2009: *High Wide & Handsome* per NPR's Ken Tucker (Fresh Air & Entertainment Weekly magazine)

**High Wide & Handsome* named among 2009's best per Village Voice, No Depression, FolkWax and fRoots

*Songs covered by Johnny Cash, Bonnie Raitt ("You Can't Fail Me Now" on her 2013 GRAMMY-winning album, *Slipstream*), Earl Scruggs, Mose Allison, Big Star, Freakwater, Norma Waterson, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Rufus Wainwright



*Film acting credits include: Mike Birbiglia's *Sleepwalk With Me*, Judd Apatow's *Knocked Up* (for which he also recorded the soundtrack) and *The 40 Year Old Virgin*; Christopher Guest's *For Your Consideration*; Cameron Crowe's *Elizabethtown*; Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*; Tim Burton's *Big Fish*; *28 Days* alongside Sandra Bullock, Viggo Mortensen and Steve Buscemi; *Jacknife* alongside Robert DeNiro and Ed Harris; Neil Simon's *The Slugger's Wife*

*Television acting credits include: *Parks and Recreation* (w/ Amy Poehler); *Undeclared* (w/ Seth Rogen & writer/producer Judd Apatow); *Grounded for Life*; *Ally McBeal*; *The T.V. Show* (w/ Rob Reiner, Christopher Guest, Harry Shearer, Michael McKean, Billy Crystal) where he played keyboard with the early Spinal Tap, which made it's first appearance on this program; a recurring role on *M*A*S*H* and a role as the original musician/sidekick on *The David Letterman Show*



BIOGRAPHY

Loudon Wainwright III

Haven't Got the Blues (Yet)--or *HGTB(Y)*, for short—is the 26th album in the long and illustrious career of Loudon Wainwright III.

It follows his acclaimed *Older Than My Old Man Now* album from 2012—"my death n' decay opus," as Wainwright calls it.

In *HGTB(Y)* he broadens his scope with a 14-song, genre-bounding set ("eclectricity," he calls it) dealing with varied subject matter including depression, drinking, senior citizenship, gun control, heartbreak, pet ownership and New York City's arcane practice of alternate side-of-the-street parking.

Uproariously rocking lead track "Brand New Dance," which evokes The Big Bopper's classic "Chantilly Lace," is "me moaning and groaning about the horror and embarrassment of personal physical diminishment in the wider context of the world in which we live today," Wainwright states.

Continuing this theme, "The Morgue," which Judd Apatow originally commissioned for Wainwright's dysfunctional dad character to sing to Adam Sandler in an episode of *Undeclared*, finds "death and decay meeting shit love," he says.

Likewise, "Harlan County" was written as a theme song for the TV show *Justified*, and also like "The Morgue," was rejected. Wainwright's version on *HGTB(Y)*, however, features the beautiful vocal harmonies of singer-songwriter Aoife O'Donovan. The backup vocals of Wainwright's daughter Martha, meanwhile, appropriately grace "I Knew Your Mother."

Other cuts of special Wainwright interest include "Man & Dog," which was motivated by his dog Harry (the inspiration of other Wainwright ditties, including, he says, his yet-to-be-recorded "Puppy Hate"), and "Spaced," a klezmer/Balkan gypsy-styled look at that alternate street parking theme. He takes a typically topical turn on "God & Nature" ("A bit of Episcopalian gospel composed after watching the 2012 Vice Presidential Debates") and his new seasonal favorite, "I'll Be Killing You This Christmas."

Wainwright notes that he toyed with the idea of calling the album *Town & Country*, then saw the cover photo of the famous forlorn clown Emmet Kelly, after which "Haven't Got the Blues (Yet)" became the title track. Another standout track, "Depression Blues," invokes such great blues men as Blind Lemon Jefferson and Sleepy John Estes, not to mention Shakespeare and "old Sigmund."

Producing *HGTB(Y)* was Wainwright's long time musical collaborator David Mansfield, who has backed him on numerous previous recordings as instrumentalist/arranger, including the 2010 Grammy Award winning *High Wide & Handsome-The Charlie Poole Project*.

"I got to know L'il Davey about 23 years ago, on a flight back from Vancouver—I think—to New York," Wainwright recalls. "I've worked on and off with him ever since, on TV, in the recording studio, and on the road. He's been featured as a player and arranger on some of my best records including *History*, *Grown Man*, *Last Man on Earth*, and *High Wide & Handsome*."

Other top players grace *HGTB(Y)*, and include ace banjoist Tony Trischka, saxophonist Steve Elson, drummer Sammy Merendino, bassist Tim Luntzel, and another longtime musical cohort, Chaim Tannenbaum, on background vocals.



Born in Chapel Hill, N.C. in 1946, Loudon Wainwright III came to fame when "Dead Skunk" became a Top 20 hit in 1972. He had studied acting at Carnegie-Mellon University, but dropped out to partake in the "Summer of Love" in San Francisco, and wrote his first song in 1968 ("Edgar," about a lobsterman in Rhode Island).

He was soon signed to Atlantic Records by Nesuhi Ertegun, and was lured by Clive Davis to Columbia Records, which released "Dead Skunk." His songs have since been recorded by Bonnie Raitt, Johnny Cash, Earl Scruggs, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, his son Rufus Wainwright, and Mose Allison, among others. In 2011, they were commemorated by the comprehensive five-disc retrospective *40 Odd Years*.

Additionally, Wainwright has co-written with songwriter/producer Joe Henry on the music for Judd Apatow's hit movie *Knocked Up*, written music for the British theatrical adaptation of the Carl Hiaasen novel *Lucky You*, and composed topical songs for NPR's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* and ABC's *Nightline*. An accomplished actor, he has appeared in films directed by Martin Scorsese, Hal Ashby, Christopher Guest, Tim Burton, Cameron Crowe and Judd Apatow.

Wainwright has also starred on TV in *M.A.S.H.* and *Undeclared*, and on Broadway in *Pump Boys and Dinettes*. Most recently, he appeared in the film *Pleased To Meet You* (with fellow music legends John Doe, Aimee Mann and Joe Henry), and created a one-man theatrical show, *Surviving Twin*, which combines his songs and the writings of his late father: Initially developed as part of University of North Carolina's Playmakers series, it focuses on fatherhood—both being a father and having one—and also explores the issues of birth, self-identity, loss, mortality, fashion, and of course, pet ownership. *Surviving Twin* is currently being performed in limited theatrical engagements.

www.lw3.com



PRESS QUOTES

“...Wainwright is as good as he’s ever been. Almost forty years into his recording career, he has not only retained his sharpness of wit but has also learned to cut with greater skill.”

The New Yorker

“ ‘Older’ is a hilarious and self-lacerating take on both the bonds and bondage of family, full of duets and subtexts that would take a family therapist years to untangle. What emerges is common familial strife rendered in uncommon ways. As Loudon sings on the affecting ‘In C,’ ‘And if families didn’t break apart, I suppose there’d be no need for art.’ ”

David Carr, The New York Times, May 11, 2012

“His songs tiptoe audaciously along the boundaries between slapstick and tragedy, and prove time and again that nothing is more serious than comedy.”

Adam Sweeting, The Guardian UK

“Loudon is one of the great national treasures most people aren’t aware of, so for me, it’s very exciting to do something that exposes his work to a larger audience. Loudon’s work is a powerful reminder to me that I must always be honest, funny and true to myself.”

Judd Apatow (Director, “Knocked Up”, “The 40 Year Old Virgin”) On working with Loudon Wainwright III

“High Wide & Handsome is a fine tribute to a criminally unknown minstrel, and it’s another gem in Loudon’s criminally underappreciated catalogue.”

Andy Whitman, Paste Magazine

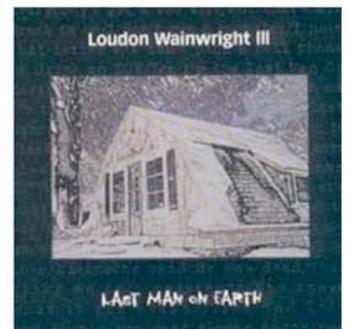
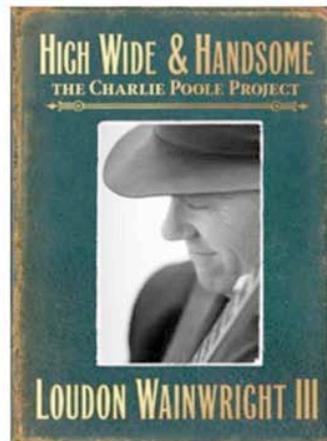
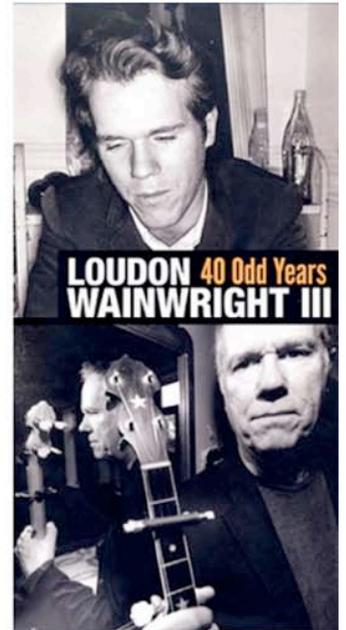
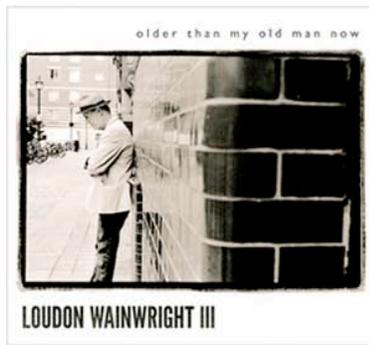
“It... unifies the two sides of Loudon Wainwright: sentimental wiseass folkie and tragicomic character actor. He tweaks lyrics and personalizes arrangements, as [Charlie] Poole did.”

Will Hermes/ Rolling Stone review of High, Wide & Handsome

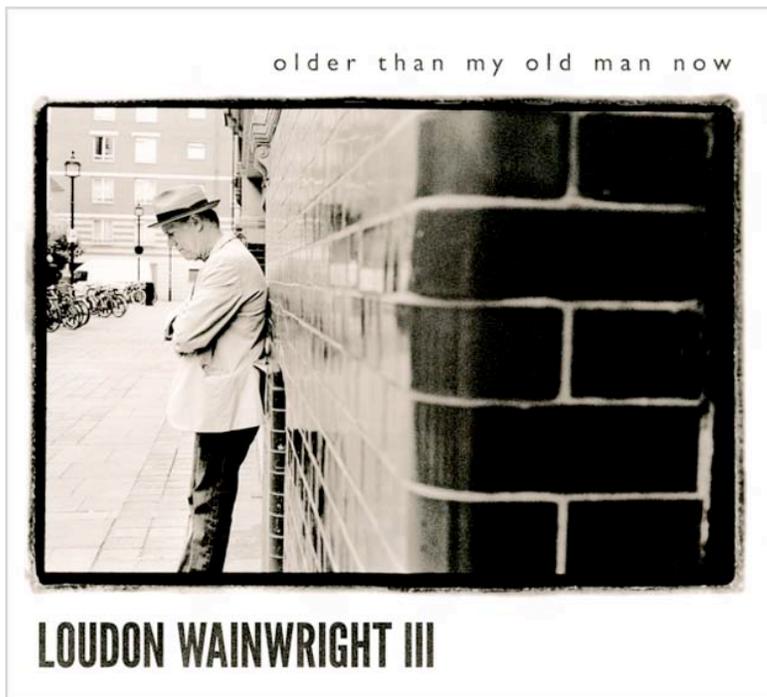


DISCOGRAPHY

- Older Than My Old Man Now (2012)
- 40 Odd Years (2011)
- 10 Songs For The New Depression (2010)
- High Wide & Handsome:
The Charlie Poole Project (2009)
- 2010 GRAMMY WINNER
- Recovery (2008)
- Strange Weirdos (2007)
- Here Come the Choppers (2005)
- So Damn Happy (2003)
- Last Man on Earth (2001)
- Social Studies (1999)
- BBC Sessions (1998)
- Little Ship (1997)
- Grown Man (1995)
- One Man Guy:
The Best of Loudon Wainwright III (1994)
- Career Moves (1993)
- History (1992)
- Fame and Wealth / I'm Alright (1991)
- Therapy (1989)
- More Love Songs (1986)
- GRAMMY Nominated
- I'm Alright (1985)
- GRAMMY Nominated
- Fame and Wealth (1983)
- A Live One (1979)
- Final Exam (1978)
- T Shirt (1976)
- Unrequited (1975)
- Attempted Mustache (1973)
- Album III (1972)
- Album II (1971)
- Loudon Wainwright III (1970)



OLDER THAN MY OLD MAN NOW 2ND STORY SOUND RECORDS



2010 Grammy winner Loudon Wainwright III's latest album *Older Than My Old Man Now* was released on April 17, 2012 through 2nd Story Sound Records. Having now lived longer than his father, esteemed *Life Magazine* columnist and editor Loudon Wainwright Jr., Loudon examines life, family, and mortality with candor and humor on fifteen new original songs.

Older Than My Old Man Now is inspired by the five generations, from Loudon's grandfather to his grandchildren, that are represented and sprinkled throughout this album. His children Rufus and Martha Wainwright, Lucy Wainwright Roche and Lexie Kelly Wainwright and two of their three mothers, Suzzy Roche and Ritamarie Kelly, aid vocally on several songs. Recitations of his father's work and a song co-written by his late first wife Kate McGarrigle called "Over The Hill" are also featured on this album.

Older Than My Old Man Now is produced by Dick Connette (producer of Loudon's Grammy-winning *High Wide & Handsome: The Charlie Poole Project*). "One voice singing a lot about death n' decay can be a bit wearing so I brought in other singers to help with the heavy lifting," says Loudon. Along with his family, other guests include Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Dame Edna Everage, jazz guitarist John Scofield, and Chris Smither.

40 ODD YEARS SHOUT FACTORY

A 4 CD / 1 DVD box set celebrating the career of Loudon Wainwright III, entitled *40 Odd Years*, produced by Loudon and celebrated writer/director/producer Judd Apatow, who has featured Loudon in his films *Knocked Up* and *The 40 Year Old Virgin*, as well as on his TV show *Undeclared*. Judd Apatow writes in his introduction to the set, "I wanted to do what he has always done: to be brutally honest, emotional, hilarious and sweet all at the same time. Whenever I wonder what my tone might be, if I am confused, I just listen to a Loudon Wainwright song."

40 Odd Years is a career-spanning collection chronicling the wealth of Loudon's work, including his early hit "Dead Skunk" (which hit #16 on Billboard's Hot 100 in 1973) and 1973's "The Man Who Couldn't Cry" (covered by Johnny Cash on his 1994 GRAMMY winning album *American Recordings*); through his two GRAMMY nominated albums (*I'm Alright* and *More Love Songs*); to his 2010 GRAMMY winning album *High Wide & Handsome: The Charlie Poole Project*. The first 3 discs chronicle the years 1969-1983; 1984-1995 and 1996-2010; while disc 4 contains rare and unreleased material. The 3+ hour DVD includes an extremely rare documentary made for Dutch television entitled *One Man Guy*, TV appearances on the BBC, *Saturday Night Live*, and *Austin City Limits*, as well as several unreleased concert performances.

According to Loudon, "I'm lucky - it still feels like there's work to do, and I'm doing it. I hate the travel, the airports, the hotels, but I love the job itself, which is writing the songs and doing the shows. As a kid I had a dream of being a performer, and lo and behold it came true... So now the plan is to keep performing and writing for as long as possible."

