

Album: *Little Songs*

Artist: Colter Wall

The inclusion of Wall's long time touring band on 2020's *Western Swing & Waltzes and Other Punchy Songs* was a pivotal moment that created traction to allow Wall to extend his sound to appropriately match his gritty storytelling. The results were spellbinding. The prairie magic continues on *Little Songs* which finds the Saskatchewan native using his signature baritone and authentically driven narratives with fully committed confidence. All of which is certainly a testament to his partnership with bandmate Patrick Lyons who acts as co-producer on the project.

Yet even with these integral steps forward, Wall never ventures into modern territory but instead adds his Folk-tinged contributions to the universal classic catalog. *Little Songs* doesn't try to replicate efforts from Nelson, Cash, or Haggard, but instead centers Wall as a standalone musician in the subgenre all his own. The nuanced lyrical structure of "Standing Here" is a testament to Wall's tireless ability to bring forth the most complicated feelings in a simplistic but accessible way. The sleepy, campfire nature of "Corralling the Blues" is so visceral one can almost feel the spark of the logs flickering as Wall laments about loneliness — a feeling he has clearly felt as a true working rancher. Though it isn't always focused on labor of the land as evidenced on the subtle "Honky Tonk Nighthawk" that is an often hilarious account of Wall's desires. A closer listen to the title track easily provides the reasoning for this selection for the album. When he sings, "You got to fill the big empty, with little songs," it is clearly a memorable brand statement of his steadfast mission with music that is soulfully felt throughout this fine collection.

Some have stated that Wall feels like a mysterious figure in Country music which is likely due to his humble aversion towards absorbing trends to gain more traction within the industry. Less focus on fleeting exposure has allowed him to focus solely on his art form and further remain true to his core. *Little Songs* doesn't just further cement Wall as a staple in the genre, but acts as a truer introduction of the man himself.