



"Hancock embodies the spirits of Hank Williams, Ernest Tubb and Bob Wills in his ferociously swinging honky-tonk—outlaw country to the max."

—**San Francisco Chronicle**

"Hancock takes what was once old and makes it seem like it's always been and always will be." —**AllMusic**

WAYNE HANCOCK

SLINGIN' RHYTHM

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A Wayne "The Train" Hancock album is as refreshing as a beer pulled from a tub of ice on a summer's day. You stick your hand deep into that tub, you know it's gonna be cold, and you know it's gonna be beer, but, dang, if it ain't always a kick how surprisingly *JUST RIGHT* it is. *Slingin' Rhythm* is just right, a finely honed, day-in-the-life brand of **juke joint rhythm** sitting in the sweet spot of American music invention **between country, hillbilly, jazz and western swing.**

And while "The Train" is indeed a throwback, the funny thing is, the more retro he gets, the fresher he sounds. His songs about the everyday and the everyman, with their driving pulse and live-in-the-moment vibe, have a character and passion that go beyond a particular time.

Even though it's been over three years since his last album, *Ride*, no grass has grown under Wayne's boots—he's on the road 200 days a year. *Slingin' Rhythm*, with its emphasis on off-the-cuff instrumental interplay and extended soloing, Wayne and his band drive down the centerline between tight and loose. **Like a latter day Bob Wills**, spontaneously calling out encouragement, or Hank Sr and Ernest Tubb effortlessly knocking out **smile-through-the-pain honky-tonk**, Wayne "The Train" Hancock delivers an unvarnished, BS-free restorative.

When it comes to classic trope of the murder ballad, the subject is often spoken through metaphor or deeply formalized imagery. Not so with Wayne. He gets to the point in "I Killed Them Both" with a chilling bluntness that'd

make Johnny Paycheck nod with approval. The thing is, though, you might miss the tragedy at first because that bouncy back beat will have you on the dance floor. On the languid lament "Dog Day Blues" you can feel the sweat rolling down the back of your neck. The attention to detail in "Small Bouquet of Roses" paints **a distinct picture of heartbreak.**

Wayne teamed up once again with his **producer-for-life Lloyd Maines (Terry Allen, Uncle Tupelo, Dixie Chicks, Ray Wylie Hubbard)** and recorded on the fly, never doing a song the same way twice. That's what gives *Slingin' Rhythm* its relentless energy—and with a band this killer, you've got to let them off the leash. "2 String Boogie" and Merle Travis's "Divorce Me C. O. D." bounce along on crisp, jazzy guitar licks, **referencing masters like Chet Atkins and Hark Garland right up through the neo-retro scenesters like Deke Dickerson.** And the loungey Texas swing in "Wear Out Your Welcome" and the instrumental "Over Easy" freshens up the template laid out by the great Texas Playboy steel player Leon McAuliffe.

As always, **Wayne writes what he knows** with the clarity and honesty of a door slam. Like the title track, both a tenacious statement of purpose and a straight-up, no-chaser bio, says:

"I love the road and my plans are never to retire, and anyone who says that I will is nothin' but a liar...cuz that's how I make my livin', slingin' rhythm"

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