

KATE WOLF • LOOKING BACK AT YOU

LIVE IN LOS ANGELES 1977 THROUGH 1979

1994

1. **The Old Street Singer** 3:16
Kate Wolf • 6/9/78
2. **I Had A Good Father And Mother** 3:24 • *Traditional • 6/9/78*
3. **Hold On To Me Babe** 3:07
Tom Paxton • 6/9/78
4. **Rock Salt And Nails** 5:58
Bruce "Utah" Phillips • 12/15/79
Don Lange guitar & vocal
Nina Gerber guitar & harmonica
5. **The Lover's Return** 2:48
Traditional • 4/30/77
Don Coffin Guitar
6. **Looking Back At You** 3:46
Kate Wolf • 6/29/79
Nina Gerber guitar
7. **Bird On A Wire** 4:17
Leonard Cohen • 4/30/77
Don Coffin guitar & vocal
8. **Springfield Mountain Coal Miner** 5:13 • *Cyrus Clarke • 1977 San Diego Folk Festival*
Don Coffin mandolin & vocal
9. **These Days** 4:08
Jackson Browne • 6/29/79
Nina Gerber guitar
10. **Traveling Day** 1:41
Jack Aldridge & Kate Wolf • 6/8/78

Recording Dates

6/9/78, 6/29/79 & 12/15/79

McCabe's Guitar Shop, Santa Monica, California • Produced by Nancy Covey for McCabe's Productions • Engineered by Alan Kantor

4/30/77

Folkscene Radio Program, KPFK-FM Radio, Los Angeles, California • Produced by Howard & Roz Larman • Engineered by Peter Cole

1977 San Diego Folk Festival, San Diego, California
Recorded for Folkscene

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Bill Griffin

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Max Wolf, and **Owl Productions**.

There was a story that Kate would often tell her audience when we had the opportunity to perform together. It concerned our first meeting at an outdoor concert in Sonoma County in the summer of 1974. According to her, I was wearing a Donald Duck hat at the time. She told this story year after year. For my part, I don't remember ever wearing such a hat but the audience liked the story, or at least the way Kate told it, and I eventually gave up trying to convince her that it was any other way.

Kate had an amazing way of tying things together, not only in her songs, but in her life as well, so it came as no great surprise when a package addressed to me arrived two weeks before she entered the hospital for treatment in her fight against leukemia. The note said Thanks Bill/ The box contained... a Donald Duck hat!

Tying things together is an art. Kate set the standard as far as I'm concerned. This collection of her early work is an attempt at tying some things together myself, and hopefully I'll balance the scale a bit in the process.

It reflects Kate in the days when the stage truly was her kitchen in the old house on Dutton Avenue, and the audience her friends gathered therein. It reflects her music in the days before I was asked to arrange it for her recordings. It reflects my desire to share Kate in the pure folk tradition from which she came, including her versions of songs by some of her favorite writers and stories about her own songs. To share Kate's obvious joy in her work. Most of all her laugh.

My heartfelt thanks to the folks at McCabe's Guitar Shop and to Howard and Roz Larman for having the vision to produce these recordings and the thoughtfulness to make them available.

Bill Griffin
June 25, 1990

THE OLD STREET SINGER

Words & Music by Kate Wolf

You old street singer
some call you a bum
Sitting on a park bench
soaking up the sun
Singing to the children
and the people passing by
With a bottle in a paper bag
and a banjo at your side

Anyone would know you
if they'd take the time to look
Underneath those ragged clothes
they'd read you like a book
They'd see it in your eyes
the corners of your smile
There's more to this old street bum
than too many dusty miles

Your hotel room
must get so very small
A bed and a chair
memories on the wall
In a city full of strangers
far away from times
You've played that banjo ringing
across a picket line

You go downstairs
and out on the street
And set there waiting
for everyone you meet
Some they ignore you
some they ask you why
Some they dance to the tune
you're playing to the sky

Passing through a city
one day you'll see him there
Stop and listen to his tunes
let him know you hear

Put a dollar in the box
that sits there at his feet
Tip your hand to the man
who's singing in the street
'Cause if you stop and listen
you'll hear it every time
Melodies around you
the rhythms and the rhymes
In the stares of passing strangers
questions of the young
The barking of a stray dog
and the memories of a street bum
The barking of a stray dog
and the memories of a street bum

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I HAD A GOOD FATHER AND MOTHER

Traditional

I used to have a real good mother and a father
and they certainly stood the test
And now they are in bright glory
and I know their souls are at rest

They laid a good example to me
they taught me how to pray
Now I've truly converted
and I'm walking in the narrow way

Jesus he said for you to love ye one another
and he loves you
Then you will rightly treat your neighbor
and it won't be hard for you to do

And I know I'm so glad salvation is free
it is free for you and me
If we could only live with Jesus
how happy we would be

And I know this whole round world

do not love me no how
and it is on account of sin
I am thankful Cod is able
for to give me many friends
I am thankful God is able
for to give me many friends

HOLD ON TO ME BABE

Words & Music by Tom Paxton

As my aching head is begging
for a sleep that will not come
I rise and walk the morning streets again
I keep wondering how you're doing
I wonder where you are
I know I'll be alright but I don't know when

Hold on to me babe
wherever you may be
Hold on to me babe
I'm with you always

There was something locked inside you
like a secret burning pain
In a prison where you would not let me go
I was sure we'd find an answer
'til I woke and found you gone
And what it was I guess I'll never know

Chorus

I keep hanging onto something
I don't what it is
At least I know the sound of my own name
And I work as hard as ever
see the same old friends
Something deep inside is not the same

Chorus • 1st Verse • Chorus

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ROCK SALT AND NAILS

Words & Music by Bruce "Utah" Phillips

By the banks of the river
where the willows hang down
And the wild birds all warble
with their high lonesome sound
Down in some hollow
where the waters run cold
It was there I first listened
to the lies that you told

If the young men were blackbirds
the young men were thrushes
I would lay by the hours
in the cold rainy marshes
If the young men were squirrels
with high bushy tails
I'd fill up my shotgun
with rock salt and nails

Now I lie in my bed
and I see your sweet face
The past I remember
time cannot erase
The letters you wrote me
were written in shame
And I know that your conscience
echoes my name

Lord I lie here each night
all alone and I weep
Nothing ain't worse
than a night without sleep
I walk out alone
under the sky
Too empty to sing
too lonesome to cry

If the ladies were blackbirds
and the young men were thrushes
I'd lie there for hours
in the cold rainy marshes
If the ladies were squirrels
with high bushy tails
I'd fill up my shotgun
with rock salt and nails
I'd fill up my shotgun
with rock salt and nails

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THE LOVER'S RETURN

Traditional

So you've come back to me at last
since time once more has set you free
And asked again this heart of mine
whose early hopes were bound in thee

Come close and let me see your face
your chestnut locks are strung with snow
And yet it is the same dear face
I loved so fondly long ago

The same face on one summer's night
bent over low and kissed my brow
I loved you so dearly then
that's all passed over now

Oh no I cannot take your hand
God never gives us back our years
The love and youth we trusted then
was yours my dear in perfect truth

And yet I think I love you still
as a friend loves friend I love you dear
God take you down life's darkened path
to where the skies are bright and clear
God take you down life's darkened path
to where the skies are bright and clear

LOOKING BACK AT YOU

Words & Music by Kate Wolf

I never wrote a song for you
that touched me like you do
We're in this together now
now we're finally through
You always wanted me to feel that way
you gave it all your heart

But I didn't know my mind
and it kept us far apart

Now I see in your eyes
the love I always knew
For the first time in a long time
it's in me
Looking back at you

When you let me go
like I said I wanted to
The farther I went away
the closer I felt to you
Now we both sit here crying
like we never could do before
And the best part of it all
is not lying to you anymore

Chorus

Wipe away the tears
it's funny how love's done
Just when you let it go
it comes back on the run
And if I can give you anything
to take along with you
It's all the love I found
looking back at you

Chorus

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BIRD ON A WIRE

Words & Music by Leonard Cohen

Like a bird on a wire
like a drunk in a midnight choir
I have tried in my way
to be free
Like a worm on a hook
like a night in an old fashioned book
I have saved all my ribbons for thee

And if I have been unkind
I hope you will let it go by
And if I have been untrue
well I hope you know It was not to you

Like a babe stillborn
like a beast with its horn
I have torn everyone
who reached out to me
But I swear by this song
by all that I have done wrong
That I will make it
make it all up to you

I saw a man leaning on his crutch
and he said to me
Why do you ask for so much
But I saw a woman
she was leaning in her door
And she cried out to me
why not ask for more

Like a bird on a wire
like a drunk in a midnight choir
I have tried in my way
to be free
But I swear by this song
by all that I have done wrong
That I will make it
make it all up to you

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SPRINGFIELD MOUNTAIN COAL MINER

Words & Music by Cyrus Clarke

My brother was a Springfield Mountain coal miner
he had three young children and a darling wife
Last night there was a rumble on the mountain
shaft number three came down and took his life
shaft number three came down and took his life

Thirty miners died down in that cave-in
and thirteen times they brought the wagons

down
There's twenty graves we'll be digging in the
churchyard
ten more in the mountains underground
ten more in the mountains underground

Lay down dear brother
daddy's gonna take you home
Mamma's right behind you
to take you home where the cold wind blows

And my sister was a coal miner's daughter
my daddy was a coal miner's son
My family's lived and died on this mountain
down in the ground where the sun don't never
come
down in the ground where the sun don't never
come

One more year I'll be ready for the coal mine
one more year and I'll be going down
Every night when I pass by that mountain
I cry to see my brother underground
I cry to see my brother underground

Chorus • Chorus

© 1977 Dixie Highway Music

THESE DAYS

Words & Music by Jackson Browne

I've been out walking
I don't do that much talking these days
These days
These days I seem to think a lot
about the things that I forgot to do
All of the times I had the chance to

Well I had a lover
but I don't think I'll risk another these days
These days
And if I seem to be afraid
to live the life that I have made in song
Well it's just 'cause I've been losing so long

Well I've quit my scheming
I don't do that much dreaming these days
These days
These days I sit on cornerstones
count the time in quarter tones to ten
Don't confront me with my failures
I've not forgotten them

Now I quit my rambling
I don't do that much gambling these days
These days
These days I seem to think a lot
how all the changes came about my way
And I wonder if I'll see another highway

And I wonder if I'll see another highway

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TRAVELING DAY

Words by Jack W. Aldrich • Music by Kate Wolf

It's a traveling day you know
somehow they just don't start off slow
I must be up again and on my way
For me leaving don't come easy
long goodbyes just don't please me
Even when I know that I'll be back someday

But I'd like to give you
one last fond farewell before I go
To thank you for all we've shared
and I'd like to have you know

This time has been a pleasure
a jewel I'll always treasure
Across the hours and miles of my way

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