

**A Conversation with Loudon Wainwright III
by Frank Goodman (Puremusic.com, 8/2003)**

It was one of life's exciting coincidences. Already past the middle of July, I still didn't have my second of two interviews lined up for the August issue. That's really loose. I'd spent 10 days earlier in the month having fun in Miami Beach. JB's got an ocean view mondo condo on the water, in the heart of the South Beach action. I'd driven a truck full of stuff down from Philly and was enjoying the fruits of my short-lived labors.

Got back to Nashville near mid month, and started thinking about who we'd like to have on the cover, who would look good or go well with Ty Baskette, and be a compelling conversation of a different nature. (As time wears on, even without advertisers, you think more about how your cover looks, and how the interviews differ and yet dovetail, things like that.)

Like the rest of life, a lot of it is simply timing: who's got a new record coming out and wants to talk about it enough to schedule interviews. Most artists consider them a real chore, you see, and many interviewers see that they are. We've often been told, and we're always gratified to hear, that our interviews sometimes feel or read a little differently than most.

A gang email crossed my desk from a publicist friend. It said that Loudon Wainwright III had a great new live record coming out. So here I'd been presented with an exciting possibility that coincided with an acute need. If only I could get him...one of the greatest singer songwriters of his generation, and father to one of the greatest of the succeeding one (the inimitable Rufus Wainwright). I have a close mutual friend in Nashville who's been a folk figure since the 60s, Tom Mitchell, and LW3 references abound among Tom's many funny stories, so I felt like I knew the guy a little already.

Received a copy of Loudon's soon to be released album, *So Damn Happy*, it's fabulous. Not just great songs, but he's a super funny master of the audience throughout, radically intelligent entertainment. The collection is culled from live performances at Largo in Los Angeles and The Mystic Theater in Petaluma, CA. The accompanists supreme on the disc are Van Dyke Parks on piano, Richard Thompson on guitar, David Mansfield on fiddle, guitar, and mandolin. Their contributions are stellar, off the scale. And Martha Wainwright, Loudon's daughter, also joins him for a duet on "You Never Phone." This is as good a live record from a singer songwriter as this writer can call to mind. At some point, come over to our Listen page and see what we mean (and by August 19th, you'll be able to buy it).

The artist has a lot going on, as the acting side of his life has also picked up in a major way. He had a near hit with FOX in a series called *Undeclared* and he appears in Tim Burton's upcoming film *Big Fish*, with huge screen stars the likes of Ewan McGregor, Jessica Lange, Albert Finney, Danny DeVito, and Steve Buscemi. (Some of his past credits include *Ally McBeal* and *M*A*S*H*, and the film *28 Days*, which featured Sandra Bullock.)

Some interviews are just more fun than others, and I enjoyed this one very much, he's a helluva guy. And now, without further ado...

Puremusic: Hi, is this Loudon?

Loudon Wainwright III: It sure is.

PM: Hi, Loudon. This is Frank Goodman from Puremusic. How are you doing?

LW: Pretty good, Frank. How are you?

PM: Very good. You got a few minutes for us?

LW: Yeah.

PM: Thanks so much. Man, that's a great new record.

LW: Oh, good. Glad you feel that way about it, Frank.

PM: I just thought it was amazing. It had been a little while since I heard a Loudon record. And geez, you just get better every record.

LW: The guy I just spoke to, whose name will go unmentioned, started off the interview by saying, "Well, I haven't heard the album yet, but let's talk."

PM: Oh, I hate that!

LW: Oh, boy, you think *you* hate it.

[laughter]

PM: That's awful.

LW: I had a hard time not hanging up on him. So I'm pleased that you listened to it, and took the trouble to do so, and I'm very pleased that you like it.

PM: Let's say a half dozen times this morning alone.

LW: All right!

PM: Not only are the songs fantastic, but I'm just, as a singer songwriter, amazed by the way you work a room.

LW: Well, thank you.

PM: I mean, there's such a tremendous wealth of experience there to do it like that. I'll say out front, too, that a good friend of mine in town is an old friend of yours, Tom Mitchell.

LW: Oh, yeah, Tom. You're down in Nashville, then.

PM: Yeah.

LW: Oh, yeah. I just saw Tom the last time I was down there, in fact.

PM: Right. And I happened to be out of town, or I would have been at that bar passing the guitar around with you.

LW: Yeah, that was a fun night.

PM: So I may be privy, just for background's sake, of course, to various anecdotes of considerable vintage.

LW: Okay. But I know that Tom wouldn't have spilled *all* the beans.

PM: No, no. He ain't like that.

So on the new record, I thought that the sequencing alone was masterful. Who's responsible for that?

LW: Well, Stewart Lerman and I produced the record. Stewart was the producer on my last record, *Last Man on Earth*.

PM: Right.

LW: And we just spent a lot of hours going through a lot of stuff trying to find the sequence, where the pieces of the puzzle fit. And he's a good guy to bounce off of. So I'd have to say that he and I did it.

PM: I mean, not only was it exquisitely layered between the serious and the humorous songs, but ending with "The Home Stretch" and "Men," oh, that was really something. I ended up with my head shaking slowly in my hands.

LW: Yeah, it's a strong ending, I think. And after all these years of making these things—records or CDs, whatever you want to call them—I think sequencing is quite important. I know that now, of course, you can shuffle songs on a CD, and now you can buy just one song. But I'm of the old school, and that is that there's a little journey that takes place for that hour. And so sequencing is very important.

PM: That's a good point. Although I might, if I'm making a mix CD, as they call it, just pull a song or two off somebody's record, it wouldn't occur to me to record a whole CD and change the order of the songs as they happen. Because for those of us who make records, it's like, hey, we actually put a little thought into that sequence.

LW: Yeah, definitely.

PM: As life goes, would you call this a reasonably rosy period for you?

LW: Yeah, yeah. I mean, I think it is a good time. One of the reasons the record that I made, *Last Man on Earth*, had a kind of serious tone to it, let's say—

PM: For good reason. [It was made after his mother passed away.]

LW: Yeah, for very good reasons—serious and hopefully not dour. But this record, one of the reasons that we wanted to call it *So Damn Happy*, aside from the fact that there's a tune on the album with that title, was that we wanted to herald that it's lighter in tone. And there are some serious songs in it—you mentioned "Men," and there are a couple of other ones too—but there's some completely silly stuff, too, which I certainly hopefully never will forego entirely.

PM: Definitely not.

LW: So yeah, it's a good time, and a lighter time, and I'm doing fine.

PM: It would have been really cool if *Undeclared* was a big hit, but hey, it got somewhere. And there are good films coming up.

LW: Yeah. I just got an email, actually, from my agent, my theatrical agent. He told me that the buzz on the new Tim Burton movie, which I participated in this Spring, is very good. So hopefully, when *Big Fish*—which is the name of that flick—comes out—I think it's slated for Christmastime—I'll become a massive major motion picture star in addition to being a folk legend.

[laughter]

PM: One can only hope. And that's an amazing thing. What's your role in *Big Fish*, and what's the film about?

LW: Well, I'm kind of the mayor of this town called Specter, Alabama. Specter as in a haunting specter.

PM: Right.

LW: It's a very strange town where people have an almost *Village of the Damned/Stepford Wives* vibe—but not as menacing. This movie is—I haven't seen it, of course, cut together, but it feels—speaking of lighter in tone—it's certainly lighter in tone than *Planet of the Apes*.

PM: [laughs]

LW: This town is the kind of wonderful place where people go barefoot all the time, literally. So the mayor of this town, that's who I play.

PM: That's great.

LW: I welcome this character played by Ewan McGregor.

PM: He's the lead, Ewan McGregor.

LW: Yeah.

PM: Yeah, I like him.

LW: He's the lead as a young man. And then the lead as an older man, or at present time, is played by the legendary Albert Finney.

PM: Wow. So were you on location with Ewan and Albert?

LW: Yeah. Well, all my scenes were with Ewan, so I worked a lot with him, along with Steve Buscemi. He was in all those scenes.

PM: What's Buscemi like?

LW: Terrific, fabulous, as you might imagine.

PM: Yeah. He seems like he'd be an amazing guy.

LW: He likes to hang out. He's a very friendly, open guy, a great guy.

PM: And seems somehow like he'd be a fantastically intelligent guy, Buscemi.

LW: He's very bright and funny. We had a lot of fun together. We went to Hank Williams' grave

together—

PM: Get out!?

LW: —one rainy day.

PM: Where is it?

LW: It's in Montgomery, Alabama. We were all on location in Montgomery, Alabama.

PM: I was born the day Hank Williams died, New Year's Day, 1953.

LW: Wow, yeah. Well, we went up there. It's in this graveyard outside of town. Hank is up there with Audrey. And we made a little pilgrimage up to the hill. I had a lot of fun with Steve. He was great. And Jessica Lange is in the movie. She was great.

PM: Were either or both of them fairly familiar with your tunes, your music?

LW: Well, Jessica said she was a fan. I don't know, maybe she was just trying to be nice. But Steve—I had worked with Steve, actually, on another movie called *28 Days*, a Sandra Bullock rehab movie.

PM: What did you play in *28 Days*?

LW: I played the guitar guy.

PM: I got to go back and see it and look for the guitar guy.

LW: I didn't have any lines, but I sang in the movie, and I was in all the therapy sessions.

PM: I'll go back and check that out. Because when I checked it out the first time, I was all about seeing NRBQ.

LW: Oh, I'm in it much more than NRBQ. They're in it, but very, very briefly. They're in the wedding scene.

PM: Yeah, just the opening—the wedding band.

LW: No, I'm in the movie quite a bit, actually.

PM: I'm going to go back and check that. I just wasn't wired in. Do you know NRBQ at all? Are they friends?

LW: Sure.

PM: Yeah, because Joey Spampinato [their bass player] is a good friend of mine from town. [See our interview with Joey in the archives.]

LW: Yeah. They're great.

PM: And they did an excellent version of "Rip It Up" in the movie, I thought.

LW: Yes.

PM: It's hard to beat Little Richard's take on anything.

So I'm interested, obviously, in the difference between your musical and your acting careers. If anyone can address that without a longer setup, it certainly is you.

LW: Well, I originally thought, as a young man, that I was going to be an actor. I went to drama school in the mid 60s, 1965. It didn't last but a few years. But I thought I was going to be an actor, and learned a few skills there at Carnegie—it's now called Carnegie Mellon, it used to be called Carnegie Tech, in Pittsburgh. It has a fine drama department. But I kind of dropped out in the late 60s, was a hippie. Then I started to write some songs. But I returned to acting in the mid 70s. I was on a couple of episodes of M*A*S*H.

PM: Right, I remember, as the singing doctor.

LW: Right, Captain Calvin Spalding, the singing surgeon.

PM: That was really cool.

LW: It's probably being rerun somewhere as we speak. And then in the 80s, I started to get back into acting. I did some plays in New York. I was in a musical called *Pump Boys and Dinettes*.

PM: That was big.

LW: That was a big thing. And then I did a kind of weird movie called *The Slugger's Wife*, where, again, I played a musician. Rebecca DeMornay and Michael O'Keefe were in that movie.

PM: Didn't he marry Bonnie Raitt? Is that Michael O'Keefe?

LW: They were. They were married. They are no longer together.

Anyway, I've done bits and pieces over the years. And you mentioned *Undeclared*. I also did an episode of *Ally McBeal*, playing Dame Edna's boyfriend. That was kind of an acting highlight.

PM: Wow. And that was a biggie, that was two parts or something.

LW: Yeah, that was a two-hour episode, over two weeks. So the acting and the music, I'm doing both. There are similarities and they both involve performing skills, but they're quite different. There's a lot of waiting in acting. You learn how to sit in a trailer and wait. The music seems to be a bit more immediate. But with acting there's less travel, and that's what I like—I'd rather sit and wait in a trailer in Montgomery, Alabama than be running around airports all week.

PM: It seems to me musicians, especially bluesmen, have traditionally said, "I'll play for free, but you got to pay me for traveling."

LW: Right, right. Yeah, in acting you're paid for waiting, in music you're paid for traveling.

PM: Exactly. I really like the song "Cobwebs" for several reasons.

LW: Uh-huh.

PM: I mean, not only is it a break from the folk groove musically—which, I mean, I like that too—but I appreciate the subject, since we have to remove so many examples of that unmentionable

word from absolutely every interview we do.

LW: Yeah, yeah. Well, as I mentioned in the song, I myself misuse the word constantly. But when I hear it—

PM: How did it ever come to be?

LW: I don't know. The song explores it a bit, I suppose. I think it was my generation, with the Jack Kerouac-like wild man beatnik thing, that might have—

PM: Oh, it was the beatnik thing, right, “like, crazy daddy-o.”

LW: Right. Well, that's why I mentioned Maynard G. Krebs. I think that might have been the beginnings of it, people in the 50s and 60s who gave it a kind of hip cache.

PM: [laughs]

LW: But now it's just interwoven into the culture. I mean, every time my daughter says it, I want to do this [makes buzzer noise], make the buzzer noise and penalize her. But then she—the lower lip starts to tremble, so I back off. But I say the word myself, so—

PM: I mean, it's really not unusual, literally, to take about 100 of them out of any given interview.

LW: Yeah. Well, it's insidious. It's like mold or mildew or something. It really has peppered the language, and infected it, in a sense. That song originally appeared on a record called *Grown Man*. I made it in '94. So the situation hasn't improved. I mean, like mold and mildew, it's spreading.

PM: It's progressive, right.

LW: Yeah.

PM: We tend to think that our interview subjects are uniquely revealed when speaking of their cohorts. What incredible accompanists you have on this record.

LW: Yeah. I don't know if the liner notes were sent along with this—

PM: I tracked them down.

LW: Oh, good. Because I live in L.A. now, although you can reach me out here on Long Island. And I have some great buddies there who—well, David Mansfield has played on most of the records I've been making for the last 12 years.

PM: Where did you two first meet?

LW: I met David at the Edmonton Folk Festival, it must have been 1990, maybe. And then we did a television show together, which was a great show, which is sadly no longer—I think it was called *Night Stages*. It was on NBC late at night. David Sanborn was the host.

PM: Oh, that was a great show, the Sanborn show. He mixed people of different genres.

LW: Yeah. And that was the first time David Mansfield—I called up David and asked him to come play with me on that. So that would have been '90 or '91. And then I've been using him on records ever since. But he was in L.A. working on a movie, scoring this movie with T-Bone Burnett, the *Ya*

Ya Sisterhood movie.

And then Richard Thompson lives in L.A., at least part of the time, as does Van Dyke Parks. Both of those guys are friends. So I was just lucky to call at the right time, that they were around and came down and played.

PM: I mean, it's just an amazing trio of guys, all three monsters. And you and Richard go back quite a ways. He produced how many of your records?

LW: Well, he co-produced two in the mid 80s, *I'm All Right* and *More Love Songs*. And then he's played on a couple of others. So we go back. I think I met Richard at the end of the 70s, probably. And so we have a long, checkered relationship.

PM: He's one of my very favorite musicians anywhere, anytime. What kind of a guy is he, like off-stage? Maybe you'd share something with us about him that only a friend of his would know.

LW: He is such a pain in the ass off-stage.

PM: [laughs]

LW: No, the funny thing—and it's funny that I should use that word, that expression, “the funny thing”—he's very, very funny. I mean, again, he has a bit of a reputation for being—although certainly he has great funny witty songs, but—the expression that they use in England sometimes, doomy, he has a doomy quality.

PM: A doomy quality. [laughs]

LW: But he's the lightest, happy-go-luckiest guy—but not smiley faced, he's got a real edge to him. But he's very funny. He does wonderful impressions, and can do entire Monty Python bits—

PM: Oh, really?

LW: —word perfect, and—

PM: Oh, he does voices and all—

LW: Everything. Has a wonderful arcane knowledge on subjects like cricket and hang gliding. I mean, he's an expert on many things. He's a real all-around guy.

PM: Does he hang-glide himself, do we know?

LW: I don't know. I made up that thing about hang-gliding.

PM: Oh, yeah. I never have known a stringmeister who seriously hang-glided. [Actually, I remembered later that Banana of The Youngbloods, a fantastic stringmeister, was an expert hang glider and had a school on the West Coast for awhile...]

LW: He plays tennis, and I beat him at tennis.

PM: [laughs] So I read!

LW: Right. I'm always happy to mention that.

PM: Are you guys good?

LW: No, we both suck.

PM: You're hacks.

LW: Right, totally. But that's the great thing about tennis. You can be terrible at it and still somehow imagine that you're wonderful.

PM: Yeah, because as long as you're putting wood to the ball, it's just like you're really doing something good.

LW: Yeah. Usually it is wood to the ball.

PM: [laughs]

LW: Rarely is it nylon.

PM: Let's see. So we should say something, please, about V.D., himself.

LW: Oh, the legend. Well, Van Dyke, I first met—actually it was Rufus related. A friend of mine—actually it was David Mansfield's wife, Maggie Greenwald, who's a film director—she said when she heard this voice and piano tape of my son Rufus, some of his earliest material, she said, "You know who needs to hear this? Van Dyke Parks." So I was out in L.A.— this was years ago—and I had this cassette in my coat pocket. And I went to a Bug Music party in L.A.

PM: Are you a Bug guy?

LW: They do some of my collecting for me, yeah. But anyway, all of a sudden Van Dyke walked past. And I said, "Van Dyke"—we had met once before at a guitar store or something—and I said, "Listen, I know this happens all the time, but listen to this," and I gave it to him. And he was knocked out. And then he called Lenny Waronker over at Dreamworks.

PM: Wow.

LW: So if it weren't for me, that punk wouldn't have a deal.

PM: [laughs] He'd be walking the streets.

LW: In so many ways, if it weren't for me. And Van Dyke, of course, did the string arrangements on that very great record.

PM: Right.

LW: So he and I go back a while. We just did some shows in Germany together, actually.

PM: Oh, yeah, yeah. I forgot to put that in my questions. Thank you. With Frisell and Leisz, right? [Bill Frisell mentioned this gig in our recent interview with him.]

LW: Yeah. With Bill Frisell and Greg Leisz, and Kenny Wolleson playing drums, and Tony Sherr, an incredible bass player. And Van Dyke got in touch with these people in Utrecht, Holland, the Mondrian String Quartet.

PM: Oh, my.

LW: It was amazing. We had a great time.

PM: So that was in the Ruhr, right?

LW: In the Ruhr Valley, yeah. We stayed in Essen, but the actual show was in Duisberg.

PM: Essen, that means food, right?

LW: Yeah, and it means eat. And we did, indeed. We had a good time there. That was just a couple weeks ago.

PM: We interviewed Bill not long ago. And I'm a huge fan of his playing. And he had to be a totally different kind of guitar player to work with. And I guess he was the bandleader, right—

LW: Yeah.

PM: Can you say any more about the actual music-ness of that experience with him? What were the actual shows like?

LW: Well, first of all, for me, I'm so used to—I mean, it was great. I do play from time to time with Richard and David and Van Dyke, but to play with a great rhythm section, and as you say, Bill has a whole other kind of feel to his playing. We all met, we communicated about songs. There was some research. They listened to all the records.

PM: To all the records.

LW: And this guy, Lee Townsend, who produces—

PM: He was in on it, too? I think that guy is a magician.

LW: Yeah, Lee was kind of the overseer and the producer of the whole thing.

PM: We're huge Lee Townsend fans at Puremusic. We think we does amazing things.

LW: Yeah. So Lee and I did emails about titles and what would work. And I'd met Bill just socially a few times. But we got over there, we rehearsed for three days. And then we did two shows in this kind of incredible place—well, I think it was, at one point, a steel mill, or—it had this kind of *Blade Runner/Metropolis* feeling—

PM: Wild. Only the Germans.

LW: Yeah, it was wild, indeed. But it really worked out. Both nights were really fun, and people seemed to enjoy it.

PM: So in that kind of environment, were the acoustics pretty decent?

LW: Yeah, the sound was great. There was a great, great sound person named Claudia, a beautiful woman who does wonderful sound, and she did the sound for the house. And the whole thing was a great experience.

PM: She's European?

LW: No, she's actually from New York—or actually, she's originally from California, and she lives in Brooklyn. I can't remember her last name.

PM: Claudia, okay.

So, by virtue of that gig alone, I mean, to say that you're experiencing the respect of your peers is quite an understatement.

LW: Yeah, that's been the highlight of the summer, that gig, certainly.

PM: Because it's really a classy job, I'm wondering who did the selecting of the artists to be profiled in that series. Do you know?

LW: I don't know for sure, but I suspect it was Bill and Lee.

PM: Wow.

LW: And then we had our hosts—I'm blanking on their names—but these two guys in Essen who produced it.

PM: Maybe I'll go back to Lee and inquire.

LW: Yeah, Lee will have all the info. But they had, I think, pretty much creatively in that situation—they had Suzanne Vega and Mark Ribot, and I think Elvis Costello—

PM: Elvis too, yeah.

LW: —he either did it or is going to do it. So I think that Lee and Bill were the people who made the decision.

PM: So, them some mighty talented kids you have.

LW: Yeah. Yeah, one of them is on the album, Martha.

PM: She done good, too.

LW: Yeah, she sang great on the record.

PM: Really a lot of attitude on that cut. It was really cool.

LW: Yeah.

PM: We here loved Rufus' *Poses*. Was that big on your list?

LW: Yeah. And of course the fact that my song "One Man Guy" was on it, that didn't hurt.

PM: Yeah. Did he sell a lot of units with that?

LW: Well, I got a little bit of a check.

PM: Good.

LW: That's a great record, and—

PM: He did a good job on your song.

LW: Oh, I think it's the definitive version of that song.

PM: So you're big on *Poses* too. You like that record?

LW: And the new one. Wait until you hear the new one. I've heard that—I've heard a lot of it, anyway.

PM: Oh, really. We're hot to go on that. In fact, at one point we were hoping—though it's a little hokey, but—we were hoping to have both the Wainwrights, father and son, on our cover. But the timing didn't work out.

LW: Oh, well.

PM: Is Martha going to make a record?

LW: Well, she has kind of made a record, and now they're just—she's shopping a deal, which is a grotesque expression. You know, looking, trying to figure out who's going to put it out. But a lot of it is done. She's been working on it and she's getting ready to make a move.

PM: Did she write the songs or go outside for songs?

LW: She mostly wrote the songs.

PM: Yeah. That is a talented family.

I read something very funny you said in a previous interview, that as a songwriter Allan Sherman was more interesting to you than Phil Ochs. [laughs] That's hilarious.

LW: Well, he certainly made me laugh more.

PM: Yeah.

LW: And I like to laugh. I mean, I—

PM: It's a taste thing.

LW: Phil Ochs was great, of course.

PM: Yeah, of course.

LW: So was Allan.

PM: Yeah, so was Allan. [laughs] Yeah, I heard "Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah" the other day and laughed my ass off.

LW: Sure.

PM: What are you reading lately?

LW: Well, actually, I'm reading the book that I read on the plane coming home from Germany, *My Life as Me*, the Barry Humphries autobiography. Do you know who Barry Humphries is?

PM: I don't think so.

LW: He's an Australian actor who plays the character—among others—but is most famous for playing Dame Edna Everage.

PM: Oh!

LW: He's not a drag queen. He's an amazing, terrific, funny actor that I actually worked with on an episode of *Ally McBeal*.

PM: Exactly.

LW: But I've been a fan of his for years and years. And I lived in England for 12 years, and over there he has kind of legendary status. So I was reading his book, actually. That was the last big book I read.

PM: Are you listening to anything much?

LW: Not much. I'm kind of retro in the listening realm. I find myself going back to black dead jazz piano players, because—I suppose because I'm not threatened on any level by Bud Powell or Thelonious Monk. I don't really listen much to other songwriters. I mean, I know they're out there and some of them are good—

PM: Yeah, but—

LW: —but I hate that idea.

PM: [laughs]

LW: For my own listening pleasure I kind of alternate between jazz channels and classical music channels.

PM: The other night at a friend's house I saw the DVD of *Straight, No Chaser*.

LW: It's great. I own that DVD.

PM: Wow, is that good! That was spooky.

LW: Yeah, amazing.

PM: The new deal is with Sanctuary Records.

LW: Yes.

PM: I thought they were a head banger label.

LW: Well, that's why they signed me!

PM: [laughs] But they do more than that, don't they?

LW: Yeah. Well, they certainly do. I think somebody told me they signed John Hiatt recently. And they're getting ready to sign somebody like Joan Baez. So they've got some money from their metal groups and their T-shirt sales, and their management. They manage The Who and—

PM: Holy geez.

LW: But I think they're trying to make some tasty procurements.

PM: [laughs]

LW: Hopefully I'm one of them.

PM: Oh, there's no doubt in our mind. Are there things you haven't attempted yet that you'd like to try?

LW: A triple back somersault with a full gainer.

PM: [laughs] I hope I don't hurt myself.

LW: Yeah, I don't know if at this point—I'm going to be 57 next month, or two months, so I don't know if I'll get to that in this lifetime. But you know, I'm chugging along here. The songs are, thank goodness, still coming out, sometimes a little slower than I'd like. And I've got some acting irons in the fire. We've talked about those. So I'm quite happy. There's plenty to do. I've got a ten-year-old daughter that I'm enjoying.

PM: Wow.

LW: So life is, dare I say it, good. Why not?

PM: Yeah. One ought to say it when it is, I think.

LW: Sure.

PM: Are you what you'd call a spiritual guy in any sense of the word?

LW: Well, I went to Episcopalian boarding school.

PM: [laughs] I guess that qualifies.

LW: And they just about stomped it out of me. But... Can you hold for one second?

PM: Sure.

.....

LW: Frank?

PM: Yeah.

LW: Hi.

PM: Hi. Do you need to get that?

LW: Well, that's the next guy. But he said he's going to call back. We've got a few more minutes.

PM: Yeah, and I'm almost done, anyhow. I wanted to make sure it wasn't my question that put you off.

LW: What was the question?

PM: [laughs] Are you a spiritual guy in any way?

LW: Oh, yeah, it did put me off, actually.

PM: [laughs]

LW: I ain't no Leonard Cohen, let's put it that way! I don't go to no dang monastery!

PM: That's right.

LW: I can't even say the word. I don't know, I'm just as confused as the next guy. Does that qualify me as being spiritual? I certainly don't know what the hell is out there. There's something, but I don't know what it is.

PM: Yeah, that qualifies you in my mind. You're a spiritual guy, yeah.

LW: Okay.

PM: Well, I'll clear the line and the lane for the next guy, because I'm really grateful for your time, and love the new record.

LW: Well, thank you so much. And I'm so pleased that you do like it. And I've enjoyed talking with you.

PM: Thanks. And I'll say hi to Tom Mitchell for you.

LW: Please do.

PM: See you, Loudon.

LW: All right, Frank.

