



## LANGHORNE SLIM & THE LAW

### *The Spirit Moves*

Sometimes, truth can't be explained. But it can be felt, running wild through a song. "I don't want to tame myself. I want to be wild," says Langhorne Slim. "If I can continue to refine the wildness but never suffocate or tame it, then I'm on the right path. Because it is a path. I feel it."

*The Spirit Moves* is Langhorne's newest artistic attempt to refine the wildness. The result is an effervescent collection of his now-signature, cinematic, joyful noise, rooted in folk, soul, and blues. Out on Dualtone Records on August 7th, 2015, the album marks his second with rock-solid band The Law, and the highly anticipated follow-up to 2012's critically acclaimed *The Way We Move*.

*The Spirit Moves* is a stunning portrait of Langhorne's life in transition: the "born to be in motion and follow the sun" rambler found a home in Nashville, Tennessee. While he's put down roots in a place, he's unattached to a person, single for the first time in recent memory. *The Spirit Moves* is also the first album of his career written and recorded entirely sober. Together, the record's beautiful glimpses of bold beginnings and risks taken create an ode not only to a better life, but to the vulnerability needed to live it.

"I'm a strong believer that sensitivity and vulnerability are not weaknesses. They're some of the greatest strengths of man and woman kind," Langhorne says. "And that's what a lot of the record is about."

Langhorne and The Law sought out engineer Andrija Tokic (Alabama Shakes, Hurray for the Ruff Raff) and recorded *The Spirit Moves* at Tokic's studio, the Bomb Shelter, in East Nashville. Producing duties were shouldered by Langhorne, the band, and trusted cohort Kenny Siegal, reuniting the family behind *The Way We Move*.

"I went to battle with my demons, and I'm still doing it," Langhorne says. "My brothers stood beside me and kicked ass on the record." Three of his brothers are The Law: drummer Malachi DeLorenzo, bassist Jeff Ratner, and keys and banjo player David Moore. "My band is not a hired gun group of guys," Langhorne says. "They are my band and they are uniquely spectacular."

And then, there's brother Kenny Siegal. "In Kenny, I've found a musical brother," he says. "We drive each other crazy, but the man understands me somehow in an energetic, spiritual sense, more than most anyone I've ever met."

Langhorne wasn't looking for a co-writer, but that's exactly what Siegal became for eight of the record's songs, making *The Spirit Moves* the first time Langhorne has ever written with someone else for an album. For Langhorne, writing is often an arduous process. "I rarely write a complete song immediately," he explains. "Every once in a while, one hits, but songs mostly come in pieces. Those pieces build up and start to taunt me as they swirl around in my head. Eventually, they make me feel like I'm going totally crazy. It's like they're gonna devour me—eat me alive."

He pushed through alone to pen some of the tracks, chasing each song's individual truth. In creating others, Siegal helped him put the pieces together.

What emerged is a record that delights in contradiction: freewheeling but purposeful; celebratory but confessional; looking to light even when it's dark. Langhorne's voice—an arresting howl sublimely at home in a Mississippi roadhouse or on a Newport stage—has never sounded better.

He wrote the title track just weeks before entering the studio, “terrified that I didn't have enough and what I had wasn't good enough.” The song is no mere reflection, but a manifestation of unbridled joy, and a celebration of opening up oneself to the supernatural that surrounds us.

“Changes” is an intimate look at a soul being reborn, but Langhorne hopes each listener can hear something of their own in it. “When I'm writing, it's coming from a heart or soul kind of place, not the mental zone of ‘Well, I moved to Nashville and I got sober and I'm single and I'm going through changes, so let's write a song about it,’” he says. He calls infectious garage-pop growler “Put it Together” “the most painful song I've ever written,” not because of the subject matter, but because of the process. He found the opening lines and crunchy chords while seeking relief after his beloved 1977 Mercury Comet was stolen. But then, the song took months to complete. “I've never worked that hard to get a song,” he says.

The refusal to let a heart harden helped bring about “Life's a Bell,” a dreamy call-to-action that nods to 50s rock-and-roll and Sly and the Family Stone. “A lot of my music is celebration of light,” he says. “It's a horrible thing to shield our hearts and not be vulnerable.”

“Wolves,” based on a James Kavanaugh poem, tackles similar subject matter, and Langhorne feels it's the “truest expression of myself that I've put into a song.” “I'm tough enough to run with the bulls, and I'm too gentle to live amongst wolves,” he sings, his soul-shouting subdued to a hush that's just as powerful.

The rollicking “Southern Bells” pulses with the optimism of a new day, while “Strongman” and its piano pay tribute to perseverance and seizing the moment. “Whisperin'” captures another kind of breakthrough, relatable and intense, while “Strangers” is classic Langhorne Slim, and begs to be danced to, uninhibited and free.

“Airplane” is a poignant example of his ability to capture the redemptive hope in desperation. Part meditation, part urging of an unnamed co-conspirator, the song puts his defiantly tender vocals front and center, hugged by a rotating cast of instruments that kicks off with stark guitar and piano, swells into lush strings and percussion, then ebbs back into its stripped-down beginning—like the waves of confidence and doubt that make up faith itself.

The song is undoubtedly a career standout for Langhorne, and creating it was a long road. Three key “muses”—his Grandma Ruth, dear friend Joel Sadler, and another confidant—gave him encouragement along the way. “I kept going for ‘Airplane’ because it made sense to me and there were people around me who were moved very deeply by it,” he says. “It's one of my favorite songs I've ever written.”

With a new home and a clear head, Langhorne is exhilarated thanks to the realization of what he knew was possible. “I had a problem with drugs and alcohol from the time I was 15 until I quit last year on my 33rd birthday,” Langhorne says. “I was hitting my head against the ceiling. I knew all I had to do was quit, and my head would burst through that ceiling. I didn't really know what would be there, but I knew it'd be something greater.”

For Langhorne, something greater includes making the best music of his life.

“By opening myself, I'm vulnerable and I'm fearful, but I start to get real. And in that realness, there is immense strength that I wish for everybody,” Langhorne says. “Maybe everybody's scared to be a freak. But when you live as a freak—” he laughs—“it's so much more fulfilling.”