

On November 4, Lambchop return with For Love Often Turns Us Still—officially titled FLOTUS. Inspired as always to make art from the unsung sounds and scenes of his South Nashville neighborhood, Kurt Wagner set aside what he has learned over the last 30 years and embarked on a musical adventure to bring us this album that sounds like no one else—or rather, completely, unmistakably, like himself.

Wagner is still a master of life’s minutiae and dramatic landscapes that reflect troubling times both home and abroad; his fragile yet powerful songs are as much about the tiny details of living in a struggling neighborhood in Nashville as they are about the grander scheme of things. However, something is different onFLOTUS. While Lambchop’s stylistic sound palette endures, it now includes a new set of previously unheard shades and tones. It combines the analogue sounds of a man recording in an intimate setting with the artificially enhanced echo of the undeniably real sounds of the city. These songs serve as Wagner’s homage to the daily urban soundtrack of modern R&B, soul, and hip-hop (Kendrick, Kanye, Frank Ocean, Shabazz Palaces) garbled through grocery store speakers and tiny cell phones.

“Overall, artists like myself have been using the same production techniques forever, letting technology enhance and further a sound but not really taking it to a new place,” says Wagner. “Technology bending to the will of the creator became playful, complex, and exciting to hear on repeat with a structure still open to interpretation.”

There’s no return to the past for Lambchop because there’s no moving forward within nostalgia. Start to finish, FLOTUS is imbued with that magical energy that comes with this knowledge. The album is bookended by two long-form pieces: the first, “In Care of 8675309,” is most reminiscent of where Lambchop have been, while the second, the sprawling, hypnotic “The Hustle,” suggests where they might still be headed.

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We are delighted to introduce you to this new direction with the final song on FLOTUS. “The Hustle” seamlessly shifts between movements, a foundation suggestive of krautrock and early electronic music, gorgeously ornamented with perfectly placed piano and horns. Drawing upon a diverse palate of influences and transcending each one, it’s a stunning piece of work—certainly one of the most impressive achievements of Lambchop’s catalogue.

Kurt shares the story behind “The Hustle,” perhaps the most unabashedly romantic Lambchop song ever:

My wife and I attended this wedding of one her colleagues in the countryside outside of Nashville. Weddings are a heady mix of emotions, memories, and events that can be quite rich in imagery. With this being a Quaker wedding, there was a lack of “officiating” in that the bride and groom addressed each other directly the entire time. This was something that I found to be most touching. Beyond that, as with much of my writing, I tend to describe experiences in an almost journalistic fashion and then strip things down till there is barely a thread to hold them together—in this case, starting with the vows and then moving on from there. The entire wedding party was doing this great synchronized dance step that I hadn’t seen before. I asked my wife what dance it was, and she told me it was the Hustle. She suggested I join them. I respectfully declined.

*Official biography (City Slang)*