

# A country singer with the blues

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Townes van Zandt, a lean, dark-eyed Texan from Houston whose mood is black, is a cowboy-singer-poet, and his sound is talking country blues.

His first two albums on the Poppy label, Townes van Zandt and Our Mother the Mountain, underline his simple, almost fatalistic outlook to life.

He sings about the joy and pain of love-man-woman, man-fellow-man and man-nature-sometimes tender, sometimes traumatic and always bitter-sweet.

Townes hasn't yet found much to laugh about and he worries about depressing people.

"I have never met a human being who is totally willing to consider every other human being his brother, myself included.

It's a mean world. . . .

Even people who say they love everybody don't. People who are musicians and longhairs, who decide they want to live on the outside, usually have trouble adjusting to life—they drink too much, smoke too much, take too much dope."

Townes has been picking guitar since high school because "it's the only job I've had more than six months."

Our Mother the Mountain was produced in Nashville with the help of some friends, including Charlie McCoy, who plays guitar, organ, harmonica and bass and recorder on Why She's Acting this Way.

My Proud Mountain, the story of a boy who leaves home when he is barely 17, tells more about Townes than any liner notes.

He is a product of his influences—Hank Williams, bluesmen Lightnin' Hopkins and Muddy Waters and Dylan—yet hauntingly unique.



TOWNES VAN ZANDT