

Flashback: Thoughts on *Late To My Own Funeral*

by Boldy James & Nicholas Craven

1.19.26 From the crib



“Don’t nothing beat a failure more than a try”

This album came out last July (2025) so this isn't really a reaction but I love this album and relistened to it today on a walk and I want to talk about it and pay it homage. Quick tidbit in relation to this album that I find kinda funny is a buddy who I was in graduate school with at Babson is a producer and I had mentioned to him I fw Nicholas Kraven as a producer. He then told me a story of how he had met/had a run in with the producer of this album Nicholas Kraven and how Nicolas Kraven's mindset when it comes to producing is basically “use n flip soul samples or else ur shit is ass” lol I found that funny. To be fair he does this shit well so I can't be mad at him for getting in a lane and rlly sticking to it. Side note I highly recommend watching this youtube video ([Rhythm Roulette: Nicholas Craven | Mass Appeal](#)) in which he talks a bit about his process with sampling and you get to see how some of the magic is done. I love old soul music, especially old motown music so his lane of production is like the best of two genres for me. How he uses old records and incorporates the “old sound” into modern music I think is super cool and an amazing skill that can't be taught. When it comes to sampling him and the Alchemist are doing it super different imo. I also really respect his musical knowledge (which is on display in the above linked video) when it comes to different musical eras and the sounds that defined those eras down to what kind of instruments are used or *how* those instruments are used. Super dope and as a music lover I am envious of this skill he has. The concept of just sitting in a studio, chopping/flipping soul records into amazing beats and getting high as fuck is such a vibe lmao, I would love to sit in on a studio session of him working.

Some people critique or make a fuss out of sampling music, and I 100% can understand why sometimes. There are 100% a lot of cases of lazy samples today especially in rap (See DoeChii's “Anxiety” etc.) and I do think if not done with the right intention / respect to the art

you are sampling its a negative. But for someone like Nicholas Craven, Alch, or older dudes like J Dilla its truly an art. They interpolate and use the samples in their music in such a way they are paying homage, sampling with care/respect, and keeping music from the past alive. Like passing an heirloom down the family tree they pay homage to those that came before and package their art in a way that younger people can interact with these “heirlooms” in a new way. I kinda geek out about producing shit like this and the skill that goes into sampling old records and I just wanted to say my 2 cents on that. Now more into the specifics of the able.

I like a lot of Boldy James stuff, but this is definitely my favorite album of his he's rapping on. Granted, I've only been listening to him for a couple years so I might be missing some shit, but this album is so amazing man. 10 tracks is the perfect length, and he has the perfect combination of like laziness with his flow that he seamlessly kinda blends into the samples himself but he has enough punch and good lines that he still like sticks out enough if that makes sense. I feel like I listen to this album and it's like eating a perfectly seasoned meal. All of the ingredients/seasonings are working together, and maybe every once in a while you get a little extra kick of paprika or something that works just right. Thats like Boldy james on this album to me hes a role player playing his role perfectly on the beats and doing just enough at the right moments to remind me like “damn this guy isn't just like floating on this beat hes spitting.” He's just so damn chill no glaze he rap like Cade Cunningham hoops just never in a rush and playing at his own pace. Idk if that's making sense but thats how it feels in my brain. Luxury music. This is one of those albums to I can literally listen to doing anything and listen to the whole thing through. Hooping, cleaning, walking, journaling, real versatility and timeless shit whenever a song from this album comes up on shuffle for me I end up damn near listening to the whole album.

Anyways I love this album for how it sounds and having watched a buncha videos about alch and Craven recently and their processes with sampling and production it makes me appreciate it even more. Shoutout *Fair Exchange No Robbery* too. Designer Drugs went platinum in my headphones last year.