

= Folk Singer (album) =

Folk Singer is the fourth studio album by Muddy Waters , released in April 1964 by Chess Records . The album features Waters on acoustic guitar , backed by Willie Dixon on string bass , Clifton James on drums , and Buddy Guy on acoustic guitar . It is Waters 's only all @-@ acoustic album . Numerous reissues of Folk Singer include bonus tracks from two subsequent sessions , in April 1964 and October 1964 .

Despite not charting in any country , Folk Singer received critical acclaim ; most reviewers praised its high @-@ quality sound , especially on remastered versions , as well as the instrumentation . In 2003 , the album was ranked number 280 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time .

= = Background = =

After his successful performance at Newport Jazz Festival and tours through America , Chess Records encouraged Waters to record songs for a new studio album . Before the recording , several musicians had Waters 's band , and other had joined Waters . Andrew Stephens , who played at Newport , was replaced in the following years with numerous bassists . The drummer Francis Clay was replaced by Willie " Big Eyes " Smith , who played in the Muddy Waters Junior Band . Pat Hare was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of his wife (while in jail , he formed the band Sounds Incarcerated) . Hare was replaced by a succession of guitarists , including James " Pee Wee " Madison , who played a right @-@ handed guitar left handed . Madison played guitar on some of the reissue bonus tracks , as did Sammy Lawhorn . Lawhorn allegedly suffered from narcolepsy (Elvin Bishop denied this , believing that Lawhorn 's sleepiness was due to alcoholism) . The electric guitarist Buddy Guy , who had recorded with Waters on Blues from Big Bill 's Copacabana , released by Chess in 1963 , was hired . Guy had been discovered by Waters shortly after Guy arrived in Chicago from Louisiana .

= = Recording = =

Folk Singer is an " unplugged " recording and differs from his earlier albums , which featured an electric blues sound . The title of the album was chosen by Chess Records because it was recorded during the time when folk music was popular . In order to appeal to fans of folk music , Chess recorded a more acoustic album with two acoustic guitarists . Buddy Guy was hired as the second guitarist . Other guitarists played on bonus tracks . Guy played on all original songs , except the last song , " Feel Like Going Home " , together with Waters .

The recording took place at the Tel Mar Recording Studios , in Chicago , in September 1963 , and was produced by Willie Dixon . The original vinyl release includes nine songs , most of which are performed at a slower tempo , with the exception of the uptempo " Good Morning Little Schoolgirl " . During recording , Waters emphasized his singing with hums and sighs .

= = Releases and tour = =

The original album was released as an LP in April 1964 by Chess Records . Since then , numerous record labels have released different versions on CD , with different bonus tracks from Waters 's 1964 sessions . One of the first CD versions was released in 1993 by Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab , containing two bonus tracks , " You Can 't Lose What You Never Had " and " The Same Thing . " The 1999 remastered version contains five bonus tracks , " The Same Thing " , " You Can 't Lose What You Never Had " , " My John the Conqueror Root " , " Short Dress Woman " and " Put Me In Your Lay Away " .

The supporting tour through Europe , the second American Folk Blues Festival , began one month after the recording of Folk Singer . The first gig out of seventeen took place in London ; other performances were in Belgium , Germany , France and Denmark . In London , Waters began with

the unreleased " My Captain " , followed by " Rollin ' Stone " . In keeping with the folk theme , quiet versions of " Five Long Years " , " Blow Wind Blow " , " Trouble No More " , " My Home Is in the Delta " and " Got My Mojo Working " were performed .

= = Critical reception = =

In a contemporary review , Down Beat magazine found Waters 's singing " forced and artificial " , writing that Folk Singer suffers from a major flaw : " He only begins to come close to the power and unforced intensity of the original numbers and style from time to time , as on ' You Gonna Need My Help ' and ' My Home Is in the Delta ' " . In a retrospective review , Cub Koda , writing for AllMusic was more enthusiastic , deeming the record 's sound fresh and vital . In 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked Folk Singer number 280 on its list of the " 500 Greatest Albums of AllTime " , writing that the " unplugged " playing was pioneering and has since been " beloved by blues and folk fans alike " . In a 1994 issue of Rolling Stone , a reviewer wrote , " ... There aren 't too many blues albums that qualify as audiophile recordings , but Muddy Waters Folk Singer surely does . A wonderfully intimate session , it delivers Waters ' voice in all its power and subtlety , while rendering his guitar work ... with such vivid realism , you would think you were sitting in the studio "

= = Track listing = =

" My Home Is in the Delta " (Waters) ? 3 : 58
" Long Distance " (Waters) ? 3 : 30
" My Captain " (Willie Dixon) ? 5 : 10
" Good Morning Little Schoolgirl " (Sonny Boy Williamson) ? 3 : 12
" You Gonna Need My Help " (Waters) ? 3 : 09
" Cold Weather Blues " (Waters) ? 4 : 40
" Big Leg Woman " (John Temple) ? 3 : 25
" Country Boy " (Waters) ? 3 : 26
" Feel Like Going Home " (Waters) ? 3 : 52

= = = 1993 bonus tracks = = =

" The Same Thing " (Dixon) ? 2 : 57
" You Can 't Lose What You Never Had " (Waters) ? 2 : 46

= = = 1999 bonus tracks = = =

" The Same Thing " (Dixon) ? 2 : 57
" You Can 't Lose What You Never Had " (Waters) ? 2 : 46
" My John the Conqueror Root " (Dixon) ? 2 : 22
" Short Dress Woman " (John T. Brown) ? 2 : 49
" Put Me in Your Lay Away " (L.J. Welch) ? 2 : 56

= = Personnel = =

Credits are adapted from AllMusic .