



TBA Review: Holcombe Waller/Larry Krone

By **Luciana Lopez**, *The Oregonian*

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When a music critic nearly wipes away a tear -- nearly, let me repeat -- a musician has cause for pride. But **Holcombe Waller** so fully inhabited his songs of introspection, sadness, hope and transformation Saturday night at the Someday Lounge that their power to pierce so acutely was no surprise.

His show was billed as "Into the Dark Unknown: The Hope Chest," with a lengthy description about movement, video, costume, etc etc. Really, though, the show was about Holcombe's ability to strip himself emotionally bare before an audience without losing himself in his vulnerability. One minute he told a story that begins on a nude beach (one not repeatable here without the textual equivalent of bleeping); the next minute he broke a heart with another song about loss. Waller blended the hushed quality of folk, the easy flow of pop, a dash of theatricality (especially in a piece performed in French) and a particular vision all his own. Credit goes, as well, to his guest musicians, who complemented and supported Waller with restraint and taste.

Opener **Larry Krone** drew more explicitly on comedy in his set. His songs carried enough pain of their own (Luther Vandross' "Dance With My Father," for example), but he added another layer through various costumes. Sometimes the effect was distancing, a detached hipster irony that detracted from the music, such as the patches he pinned to his pants before singing Dolly Parton's "Coat of Many Colors." But at his best, the sartorial side echoed and amplified his music; wearing only skivvies on stage while singing "I'm going out tonight but I feel like dying" illustrated, unequivocally, the naked sadness of the song.

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