

ABOUT JOE MIDDLETON

"Do it in the name of love, children, do it in the name of love — it's so much better when we're working on a building"— "Do It in the Name of Love"

Joe Middleton has spent much of his adult life traveling the country playing heartland rock 'n' roll and writing songs that tell stories only years of life experience and miles on the road can tell. A songwriter less interested in trends and more focused on depth, Middleton's latest release, *Blue Daffodils*, is for the music listener who values lyric-driven songs that will resonate with fans of artists like James McMurtry, John Prine, and John Hiatt — songs that come with emotional realism, vivid characters, and a side of social commentary.

"We're living in a time when a stroke of a key from a man in the dark can make you weak, and as quick as you let your reason lapse, you're headed down the same dark, crooked path" — "Blue Daffodils"

Middleton worked with David Rhyne at Traffic Sound Studio in Charlotte, NC, to record this new collection of songs, the title track inspired by something an old friend's grandmother said. "Even though daffodils don't come in blue, she gave all blue flowers this name and referred to them as a sign of new beginnings," Middleton recalls. With the current challenges in the world, Middleton found inspiration to write about how, even in dark times, there's always something right outside our window to remind us of beauty in the world.

With a stellar group of musicians enlisted, Middleton wanted these songs to feel live and organic — something refreshing for music fans who are not on board with artificially created music that has quickly entered the music industry. He wanted it to sound true to who he is: an artist who grew up in Cheraw, South Carolina, and never stopped playing music and singing in rock 'n' roll bands since he was 14 years old. You can't manufacture the way those experiences translate to songs. Music lovers looking to hear real musicians playing in a real room, with all of the human elements intact, will feel right at home with the sound of *Blue Daffodils* and everything Middleton has to say.

"I didn't come here to argue, I didn't come here to preach, and I won't stand up on my soapbox and make some political speech. But I might play a song about justice and the struggle against the machine, and if I can't change your mind, at least I took the time to make sure that my conscience is clean." — "Folk Singer"

Like any good folk singer-songwriter, Middleton isn't holding back when it comes to social injustice and current challenges in America — but *Blue Daffodils* is not a political record. It's more of an album exploring how we experience humanity and love.

"Tambourine" was inspired by his wife, who, upon waking from intense brain surgery, said, "All I want for Christmas is a tambourine like the Shiny Ribs background singers." And "My Lullaby" was written for a lost loved one. The album takes some interesting turns, with a nod to Marty Robbins in "Oh Felina" and even an ode to Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks in "Too Far From the Ground."

