



For Immediate Release—

The Seldom Scene Continues Their Genre-Blurring Legacy With Brand New Album, *Remains to Be Scene*

Out March 14th via Smithsonian Folkways; Hear “Last of the Steam-Powered Trains” today

Jan. 14, 2025 – Bethesda, MD – Now that some of its biggest stars fill stadiums and cross over with mainstream audiences, the concept of bluegrass unshackling itself from a conservative, straight-ahead mindset can seem like a given—but the continued presence of the 53-year-running quintet [The Seldom Scene](#) acts as a reminder that it wasn’t always so. Since their inception in 1971 in a Bethesda, Maryland, basement, the 4-time Grammy-nominated group has had an elastic relationship with the bluegrass genre, incorporating songs and sounds from rock and roll, country, and pop. In fact, in their early years the band established an essential precedent that allowed bluegrass bands to expand their repertoire, laying the groundwork for today’s bluegrass boom. And there’s still something thrilling about hearing this band’s alchemical skill as they pull the unexpected together, mixing old and new and drawing throughlines from Bob Dylan to Bill Monroe.

Today, The Seldom Scene announced a brand new album, *Remains to Be Scene*—out on March 14th on Smithsonian Folkways—which continues their long-running legacy of pulling gems from outside of and within the bluegrass canon and reimagining them in what is now a signature style. Comprised of mandolin player Lou Reid, bassist Ronnie Simpkins, banjoist and fiddler Ron Stewart, dobro player Fred Travers, and guitarist Dudley Connell (who was recently succeeded by Grammy award-winner

Clay Hess—more on that below), Remains to Be Scene features an interpretation of Jim Croce’s “A Good Time Man Like Me Ain’t Got No Business (Singin’ the Blues),” a pair of songs by Bob Dylan: “Walking Down the Line” and “Farewell Angelina,” the latter made famous by Joan Baez in 1965, while also revisiting a fan-favorite, “White Line,” from their iconic Live at the Cellar Door album and paying tribute to their inspirations, Flatt & Scruggs with “Hard Travelin’.”

The first taste of Remains to Be Scene comes today in the form of the album’s first single, “Last of the Steam-Powered Trains,” a classic Ray Davies song from the repertoire of the fabled British rock band, The Kinks. Translating vintage rock and roll into hard-driving bluegrass seems to come naturally for the Scene’s modern lineup. Mandolin chops replace snare hits and a thumping bass covers all of the low-end duties on this propulsive paean to another time, while the slinky swing of the original gets straightened out with Stewart’s banjo rolls. The song’s signature blues guitar lick remains, though, to instantly remind listeners of the original 1968 version. “The Scene has always looked outside the box for material, and we thought this one fit the bill,” says Reid. Unsurprisingly, the band still has the ability to meld it all together, just like they’ve done for the past five decades.



“Last of the Steam-Powered Trains” – The Seldom Scene

Fans can stream or purchase “Last of the Steam-Powered Trains” and pre-order or pre-save Remains to Be Scene ahead of its March release [right here](#). For more information, please visit seldomscene.com.

Remains to Be Scene Tracklist:

Last of the Steam-Powered Trains

Crossroads

A Good Time Man Like Me Ain’t Got No Business (Singin’ the Blues)

Hard Travelin’

Farewell Angelina

Walking Down the Line

Lonesome Day

I Could Cry

White Line

Show Me the Way to Go Home

The Story of My Life

More Behind Remains to Be Scene: Self-produced with engineering and mixing by Jim Robeson at his studio The Bar in Rockville, Maryland, *Remains to Be Scene* caps the end of an era for the group in many ways. The album is dedicated to the memory of Bluegrass Hall of Famer and Seldom Scene cofounder Ben Eldridge, who retired from the group in 2014. But Eldridge remained a major presence and friend to the band, penning heartfelt liner notes for this album before his passing in April 2024.

Also notable is that *Remains to Be Scene* marks the final album for Dudley Connell, another Bluegrass Hall of Famer as a member of the Johnson Mountain Boys. Connell wrapped up a Seldom Scene tenure of nearly three decades on guitar and vocals with his retirement at the end of 2024. “Twenty-nine years, dude, that’s a long, long time,” Connell says with a laugh. “No regrets, I’ve loved every minute of it, and it’s been a real joy working with these guys for so long. But I want to get out while I still have my mobility and can travel, walk my dog, things like that.”

About The Seldom Scene: Most legendary bluegrass artists get that way by rambling far and wide. But not The Seldom Scene, which is as legendary as they come even though the group has mostly stayed close to home in the greater Washington, D.C., vicinity for most of its 53 years of existence. And yet even as the progressive bluegrass quintet’s lineup has turned over multiple times from those early days, The Scene has maintained an admirably high standard of musicality and artistry, on record as well as onstage at live-residency venues like The Birchmere in Alexandria, Virginia. The band makes old songs sound brand new while putting a bluegrass spin on some of the least-likely cover songs in the genre. Those virtues are all in place on *Remains to Be Scene*, their 24th album, released on Smithsonian Folkways, on which they cover everybody from Bob Dylan to The Kinks with customary flair. The album is also another milestone effort for the Scene — the first since the passing of co-founder Ben Eldridge (who penned liner notes before his death in April 2024) as well as the last for longtime Scene member Dudley Connell, who is retiring after 29 years in the band. As usual, the rest of the Scene is taking those departures in stride. One way or another, The Seldom Scene will go on.

About Smithsonian Folkways: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the “National Museum of Sound,” makes available close to 60,000 tracks in physical and digital format as the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian, with a reach of 80 million people per year. A division of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, the non-profit label is dedicated to supporting cultural diversity and increased understanding among people through the documentation, preservation, production and dissemination of sound. Its mission is the legacy of Moses Asch, who founded Folkways Records in 1948 to document “people’s music” from around the world. For more information about Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, visit folkways.si.edu.