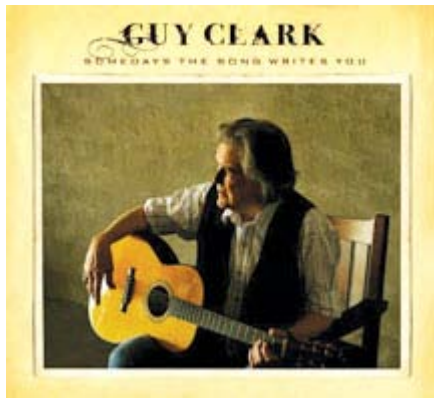


TexasMonthly

Guy Clark

Somedays the Song Writes You

Dualtone



He's got a bit of a rep, yet while Guy Clark is every inch the crusty, ornery cuss he's always been, there's a sad sense of resignation on *Somedays the Song Writes You* (Dualtone). After his wry 2006 triumph, *Workbench Songs*, this tone is a surprise from the Monahans-reared songwriter: As events conspire against him, a what-are-we-going-to-do attitude seeps in on several of his spare songs. And elsewhere, such as on the writer's block—inspired “Hemingway’s Whiskey” (“Living one word to the next”) and the regret-filled “The Coat,” there’s a sense of defeat (“I walked out and left my coat / **The weather’s** turning cold / **Now I don’t feel so smart, I don’t feel so bold**”). Yet sad or no, there’s magnificent work here: the pitch-perfect fable of “The Guitar,” the piercing character study in “All She Wants Is You” (“Everybody’s got some baggage / **But she knows how to travel light**”), and the illusory optimism of his finale, “Maybe I Can Paint Over That.” Clark uses co-writers for his songs, many of them much younger, to give him inspiration, but it’s likely these collaborators got a lot more than they gave.

Jeff McCord