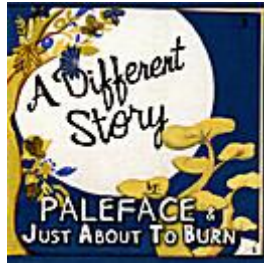


Mp3 Paleface - A Different Story



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Fun lovin' folkcore. Tom Waits, Hank Williams and The Beatles in a blender. 11 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, ROCK: Americana Show all album songs: A Different Story Songs Details: "If you're a fan of neo-folk or punk-grass like that of the Avetts, Slim, or Beck's acoustic work, Paleface is likely up your alley. Samalot's sweet, girly harmonies add another layer to Paleface's gruff, masculine voice and lo-fi banjo picking -- kind of like Tom Waits and Kim Deal of the Pixies making quirky acoustic folk together." Courtney Devores, The Charlotte Observer "The Deal: He may have been a guest vocalist for Avetts and former roommate of Beck, but indie folk singer Paleface, who now calls Concord home, proves his music needs no name dropping...The Americana roots of Paleface's indie folk run deep. Dobro, banjo, harmonica, acoustic guitars they're all here and filling the void behind his raspy vocals nicely. It pairs up nicely with Scott and Seth Avett, who guest on "I Can See the Light." The album has a rough-around-the-edges feel and occasional sounds that make you wonder what kind of instrument is being used listen for the sledgehammer-on-steel sound in the background of "Dyin' Daze." It's got a groove to it that gets better with each listen. The record's got a groove to it that gets better with every listen...A great release to kick off 2008 if it were released a week earlier, it would have made my top 10 of '07." Jeff Hannes, Creative Loafing Paleface tells 'A Different Story' By Sarah Hall, Salisbury Post Paleface has moved on, not just to a new chapter in his life, but to a different story. The perennial New Yorker may have seemed inextricably tied to the Lower East Side. He was part of the underground music scene in the late '80s and early '90s when he was schooled in songwriting by Daniel Johnston and roomed with Beck. Paleface reemerged as an Antifolk legend in the late 90s East Village surrounded by the likes of Regina Spektor, the Moldy Peaches and roommate Langhorne Slim. But since August, Paleface, or "PF" as his friends call him, has been calling North Carolina home. And PF is liking NC. Click

here to watch Paleface sing "We got all night" from their new CD "A Different Story." Avett Brothers fans, who will recognize Paleface's distinctive gritty baritone from his vocals on the Avett records "Emotionalism" and "Four Thieves Gone," may not be as surprised to find him living in Concord, the hometown of Scott and Seth Avett. The brothers have returned the recording favor, providing vocals, banjo and guitar for "I Can See the Light," the final track capping off Paleface's newest release, "A Different Story." This CD is a remarkable collection of neo-folk. The arrangements display a refreshing simplicity and economy of instrumentation and effects, never getting in the way of the poetry of the lyrics by this prolific songwriter. Recording took place in New York before the move, and also features members of PF's band "Just About to Burn:" J.D. Wood plays bass, keys and guitar, and provides back-up vocals; Lenny Molotov on dobro, lap steel, electric guitar and mandolin; Rob Troise plays electric guitar; and Monica "Mo" Samalot provides vocals, drums and percussion. Paleface displays his command of multiple instruments on the recording, playing guitar, banjo, harmonic and melodica. But only Paleface and Monica relocated to North Carolina. The others stayed behind, tied to the jobs that had also kept them from touring. PF and Mo wanted to make music full-time and discovered that they could actually tour better with Concord as home base. With the cost of living less in the South, so far they have been getting by without having to take day jobs. And they have been performing steadily, not just in North Carolina, but also the surrounding states. With Just About to Burn disbanded, there was some debate about what the duo of PF and Mo should call themselves. They followed the advice of Avett manager Dolph Ramseur to pick a name and stick with it. And since the name Paleface is already well known, that's the name they chose. So there's Paleface the man, and there's Paleface the duo. Fans old and new packed The Evening Muse in Charlotte Jan. 5 for the release of A Different Story after Creative Loafing's Jeff Hahne declared the CD "a great release to kick off 2008" and said that had it been released a week earlier, it would have made it into his top 10 albums of 2007. As the duo tours in support of the release with just the two of them, one may wonder how PF and Mo are able to perform songs from a CD recorded by a larger group of multi-instrumentalists. The answer is they manage very well, thank you. Their unembellished versions capture the essence of the songs and are a joy to listen to. Catch them live in their marvelous simplicity, then get the CD so you can revel in the fleshed-out arrangements. It's hard to decide which of the songs to expound upon in this small space, since they are all winners. The CD kicks off with the optimistic "Kick this Jam," with sauntering strings leading the listener toward an enjoyable ramble through

all 11 tracks. I defy you to try to hold still while listening to the upbeat "Little By Little" propelled by Mo's drums and background vocals. "Brooklyn Girl" is a simply beautiful, earnest serenade underscored gently by the bowed bass furnished by Bob Crawford. If I had to pick a favorite track, I would choose "Dyin Daze" with its rough-around-the-edges feel, almost like a chain gang work song an image reinforced by a sound in the background like a ringing steel hammer. The open tuning of Paleface's solo banjo provides a perfect introduction to this arrangement that breaks into a haunting lament: "Oh no, to my dyin' days, I'll never understand this world or its wicked ways ... the things people do and the things that they say." In the midst of the record, Mo has made a foray into songwriting. The petite Puerto Rican offers "Ya Me Voy," which she sings with childlike simplicity. It floats like an island of repose in a sea of American folk. The song reflects her mixed feelings after being laid off from a job that she wasn't really crazy about anyway. She felt good about leaving, but sad at the same time. Sung all in Spanish, the song translates "I'm going home. I need to rest. I'm going home. I need love and peace." She doesn't rule out writing more songs but seems happy to leave the songwriting to Paleface, who appears to write songs as effortlessly and as quickly as some people tie their shoes. Besides, she's too busy. Not only is she performing steadily as half of Paleface, she is currently acting as business manager, taking care of booking, negotiating, communicating, and freeing PF to concentrate on being the duo's more artistic half. It's an ideal situation as far as she's concerned, and she's happy to be the yin to his yang. The CD's concluding track, "I Can See the Light" with the Avetts, seems more like a beginning, looking toward a bright future here in the sunny South. "I can see the light by the time we get up to it, it'll be a different story." The future hasn't always seemed that bright for Paleface. A lot of dark days interrupted what had been a promising career. He was the first of the Antifolk artists to be signed to a major label, Polydor, when he released his illustrious debut album including the popular "Burn and Rob," a tongue-in-cheek commentary inspired by the memorable Judas Priest trial. His manager at this time was Danny Fields (Ramones, Iggy Pop, MC5) and Paleface appeared in "Rolling Stone" and "Spin " magazines. PF gives credit for his knack for songwriting to Daniel Johnston, who helped him early on. Although the public knows of Johnston largely through the film "The Devil and Daniel Johnston," which documents his descent into incapacitating mental illness, PF knew him before the lithium and demons took their toll, when his genius was still evident. Paleface in turn influenced Beck, helping him make the leap from folk singer to singer/songwriter. But while Beck went on to achieve platinum status and Grammy awards,

Paleface's career seemed cursed by bad luck, made worse by bad business and life choices. His downward slide culminated with liver failure. It would have ended his life, had he been alone when he collapsed. But he survived to tell how it was a wake-up call to change. "You know, the liver is the only organ in the human body that can regenerate itself," he says, a statement that seems to reflect the same optimism that pervades "A Different Story." Instead of dwelling on the tragedy of the near-fatal experience, he's thankful for his second chance. With his immune system shot, the road to recovery was long. But this turned out to be one of his busiest and best songwriting periods. Eventually, he was performing again. Around this time, Mo was working unhappily as a junior architect with a Manhattan firm. She would look forward to the end of the workday so she could go to the East Village and listen to music. She especially liked to watch the drummers, thinking "I believe I could do that." She had never studied music. Where she was from, music wasn't even offered in the schools. But she ordered a drumset off eBay, and in only a few months taught herself to play well enough to sit in with bands. After a while she got up the nerve to suggest to one of her favorite singers, Paleface, that maybe they could jam sometime. He liked what he heard. As if in a musical fairy tale, Mo became Paleface's drummer. She played drums four years professionally before she finally had lessons, studying with Paula Spiro of the Female Drummers Workshop. She got the training and encouragement she needed to take her playing to a new level, adding more energy and nuances. Spiro also made her learn to read music. She stressed how music is a universal language, and that she could be in Germany and have a score stuck in front of her, and she'd be able to play it. Mo says she would have liked to have had more formal training, but lessons were expensive. "Maybe I can take lessons again," she says. It seems to have occurred to her in the middle of our interview in a Concord, N.C. coffeeshop that music instruction may be yet another thing that costs less here. "Maybe I can, too," says PF. New York's loss is our gain. Here's hoping that the Piedmont continues to appeal to PF and Mo. As for the "different story," may North Carolina be where they live happily ever after. Or you can get the CD from Paleface themselves. The duo is coming to Salisbury Feb. 16, appearing at The Blue Vine, 209 S. Main St. CD REVIEW, by Bootleg Magazine

"Imagine Mark Lanegan in a childlike, playful mood recording a melodic album of material, or better yet, Tom Waits simply trying to sound like Dave Matthews Band. Conjure that as a way describe the engagingly gravel voice and soulful delivery of Paleface, lead singer of Paleface Just About to Burn. Paleface sings heartfelt, rustic vocals on A Different Story that are smooth and with a fair amount of

bumps in the road to keep it grounded. Songs on the album are traveling music - freight car jams and side of the road tunes. At times it feels of being recorded on front porches and old rooms with a single light bulb hanging from a high ceiling. A Different Story finds it way into the cracks of the soul, smoothing edges and brightening areas where shadows lurk. Its Americana spirit and world-weary hopefulness permeates earnest playing with catchy melodies. 'Dyin Daze' spins perfectly around guitar jabbing and train echo banjo playing, recalling Livin' with the Law era Chris Whitley. Paleface sings, Oh, no, till my dyin days, I'll never understand the world or its wicked ways. 'Brooklyn Girl' has a narrator who's been around and knows exactly what he means; This world we're living in has got a pulse that's feeding famel've been down and I've been up and I've struggled to climb/And I've held myself back and wasted lots of precious time. 'Ya Me Voy' centers the album with sweet, lilting vocals by Monica Samalot and gentle guitar picking - a lullaby for grown ups. 'Just So You Know' showcases slow acoustic funk, its strength in a reverse groove and Paleface's soft howl. Samalot's background harmonies produce a ghostly quality, giving the song its own world. 'I Can See the Light' is a Sunday stroll coupled with Saturday night finesse. The song is carefully propped up with more of Samalot's vocals as well as acoustic and banjo guitar by Scott Seth Avett. Paleface could be well on his way to being the Sting of modern Americana, mixing traditional playing with storytelling. The timber and rareness of his voice will surely open doors but the songwriter's sincerity will solidify his place." Brian Tucker, Bootleg Magazine

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