

## Mp3 Nathan Hamilton - All For Love And Wages



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Singer/songwriter, roots rock with a strong lyrical sense, steeped in the storytelling tradition. 11 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Rock, ROCK: Americana Details: When people ask Hamilton what he does for a living, he usually says "musician." That's a pretty modest claim for a guy who won the prestigious Kerrville New Folk award in 2000, putting him in the company of past winners like Slaid Cleaves, Steve Earle, Lyle Lovett and Robert Earl Keen. Tuscola, his 1999 solo debut, launched two charting Americana radio singles ("Cash Tobacco" and "Spent") and garnered an almost embarrassing amount of critical praise. "Full of haunting images and evocative emotions," wrote Chris Riemenschneider of the Austin American-Statesman, while Christopher Hess of the Austin Chronicle hailed the album as "a strong series of country-folk tunes that establish Hamilton as a local voice to be reckoned with." Sara Rex of KFAN Texas Rebel Radio singled it out as one of the best releases of the year. Nathan Hamilton is an artist, and like all artists - or at least the best of them - his art is not limited to his immediate stimuli. Nor is his mode of expression limited to song or any other single form. Over the course of his adult life, the Abilene-born and raised, Austin-based Hamilton has performed with a theater company in Los Angeles, tried his hand at writing plays, briefly studied graphic design, reveled in the freedom of textural art and recorded three albums, one with a band (The Good Medicine Band, formerly the Sharecroppers) and two (last year's critically acclaimed Tuscola and the new All For Love and Wages) as a solo act. "I've always been interested in discovering new territory and mediums as an artist"- an identity he equates with being an athlete. "Anybody that's seriously into athletics, may be active in a number of different sports to work various muscles and develop other skills, but they're still overall an athlete," he says. "I think it's the same with art." Consider All For Love and Wages then the way one might consider a single painting in a larger and still unfinished body of work, not so much a mirror image portrait of the artist as a study in a specific

mood and theme. A very different theme, it just so happens, than the one Hamilton explored on Tuscola and with the Good Medicine Band. "The new record kind of breaks away from the whole Texas, small town thing. I felt as though I'd said all I had to say on that. I was just trying to get more specific in terms of getting off the dusty, old small streets and getting into the house, where we live, to explore what's going on with the people in those houses." The things that interested Hamilton inside those houses and subsequently inspired so many of the songs on All For Love and Wages were stories from friends, family members, people he's met over the course of years of taking on odd jobs like construction work to support his art and family - as well as snapshots from his own life and marriage. "It's the detailed experience of humanity," he elaborates. "When you're standing at the sink and the way the light comes through a glass sitting on the ledge, how that moment right there, that physical object, that detail, can encompass a complete emotion or experience that you're going through in your life. I think that correlation between emotion and objects is sort of a theme for me as a writer, and that's what is interesting to me." Musically, All For Love and Wages finds Hamilton further refining his style of stark, singer-songwriter confessionals on half the album while simultaneously exploring a more rhythmic, rocking vein on the other half. Hamilton credits friend and co-producer Ted Cho (of Poi Dog Pondering fame) for helping him hammer out the details of the new album, but the extra punch and muscle to the mix comes courtesy of his seasoned road band, No Deal (named after the Townes Van Zandt song). "They played a big part in shaping the sound of the new record," Hamilton enthuses. "My guitar player, Brent Malkus comes from a punk background so he adds a whole new edge to the music. Also Rob Gaines on drums and Mike Stevenson on bass just drive it home. They helped me lean a little harder into the rock direction I was headed, which I am really enjoying. At least for now." Spoken like a true artist - always receptive to new and challenging forms of expression, but never knowing when, where or how inspiration will hit.

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