

## Mp3 Little Pebble - Folk: Free-folk



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Easy going background music - moody and reflective. 11 MP3 Songs FOLK: Free-folk, FOLK: Folk Pop

Show all album songs: Little Pebble Songs Details: LP - I really like this fair review of my first album, it best describes the product on offer! Independent Music Writer - James McNeil Little Pebble is a self-titled album from Edinburgh singer songwriter Alan Oates that aptly declares its intentions in the first song "April Nectarine," where a lyric says, "not to be different, just to be good." It's an ethos he sticks to throughout the album. On listening it's obvious he's not trying to be different and his influences are easy to hear. They range from Donovan and Bob Dylanesque vocals, guitar and harmonica framework to the more ambient electronica of Four Tet, with tinges of Bowie thrown in for good measure. Saying this though none of these influences are ever glaringly obvious and this is symptomatic of the way he has melded his influences together and come up with his own way of doing things. And it's good. The songs are led by acoustic guitar and vocals but the addition of drums, bass, harmonica, piano, banjo, female backing vocals and a mellotron sounding keyboard all add a subtle texture that give the songs greater depth and complexity. It also serves to bring Little Pebble neatly out of any obvious categorisation that vocals and acoustic guitar alone would immediately put on him. All the songs seem to come and go before you really get a chance to get into them, which is partly due to the way many of them build up slowly, reach a peak then break down to just vocal and guitar. This technique is used throughout the album but it isn't overdone and is not obvious due to the subtle production and additions of the backing musicians. It also means the songs can be listened to over and over again, with each subsequent listen bringing something new to light. The lyrics seem to be about everyday issues and don't often enter into bigger arenas, which belies the unpretentious attitude and feel behind the songwriting. The main themes seem to surround people and relationships, acceptance and finding a place for yourself but not in a

defeatist way. At times the lyrics do sound almost naive, specifically the song Good Things where he sings " you know there's only good things in a smile " a nice thought, however not always true. Although the innocence of the song and the way it's sung almost has you believing it. The lyrics are all very honest and straight out of the writer's head, and he wears his heart on his sleeve. This can sometimes be overbearing but the songs lend themselves to the confessional style of his lyrics and in this setting they work. The album Little Pebble as a whole is subtle, well thought out and well produced. The main strengths lie in the songwriting, they are good solid songs, the writer knows what they are and he never tries to make them into something they're not. They are earthy and folky but the production and arrangements give them an ethereal swirl that helps keep a consistent pace and moves the songs along without them all sounding the same. The track order is good and there is enough of a variation between quiet, louder, faster and slower songs to keep your interest throughout. Little Pebble may not be an album that reaches for great heights but it doesn't try to and it's happy that way. -ends- Look out for 'Blueberry Gumdrops' - the next release by Little Pebble, available late August at CD Baby.

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