

Nathan Kane on The Seaside EP, Whale Bones' future, Twin Peaks, and vinyl records

I sat down to talk with Nathan Kane, Bloomington local and member of the self-defined Indie/Alternative band Whale Bones, at 10 pm on a Thursday night over Skype. Not knowing what to expect, and being the host of a somewhat unconventional interview, I brewed a pot of coffee and made the call.

Among other things, we discussed the Seaside EP, an emotionally raw and compelling five song EP released by the two piece band Whale Bones in 2015, and the unique creative process that sets it apart from similar genre content, as well as Whale Bones' upcoming album.

Q: I really like that you guys secluded yourselves in Florida and came back with this EP; I was really interested in what made you do that. What made you add in that creative element?

A: I don't think it was intentional at the time. Paul [Lierman] and I met in college our freshman year, and then, our sophomore year, we went on Spring Break together down in Florida and we stayed in a small little cabin, and I don't even know if it could be considered a cabin, *laughs*, it was just like a small little thing.

We were listening to a lot of different music, Deas Vail, Copeland. I was really vibing at the time and it was a different influence than I had been drawing from on previous stuff I had written in high school, so it was all like a new chapter as far as my writing went.

The first two days it rained the whole time, and so they were playing League of Legends and I don't play League of Legends so I started writing some stuff. The Current was the first thing that I wrote. We were down there for a week, and I was just really amped on the writing. I would go off on my own and stare into the ocean and write lyrics to the songs.

We would go out every night and go walking on the beach. You're in Florida during Spring Break and no one else is out on the beach at 10pm. There were three of us on this trip and none of us were talking and we were just staring into the ocean and walking along the beach, and it's really pretty, and really contemplative. There's something about looking into the ocean, how vast it is, and it feels so unending, it's like there's always something there, and so for me that opened up something. Those lyrics on that record are probably some of the easiest I've ever had as far as lyrics come, just because it was so fluid and so in that moment.

We wrote Hiding From the Sea while we were there, the Current. Ideas for Exhausted Forgiveness and I Can't Live Again were down there as well, but then the concept of how they're all tied together the guys thought of while we were driving home.

Q: So how do you think your writing process for your new album differs from the Seaside EP?

A: Well, it's written over a longer period of time. The other one was pretty much written then, but this one, some of these songs were written right when the Seaside EP got released, and some of them still are not finished. It's been a longer process, I went to school for recording so a lot of these songs are a lot more fleshed out than they were in the past. On this album, Paul played drums and I recorded them and we took three days to do it, just to be super, deliberate with everything and make sure it was perfect. And

then, I'm doing all of the recording myself, so I get a lot more control over what sounds I want, how I want things to sound, and how I want things to be played. The new record is going to sound more true to how I want Whale Bones and to what I'm hearing in my head.

Of the differences between the two albums, Nathan said, "I feel like the Seaside EP was kind of clean, the guitars were very tight and nice, but on this I intentionally play some parts really messy, just to express the raw emotion of it. I had things that I needed to say and express with the Seaside EP and I feel like I said them. Now I have these other thoughts that are maybe more out of frustration or are my observations on the outside world as opposed to a reflection of myself. I don't necessarily think it's more true because it's more aggressive music, I think it's just more applicable to these specific emotions."

Whale Bones expects the album to debut in early 2018. "It's coming along pretty well, most of the guitars are done. And then after that, bass is really quick to record, and then vocals are pretty easy as well."

We briefly discussed the band's March tour and some of their best touring experiences, including their preference for the restaurant chain Cook Out, their opportunity to be involved with the South by Southwest showcase, their recording session for Playlist Play ("they're just the coolest people, they're super kind, super fun to hang out with"), and the unique venues they've played, including an Irish pub and a motorcycle shop. As Nathan put it, "I want to play under a bridge sometime, just to check that off the list."

I also had the opportunity to hear about Nathan's birthday on tour. "There's a TV show called Twin Peaks, and I really love it. We played a show in Seattle, and the next day was the day before my birthday, and we went to all the places that they shot Twin Peaks. In the opening credits, they have a waterfall, we went to that, we went to the diner where they have a lot of scenes, and we ate some cherry pie, which is what they do in the show, and got some coffee. It was really cool to me, that's something that meant a lot to me, and it was really, really good to experience it and be there."

And finally, Nathan's opinion on vinyl. "If I listen to something, it's going to be something that I really care about and I really think is valuable and meaningful. I think the music is something worthwhile, I don't need to do anything else, I don't need to be on my computer or driving or talking to other people. I'm there to sit down and listen to a record. It's kind of an active thing. It's really cool to me, I really like it. It's an experience."

We ended on an optimistic note. "I'm excited to be producing this album. It's a way to control the vision, but it's also a way to show people what I'm capable of."

Look for Whale Bones' album to release in 2018, and in the meantime, check out their social media:

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/WhaleBonesMusic/>)

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/whalebonesband>)

Bandcamp (<https://whalebonesband.bandcamp.com>)

The weekly Whale Bones playlists and The Seaside EP can be found on Spotify
(<https://open.spotify.com/artist/6lxxKLjf402VT68HXs4JeS>)