

Parker Smith

Underground

RIYL: Neil Young, The Band, The Infamous Stringdusters, Trampled By Turtles, Traffic, Nils Lofgren, Dire Straits

Like the local dive bar's perennial drunkard, Parker Smith's music has that rare ability to thrive while at its scrappiest. All aching pedal steel and cigarette-soaked pleas, Smith seems to put his own spiritual turmoil in a chokehold, elevating it until he squeezes out the elegant songs that make for his forthcoming sophomore LP, *Underground*. Unlike most of his peers in the Americana community, Smith manages to defy being pigeonholed by inflecting his music with touches of blue-eyed soul ("Fray"), Asbury Park-indebted blues-rock ("Holy Water"), and even Gordon Lightfoot ("Arrowroot").

Parker Smith (FKA Parker Smith and the Bandwith) grew up in Atlanta, Georgia and though he hails from a non-musical family, his abilities and passion for playing seeped through at a young age. After nurturing his interest in middle school, high school saw Smith involved in numerous garage bands. Following his passion through college at the University of Miami, where he played in a Songwriting Ensemble - one founded by the Bruce Hornsby. It was here, in this ensemble that, after inspirational work with musicians from all over the globe, he began considering a career in music. Smith eventually became a music teacher at all levels of schooling before earning a graduate degree in music education from the University of Texas. Finally, moving back to Atlanta in 2015, Smith quickly found himself absorbed in the music scene, channeling his disparate influences - The Allman Brothers, Miles Davis, Randy Newman to name a few - and passion for music education into opening Guitar Shed, a music school for young aspiring musicians. As if juggling his own business wasn't enough to satiate the artist's appetite, all the while, Smith has kept a steady foot in the Atlanta music scene by playing out as often as possible.

Though *Underground* might technically fall under the umbrella of a "quarantine album," these songs differentiate themselves from Smith's oeuvre in their raw, confessional nature and their hummability: these are songs not easily shaken from memory. And aptly so, as the album itself deals with the pain, guilt, and heartbreak inherent in engaging with some of your deepest memories. This theme is most concisely captured on "Arrowroot" - another name for the invasive plant kudzu - where he slyly recounts the disruptive nature of memory itself and, as Smith himself tells it, "trying to clear your head when all of that [memory] is weighing you down."

Of course, this album wouldn't have been possible were it not for the crack-team of artists and players he assembled. Colin Agnew and Noah Kess both lent their production and mixing talents, while Colin also played drums and percussion and John Kingsley (pedal steel), Mimi Naja (backing vocals), Chris Case (keys), and Kelly McFarling (backing vocals) round out the supporting cast.

"Soulful country-folk. Smith's vocals are straightforward and soothing as he serves up vivid, literary-minded lyrics." - *Glide Magazine*

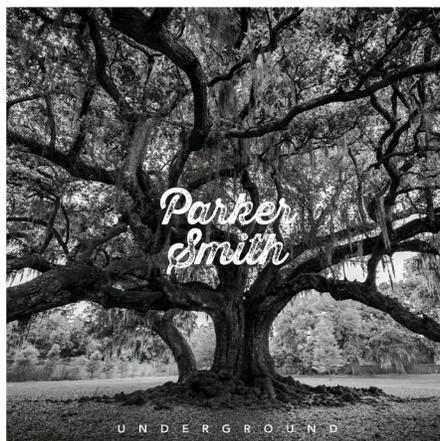
"Lots of country pedal steel swing, Parker Smith will draw you into his song about falling and picking yourself up again." - *Americana Highways*

"We're into Nils Lofgren / Southside Johnny territory with the grooving 'Fray.'" - *Americana UK*

"Asbury Park-indebted blues-rock." - *VENTS Magazine*

"Baritone vocals emerge from a symphony of strings. Thoughtful imagery sheds light on a larger theme expressed throughout." - *UNXIGNED*

1. High Road
2. Fray
3. Holy Water
4. Company Man
5. Arrowroot
6. Mirkwood
7. Limestone
8. Underground



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