



Nick Pagliari

Acoustic / Country / Pop



Nick Pagliari's got the twang of Nashville in his voice and the spirit of Memphis in his soul. It's a combination that makes his songs indelible snapshots of life — ringing portraits of love, ambition, dreams, connections, and the rest of what matters.

And for Pagliari, what matters most is reaching people. "If there's something in one of my songs that makes somebody feel like it's about their life or an experience they've had, then I've done my job," he says.

He's done his job brilliantly on *Please and Thank You*, his second full-length CD. It follows 2007's EP *Safe and Sound*, whose title track was featured in the Hilary Swank movie *P.S. I Love You*, and that same year's *The Sail* album.

Please and Thank You broadens Pagliari's musical reach while displaying the storytelling prowess and the warm, personable vocal style that's always been at the heart of this young singer-songwriter's art.

"This is a people album," Pagliari explains. "It's about my life, the lives of my friends and the characters I've developed to tell different stories about struggle and romance and desire and change."

Change is especially important. It's a recurring theme, in tunes like "Leave It Alone," which explores the seismic shifts of maturity, and "Highway Stays the Same," about emotional growth.

Please and Thank You also marks a change in Pagliari's sound. It's the first full distillation of all of his influences, balancing the hook-powered melodicism of '80s rock with the groove driven legacy of his native Memphis and the alt-country sound minted by groups like Uncle Tupelo, Wilco, Son Volt and the Old 97's. The sound of the Civil War tale "The Union Infantry" reaches back even further, to the heyday of the Band.

Although Pagliari learned to play his acoustic guitar in backyard bands with his friends in Memphis, it wasn't until he moved back to that river port on the banks of the Mississippi last year that he began to fully appreciate its musical history. "I went to the Stax Museum for the first time, and I was really blown away," he says. "I was already experimenting with horns, and the depth and the legacy of the great soul music that came from there, and the pop groups like Big Star and the Box Tops, really convinced me to include them even more. There's also keyboards on this album: piano and accordion." And then there's the boisterous grooves rippling through numbers like "Do What You Love," "Leave It Alone" and a passel more.

"All the great bands that came out of Memphis played deep in the pocket, so my band and me took that to heart when we made *Please and Thank You*," he says. "Having a great beat that we all locked around really gave the melodies and stories in the songs a strong backbone.

"The other thing I can hear, mostly in my voice and in some of the guitar playing on the album, is the sound of Nashville," Pagliari says. He moved there in 2002 to plant roots as an artist, and they took hold during his five-year stay. He was voted Best Unsigned Songwriter in the Nashville Scene's Readers Poll in 2003, and his band Fairfax had a song on the high profile *This is Americana: Volume One* compilation alongside such notables as Willie Nelson and Lucinda Williams. He also released his debut solo recording, the EP *Long Gone*, in 2005 and signed with Highland Music Publishing in 2006.

"Everywhere you look in Nashville there's great music and great musicians," Pagliari observes. "It's literally in the air, so it's inevitable that living and playing there would influence me. And it's not just country music. There's an incredible indie rock and alternative scene."

And back out into the tracks of *Please and Thank You*, which Pagliari plans to follow with a spate of touring: solo, accompanied by a drummer, and with his four-piece band.

"Each way has a different vibe," Pagliari says, "and I like 'em all. The buzz of playing live and creating songs out of nothing except my life and my imagination is what made music set me on fire when I was a kid, and I still get that buzz today — every time.

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