

Askeleton

The Personalization

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Format: 12" LP 180 Gram Vinyl Hand-Stencilled covers w/Free Digital Download

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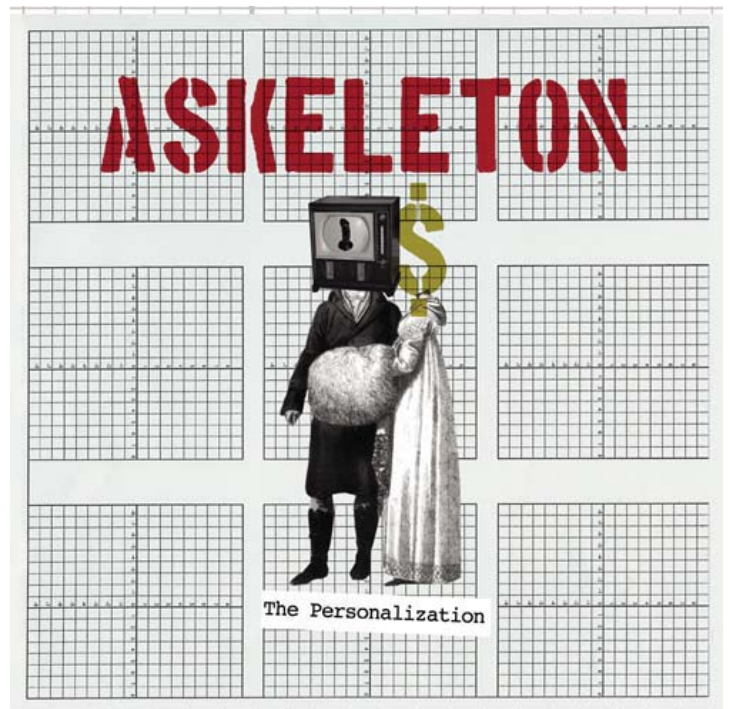
Knol Tate, who began Askeleton after the dissolution of his bands Kill Sadie and The Hidden Chord back in 2002, has long come off like he's holding you at a distance. Tate started the trend first with the lo-fi, sample-based bedroom pop of "Sad Album" and then with the cold, industrial isolation of "Angry Album or- Psychic Songs," but showed a more inclusive tendency with 2005's "(Happy) Album." And now comes "The Personalization," which is almost, well, sunny.

Done with the trilogies, Askeleton have become simultaneously lighter and bigger than ever. Without being overly self-conscious, Tate has always made records with ideas behind them. If "(Happy) Album" was about bringing in all of his friends to contribute parts to his songs, "The Personalization" represents a return to the stripped-down, live band aesthetics of labels like Stiff Records.

This all-in-the-family approach was whittled down to a core group of players for "The Personalization." Bringing together musicians he's worked with for several years now, the band on the record is composed of guitarist/drummer Bill Caperton, bassist Noah Paster, multi-instrumentalist Robert Skoro (who also had a hand in producing the record), and drummer Steve Yasgar. These players' musical experience imbues the record—the first real "band" record Askeleton has made—with an organic consistency and warmth.

On first glance, it may appear that Askeleton adopts different musical genres only to shed them just as fast, but in fact they've been accumulating styles in bits and pieces. "The Personalization" is simultaneously the most fully realized and simplest Askeleton record yet.

The lo-fi heart of "Sad Album" resurfaces again in touches like sampled phone messages, count-offs, and sloppily-layered harmonies. The electronic textures that dominated "Angry Album" are still there, but now in more of a supporting role. The keen pop sensibility that drove songs like "Birdman" and "Cities, Not the People in Them" (from Angry Album and (Happy) Album, respectively) is pushed to the fore on the insanely catchy "Death to Saint Paul" and "Swearing Isn't Very Becoming On You," which sit back-to-back in the middle of the album like a creamy nougat core. On "Intertwined," Tate takes a turn directly into plush romance when he coos, "I lost my mind / to the time we intertwined." It's an album built upon romantic utilitarianism—keep what's worked before, discard the rest, then dive headlong into new territory without trepidation.



TRACK LIST

Side A

- 01 Move To Switzerland
- 02 This Isn't French
- 03 Skunk Medicine
- 04 In The Basement We All Think The Same
- 05 I Wanna Marry All The Women

Side B

- 06 Death To Saint Paul
- 07 Swearing Isn't Very Becoming On You
- 08 Kill Everyone Alive
- 09 Minor Celebrity
- 10 Intertwined
- 11 A Girls Night Bonus

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