

Bill Mallonee – Fact Sheet

Discography:

- *Jugular* (Fingerprint) 1990
- *Driving the Nails* (Core) 1991
- *Killing Floor* (Fingerprint/Sky) 1992
- *Welcome to Struggleville* (Capricorn) 1994
- *Blister Soul* (Capricorn) 1995
- *VOL* (Warner/Resound) 1996
- *Slow Dark Train* (Capricorn) 1997
- *To the Roof of the Sky* (Meat Market) 1998
- *Live at the 40Watt* (PasteMusic) 1998
- *Audible Sigh* (Compass) 2000
- *Summershine* (Compass) 2001
- *Fetal Position* (PasteMusic) 2002
- *Locket Full of Moonlight* (PasteMusic) 2002

Factoids:

- Former History Teacher
- Recorded 13 albums in 12 years
- Peter Buck of R.E.M. produced *Killing Floor*
- Grew up in Chapel Hill, NC; resides in Athens, GA
- Signed to Capricorn Records after a showcase at SXSW in 1994
- Vigilantes Of Love inducted in the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 2002
- Toured or opened for Dave Matthews Band, Matthew Sweet, R.E.M., Bruce Cockburn, Over The Rhine, David Wilcox.
- Played 120+ gigs every year for over 10 years

Awards/Highlights:

- "Welcome to Struggleville" single Top 10 AAA radio hit 1994
- "Real Downtown" single Top 10 Modern Rock radio hit 1995
- "Audible Sigh" album #5 Billboard Top Internet Albums 2000
- "Audible Sigh" album #35 on Gavin's AAA (7 weeks in top 30) 2000
- "Resplendent" single top five Americana songs in Uncut magazine
- Website: www.wildwoodagency.com/promoter/main.htm
- Artist website: www.billmallonee.com

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Bill Mallonee – *Perfumed Letter*

A perfect movie is hard to come by – but usually contains three things: great script, great acting, great directing/cinematography. Films that stand the test of time display all of these. The same goes with rock. How rarely these days do we hear an album with all three: great hooks, meaningful lyrics, and inventive, interesting music?

Bill Mallonee delivers on all three counts with *Perfumed Letter*. And it's a joy to behold.

The national solo debut for the former Vigilantes of Love frontman, *Perfumed Letter* was produced by Mallonee, Tom Lewis (John Prine, Junior Brown, Love Tractor), and Paul Wilkinson, releasing 8/5/2003 on Paste Records. Diverging from his roots-oriented past, Mallonee adds a fresh wash of keyboards – vintage Mellotrons, Clavinovas and Moog synthesizers, no less – to contribute to a sound that is at times symphonic in its scope and ambition. "Shirts and Skins," which recalls Radiohead's "Fake Plastic Trees," soars to a stunning climax on a bed of synthesizers and overlaid guitars. "Life On Other Planets" recalls the *Pet Sounds*-era Beach Boys, and features a buoyant chorus that will embed itself in your brain upon first hearing. "Crescent Moon," as fine a love song as Mallonee has ever penned, features some typically self-deprecating Mallonee humor: "Stumbling when I come/Tripping over my dumb tongue/For God's sake, don't these mamma's boys ever grow up?" "She So Liquid," the album's outstanding leadoff track, mines the swirling psychedelia of the late period Beatles to great affect, while "Wintergreen" features what may be the best George Harrison guitar solo not performed by George Harrison.

Mallonee's resume' is impressive. Part of the fertile Athens, GA scene that produced R.E.M. and The B52s, Mallonee and his Vigilantes released 3 albums before signing with Capricorn in 1994 and breaking through with the critically acclaimed album *Welcome to Struggleville*, which garnered a Top 10 AAA hit with the title track, followed by *Blister Soul*, featuring the Modern Rock hit "Real Downtown."

An incendiary live show only added to the buzz, but it was the songs – Mallonee's ability to crawl inside the skin of some creepy, conflicted characters – that left the biggest impression. *Rolling Stone* observed, "Bill Mallonee...[has] remained fascinated with the shadowy emotional toils and struggles inherent in the American experience...exploring the grey thin line between hope and hopelessness with songs that alternate from careening scorchers to more plaintive, folkish material.... compelling, insightful." With a lyrical honesty, vulnerability, and bluntness not seen since Marianne Faithful's *Broken English* or Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks*, Mallonee portrayed himself as a redeemed criminal, a weary saint who was only too aware of his own faults and shortcomings.

Full of witty wordplay and humor, *Perfumed Letter*'s songs nevertheless speak powerfully to the contradictions that inevitably come with big grown-up themes – loving, but not as well as we should, wanting to give of ourselves selflessly, but obsessing on our own foibles and imperfections, trusting in something bigger than ourselves, yet caught up in petty jealousies and self doubt. Bill Mallonee captures those little wars of the heart better than any songwriter going, and in the process creates believable, eminently listenable soundscapes. The perfume is sweet, but it can't mask the desperation. And that's when Bill Mallonee is at his best.

Bill Mallonee – Quotes from the Recent Past

"Dylan-tinged vocal and introspective lyrics that spin out big-picture stories imbued with chilling small details." – **BILLBOARD**

"One of the best rock bands going...Mallonee's thought provoking lyrics demand repeated listening...Every song on 'Audible Sigh' is excellent!...A brilliant piece of work, a great album that deserves a wide audience." - **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

"Bill Mallonee's wayward vocals perfectly suit his dark night of the soul school of trailer park songwriting. Gripping" *** - **Nigel Williamson, UNCUT**

"Topped by the wayward melancholy of Bill Mallonee's vocals and his 'last confession' style of songwriting ... a classic slice of Americana ...Compelling." 7/10 - **THE TIMES**

"The poetry and intelligence of Bill Mallonee's songs rivals Dylan's and the spirituality and inspiration of them is like the timeless hymns. He is one of our all time favorite artists." - **Buddy Miller**

"I listen to anything that catches my ear. You don't have to wear black to impress me. I really like this album [Welcome to Struggleville] . . . Nobody heard it, which is too bad." - **John Mellencamp**

"Bill Mallonee [has] remained fascinated with the shadowy emotional toils and struggles inherent in the American experience...exploring the grey thin line between hope & hopelessness with songs that alternate from careening scorchers to more plaintive, folkish material... compelling, insightful, [he] continues to probe through Americana rock & roll proving that sometimes the only story worth telling is that of the journey." - **David Basham, ROLLING STONE**

"Fans of heartfelt melodic pop will love (Mallonee's) insightful tunes...this record is another indication of Nashville's thriving and under appreciated pop/rock scene... [They] may have a Triple A hit on their hands with this one." - **MUSIC ROW**

"[Bill Mallonee] is the best folk-rock act nobody's ever heard of...The intelligence and intensity of Mallonee's writing has elicited comparisons to Dylan from his loyal underground admirers. Given the consistency and quality of Mallonee's work over eight albums, he is arguably the first writer since John Prine to make the comparison plausible." - **NEW YORK PRESS**

'Audible Sigh doesn't exactly rewrite the book of dust-speckled country rock, but it's worth a small footnote.' *** - **Q**

"Melodic country rock, spirited & thoughtful." – **MOJO**

"Hyperbole be damned... this is awesome! Fans of heartfelt melodic pop will love Mallonee's insightful tunes. Mallonee's lyrical vision is both original and compelling...There's melody galore and soaring harmonies, but also true grit. It's just something special." - **NOT LAME**

"An earthy slice of country-gilded garage rock, shot through with Springsteen Passion." - **MAKING MUSIC**

The Critics speaketh...

"Singer-songwriter Bill Mallonee's roots rest in the Athens, Georgia, soil that nurtured college radio pioneers R.E.M. and underground stalwarts Let's Active. After releasing a dozen impressive albums with his country-folk rock project Vigilantes of Love, Mallonee explores a classic pop sound -- Magical Mystery Tour-era Beatles ("She's So Liquid") meets the Monkees ("Extraordinary Girl") -- while staying true to his love of heady, introspective lyricism. Mallonee strikes his best balance of wistful and whimsical on the deceptively uplifting post-breakup song "Your Bright Future." Floating on a Foo Fighters-inspired melody, Mallonee keenly addresses lost hope and its subsequent resignation in the lyrics, "There's a little piece of you I may never see again/There's a bigger piece of me that's simply vanishing." With *Perfume Letter*, Mallonee steps off from the Bob Dylan/Neil Young amalgam of *VOL* to take a spot among Beck, Eels and Mercury Rev. 4 STARS"

Gail Worley - Rolling Stone

"*Perfume Letter* has a dash of dBs in it. It has a dollop of Big Star. It intimates a more-than-passing acquaintance with two brothers named Davies. It's a singer-songwritery record, but it has full-band meat on the bones of its arrangements (in other words, while the songs are clearly driven by a vision, that vision is content to let sidemen express themselves beyond the purview of sidemen). Its melodies are familiar without being overly predictable. Its concerns are standard rock and roll song fare, but in the sense that they are timeless, not trite. *You know what it sounds like? It sounds as if Bill Mallonee heard Paul Westerberg's first two solo albums, saw past all of their filler to the core of what Westerberg was shooting for, and decided to record a much, much better version of those records.*"

Brett McCallon - Splendid

"This collection of brainy pop flirts with (but never drowns in) the Beatles and Beach Boys...Yet in the pulsebeat rhythm, soaring backing vocals and bruised McGuinn/Buck/Groovies guitar chords resides an exhilarating catharsis. The greatest sad songs can bring you to your knees, of course, but they also exist to pick you up. Here, Mallonee has left behind a perfumed letter for the ages." **Fred Mills - Magnet**

"The album's music is an amalgam of "Revolver" era Beatles and jangly indie pop, in songs that elliptically explore the man-woman thing. The results generally are very pleasing, with lots of nice hooks, and enough substance to easily bear up under repeated listenings. 4 Stars"

Michael Dixon - Roots Music Report

"It jangles, it shimmers, it vibes, it has Beatle-esque flourishes... it's great. His songs are colored with vintage Mellotrons, Clavavoxes and Moog synthesizers, and fortified with big Rickenbacker guitar punch. Mallonee sings with desperation, yet the witty wordplay, good humor and vibrant arrangements encapsulate the themes of innocence regained and joy on the fringe of losing it."

Miles of Music

"If you're new to all this and unfamiliar with Mallonee and his music, imagine a near-perfect folk-pop sound reminiscent of a more subdued Smithereens, or perhaps a less narcissistic Richard Thompson with a Jonathan Richman (minus the humor) complex."

Gordon Lamb - Flagpole

"Bill's future work for years to come will constantly be compared to the material here. Superb. Simply a perfect album."

Matt Kilgore - Phantom Tollbooth

"Mallonee isn't nearly as high up as he should be on the music food chain. Adroit at Brit-pop, alt-rock and alt-country, *Perfume Letter* is another gem."

Tony Peyser - Santa Monica Mirror

"Mallonee is a songwriter with a simple approach to his audience, yet he transforms familiar ideas into gold star gems that shine despite having the glare from the spotlight of popularity. Sometimes the best things for us are the things we have to search for, then we can fully appreciate the marvel of a craftsman and his plentiful gifts."

Monica Arrington - PerformerMag

"Far removed from the roots-rock style he explores with his band Vigilantes of Love, *LETTER* is a wash of synthesizers and organs. Mallonee's usually urgent - and sometimes strident - vocals ascend and descend from the heavens to create a floating, otherworldly vibe. Yes, there's no way around it: This is a modern psychedelic record if such a thing really exists. Both instrumentally and lyrically, Mallonee tests new waters here. "Crescent Moon" is possibly the best tune of the lot. It somehow manages to sum up Mallonee's departure in style as well as his search for love in two lines as he sings 'if you asked for the brightest star/ would you consider a crescent moon?' Yeah, Bill I would. You caught me off guard with this one but *PERFUMED LETTER* is a beautiful little project."

Ames Arnold - Plan 9 Music

"It's been a long path from VoL's early Southern gothic Americana revival meetings to Mallonee's wonderfully crafted bittersweet Pop confections; fans of either should be fans of both."

Brian Baker - City Beat

"Despite the seriously stated nature of his album, Mallonee's songs are not dismal or depressing. Each track is infused with a positive vibe" **Ryan Ray - Red and Black**

"I was about to write that Bill Mallonee--a fixture on the Athens music scene and longtime leader of the cult band Vigilantes of Love--has 17 albums under his belt. But references to anywhere below the waist are sort of inappropriate for the kind of jangly head-oriented pop he plays on number 17, *Perfumed Letter* (Paste). Mallonee's lived in an artsy college town forever and it shows--he shucks the trappings of alt-country as easily as he once put them on in favor of an almost English-sounding light psychedelia. It's a good step away from Ryan Adams-style populist bullshit and toward a better-fitting vulnerable-smart-guy authenticity. Just because Peter Holsapple and Chris Stamey never made any money doesn't mean their footsteps aren't worth following in."

Monica Kendrick - Chicago Reader