

Kyle and the Pity Party

Reviewed by: Lee Callaghan

January 26, 2018

Evolution Music Press

Rating: 8.5

Small town boys living only 100 miles outside of the biggest music metropolis in the world, Kingston, NY band *Kyle and the Pity Party* are making a splash in the ever expanding local music scene of New York State. Led by Kyle McDonough, this four piece outfit categorizes themselves as an emo-revival band, but this reviewer hears so much more. Using scaled down rhythmically driving themes this band steers away from the over melodious to tell a story with their music that is not marred with pretention. Not to say that harmony does not play a part in *Kyle and the Pity Party's* music, it is executed in a more deliberate manner. As the tensions build in a song, Kyle unleashes some rather surprising guitar chops, as heard in songs like "Spill It Up", and "He Was/She Was". Some have made references to *Kyle and the Pity Party* comparing them to the likes of the Cure and the Doors, however, the similarities between this tight rhythm section and early Hole, Silversun Pickups and Smashing Pumpkins cannot be ignored. Look for sound dynamics similar to Interpol and the Arkells if comparison need to be drawn, as the overlying vocal qualities naturally harmonize over the steady strumming of the open chords.

Going deep into *Kyle and the Pity Party's* debut EP *Everything's Bad*, stand out songs like, "Spill It All", "Young" and "He'll Never Love You" are professionally executed showing maturity on the band and the recording engineer. Performances by Garin Sheeley, Dan Shapiro and Evan Pyne stay right in the pocket behind Kyle's singing, as best heard on "I Love You, Let's Heal" and "Where The Girls Are". These songs are well written, have deep meaning and are presented with a major label quality not seen amongst many indie acts. Use of reverb and echoes are tastefully done, lending to an ambiance pulling the listener into to the limited headroom left over on the recordings. Streaming these indie releases come through crystal clear with no signal loss and exploring many of the dynamics that are present.

Recently released song "My Car" picks up where *Everything's Bad* left off, showing growth musically and lyrically. "I've been sleeping in my car, I've been sleeping alone at the bar", is a powerful metaphor of loneliness and despair any emo-revivalist would feel. This metaphor alone repeated throughout "My Car" paints a clear picture of what *Kyle and the Pity Party* call: "Happy boys writing sad songs". Main hook; "This honesty, this is how I feel", breaks down all the walls and exposes Kyle's singing in a very honest and emotional way that shows a maturity fighting with adolescent despair and heartbreak. "My Car" is a highlight lyrically for *Kyle and the Pity Party*, as superlative example of what happens when you pour your heart into your art. This song will stay in many favorite playlists.

As this band continues to mature, look for great performances that allows for more experimentation musically. Having the bass player come forward in the mixes may help bring up the bottom end and tie everything together sonically better than we have heard, but overall this package should be ready to shop to a major label. *Kyle and the Pity Party* are growing a nice buzz for themselves, in this market let's hope they can continue to keep the car going forward.