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Parker and Lily

Aug 21, 2001: Street
Sept: Radio

www.orangerecordings.com/tourdates.html: Tour

Formerly Valentine Six

THUMB FORWARD CHRONOLOGICALLY THROUGH A GIVEN RECORD COLLECTION, through the slow, sad singers of American pop history. Past romantic crooners like Roy Orbison & Johnny Mathis and chronic depressives like Jimmy Scott & the Walker Brothers, pausing briefly at the early Velvets before moving on into the present. At the far end of such a shelf, side by side with disks by modern melancholy luminaries like **Magnetic Fields**, **Tindersticks**, and **Portishead**, you'll find **Hello Halo** by **Parker and Lily**.

THEIR MINIMAL RHYTHMS ARE MECHANIZED, their floating, pretty South Seas mallet instruments amplified & distorted to reveal a post-millennial Manhattan pop angst. Songs like "Desert Holiday" and "P.S." speak to the distance between lovers, and that well-known absence which may or may not make the heart grow fonder - all the nervous disquietude of modern love revealed, more or less obsessively, through travel metaphors & the unhappy poetry of missed opportunity. They evoke distant echoes of Santo and Johnny-style travelogues such as Patsy Cline's "You Belong to Me", though rendered in modern urban shades of grey.

PARKER NOON'S UNPOLISHED, DREAMY VOICE lies in the quietly neurotic territory somewhere between Stuart Staples and Chet Baker (alongside, say, Astrud Gilberto, or Stephin Merritt), and his reductive guitar playing, especially on the oddly mournful baritone guitar, is heard at a distance through a thick, oily sheen of reverb & tremolo. Young New York pianist Lily Wolf defines their trebly, layered harmonies on vintage Rhodes and Wurlitzer electric pianos, AceTone, Farfisa, and Hammond organs, Vibraphone, and Marimba. Her pretty melodies veer unpredictably into the near verges of atonality, reminiscent of 60's soundtrack orientalisms or the sugary stridency of Ornette Coleman's Lonely Woman. Onstage, Lily is radiant, a sparkling, glamorous pop icon, in constant contrast to the somber, formal Noon. A ten-year romantic relationship between the two has resulted in a distinctive musical intimacy, lending a not-so-secret second dimension to their songs.

FORMERLY KNOWN EXCLUSIVELY AS VALENTINE SIX, the duo switched to the name **Parker & Lily** in the closing months of 2000, around the time **Matt Verta-Ray (Madder Rose, the Oubliettes, Speedball Baby)** began playing steel guitar on their recordings. The final **Valentine Six** album was the EP soundtrack to an obscure New York indie thriller named **Spectrum Red** (PCP Entertainment, 2000), and showed hints in it's slower numbers (such as a cover of the Jazz Passenger's "Swim To Me") of the sad spaciousness of the **Parker and Lily** recordings to follow. Subsequently **Hello Halo** was recorded over a span of 6 months, in small-band sessions utilizing tube-and-tape technology at **Matt Verta-Ray's** N.Y.Hed Studios on Manhattan's lower east side. The more personal, intimate nature of the tracks resulting from these sessions was the deciding factor in leading the band to release **Hello Halo** under the new and more diminutive appellation.

PARKER AND LILY ARE LOCAL FAVORITES IN NYC CLUBS like **CBGB** & the **Knitting Factory**, and a recent series of small tours up and down the East Coast and in the Great Lakes region has resulted in live dates with **Arab Strap**, **the Subsonics**, **White Hassle**, **Quintron**, **the Lonesome Organist**, **Cat Power**, and **Stereo Total**. Their live shows are sad and sardonic, undercut by ironically old-fashioned beats and looping, catchy melodies. Onstage, Lily is radiant, a sparkling, glamorous pop icon, in constant contrast to the somber, formal Noon. Parker sings quietly amid piles of customized & hot-wired analog drum machines, occasionally fiddling with a pre-solid-state electronic tone generator, or flipping switches to route one of Lily's vintage combo organs or electric pianos through a cheap 70's home-stereo effects unit, or maybe a converted Sun-era tape-delay unit. Like some morose bizarro-universe version of the **Make-Up**, or a gleaming new-model **Velvet Underground**, their stylized outfits seem to point towards a pop accessibility that is, however, deliberately refuted by the tense, paranoiac complexity of their thoroughly modern love songs.

The Hot Selling/Marketing Points:

- * Hello Halo recorded by, and featuring extensive guitar and steel guitar work by **Matt Verta-Ray** from **Speedball Baby** (formerly of Madder Rose).
- * Special guest appearance by Tony Corsano on drums (formerly of **James Chance and the Contortions**).
- * Multiple headlining tours across the US, as well as Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland, and so on, in support of early releases on PCP Entertainment (in the States) and Crippled Dick Hot Wax (in Europe).
- * Shows with **Arab Strap**, **Elysian Fields**, **the Subsonics**, **White Hassle**, **Quintron**, **the Lonesome Organist**, **Cat Power**, **Speedball Baby**, and **Stereo Total**.
- * The band has worked extensively on scoring underground (mostly NYC) films.
- * Parker and Lily's most recent EP under the **Valentine Six** alias was the soundtrack to 1999 indie thriller **Spectrum Red**, and the current album includes selections from their work on the more recent, as-yet-unreleased **Winterland**.
- * Recent live shows have been seen to include stacks of salvaged and hot-wired drum machines, one show topping out at 17 machines onstage at once, as well as a mad scientists' laboratory of pre-solid-state electronic tone generators, synthesizers, and converted tube home-stereo effects units.

Other Parker and Lily/Valentine Six available (Discography):

- "Soundtrack Music from Spectrum Red" CD EP on PCP Entertainment (2000)
- "Planes in Clouds" single on Mizuma Recordings Tokyo (1999)
- "In Bonn" single on Neo International Records (1999)
- "Valentine Six" CD/12" LP on PCP Entertainment (1997) and Crippled Dick Hot Wax (1998)
- "Always is My Name" single on Octet Records (1996)



parker and lily HELLO HALO

CD

1. Two Years in The Air
2. Mandarin
3. My Golden Arm
4. P.S.
5. Waitress
6. Tokyo
7. Desert Holiday
8. Morely
9. Only Heartbreak For Me
10. The World On Time
11. What's an Oubliette?



Parker and Lily
"Hello Halo"
OR016
August 21, 2001

UPC# 7-51937-17012-9 (CD)

Distributed by N.A.I.L. Distribution
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