



Still Just a Man... 10 Years Later

Bryan Hayes

Available from [Bryan Hayes's online store](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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Bryan Hayes released his first album, ***Just a Man***, a decade ago. It went over well, especially in the South, and boosted a touring schedule that was already seeing a growing fan base. ***Long Hard Road*** emerged in 2006 and cadged Internet radio play all over the Southeast, augmenting the base yet further. Then the ***Tangle Me Up in You*** EP was issued last year and landed him spots opening for Billy Joe Shaver, the Turnpike Troubadors, and others. Like many a musician, though, Hayes looked back just the other day and wondered what would happen if he re-tuned some of the earliest stuff. What with all the experience and changes that occur in a musician 'twixt then and now, it's a cogent pensée. Ah, but more than just think about it, he grabbed eight of the debut slab's eleven songs and reworked 'em. That's what you get in ***Still Just a Man***.

I can't tell you what those differences might exactly be 'cause I'm only now getting hip to this guy, but I sure as heck can let you know what's what on this particular CD. ***Mississippi*** is purely in Tom Petty territory but with an earthier Americana musicality to it (Hayes' backing band, The Retrievers, fall right in line with the singer's wont). ***Parts Sold Separately*** is deceptively hilarious, an ode to plastic surgeons, silicone, and everything tongue-in-cheekily firming up our culture, so to speak, a paean to "all-American women made in the USA...manufactured in L.A." (are ya listening, Joan Rivers, way up there in the clouds?; can we talk?). The song opens as just another country/folk tune until you start to realize exactly what he's singing about...and fall on the floor, guffawing. It's a Ray Stevens kinda gig.

Leave My Heart (Before You Go) is one of the great song titles of modern times—I mean, so much is said in just those six words that it's haiku in even shorter form. Even more is related in the song itself. Hayes returns to Petty by way of David Wilcox (the cooler than cool American guy, not the Canadian redneck a-hole) on that one but then turns Dylan's ***You Ain't Goin' Nowhere*** into a modulated Andy Griffith Show track, a sunshiny, dusty, Old West backporcher accompanied by a golden sun setting and a large glass of frosty lemonade. The cut fits very nicely in the voluminous encyclopedia of covers of the master's work. Again, I haven't a clue about the differences between ***Just a Man*** and ***Still Just a Man***, but I now sure as hell intend to go back and find out.

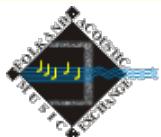
Track List:

- Soundtrack
- What Is Gone
- Mississippi
- Parts Sold Separately
- Leave My Heart (Before You Go)
- You Ain't Goin' Nowhere
- Just a Man
- Greatest Generation

All songs written by Bryan Hayes except
You Ain't Goin' Nowhere (Bob Dylan).

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