



SOUNDS OF THE SOUTH

Not everybody in the South is conservative," says **Paul Janeway**, lead singer/songwriter of the soul-rock band **St. Paul & the**

Broken Bones, who, along with other Alabama-born musicians (Jason Isbell, Alabama Shakes), don't back away from airing their progressive views. Janeway had a Pentecostal church upbringing and observed people speaking in tongues and casting out demons—which, he says, "scared the shit out of me." He considered becoming a preacher because he liked the performance part of it, but by the time he was a teenager, he'd fallen out of love with the church and formed a band in Birmingham, Alabama. His voice has been compared to Otis Redding, Sam Cooke, and Al Green, but, says Janeway,

"those names—that is god to me. That is an unreachable bar. I sang in church, but in all honesty I never thought I had a good voice or that I could do this as a living."

In 2008, while working in a mechanic shop, he saw that Prince was playing

Coachella. "So I spent a month's worth of money, [went there], got up early, and stood in the front row. It changed my life. I was crying through the whole show. That was the moment I knew I wanted to be a performer." The eight-piece St. Paul & the Broken Bones have released two albums, toured all over the world, opened shows for the Rolling Stones, and count Keith Richards and Elton John among their fans. Janeway's own eclectic tastes range from Prince to Serge Gainsbourg, and the painters Caravaggio and Mark Rothko. "Growing up in Alabama," he says, "you're not really exposed to a lot of art, so when I go to Europe, I like to go to museums." But he says he'll probably always live in Birmingham because "I think it's important for people to know there are others here who think [the same] way: you can't look at what's going on in the world and not be angry or unhappy." —L.R.