

STARS LIKE FLEAS

HOMETAPES 023. RELEASE DATE: JUNE 3, 2008. THE KEN BURNS EFFECT



Having quietly created 2 very different, highly-murmured about, and mostly hand-traded cult releases over the past several years, Stars Like Fleas re-emerged in late 2005 with new clothing and sonic plastic surgery, immediately creating a stir and an overnight name for themselves in a sentiment-suspicious Brooklyn, selling out exponentially larger shows in a variety of secret spaces (and not-so-secret spaces, like Bowery Ballroom) with the likes of Deerhoof, Grizzly Bear, Excepter, Gang Gang Dance, Comets On Fire, Kyp Malone of TV On The Radio, Man Man, Beirut, O'Death and Akron/Family. People have written many words about them from within the New York press machine: chunka chunka whrrr. Stars Like Fleas appeared in unexpected and often unannounced places throughout 2006 and 2007, playing electronica festivals, rock clubs, art galleries, electricity-free shows in unmarked warehouses, and beneath a tree in the Catskills performing into micro-radio transmitters for small crowds willing to literally camp out for a performance. Unlike similarly free-minded groups fusing rock, folk, noise, electronics, Stars Like Fleas stands out for the delicate way they commingle the disturbing, harsh and confrontational with something undeniably direct, sincere, silly, joyous and unashamedly romantic. In spite of the extreme edges of sound the Fleas pull into their music, they have created something perhaps as accessible as it is indescribable.



Having been compared to such far-flung groups as Xiu Xiu, Butch Morris, Animal Collective and Talk Talk, describing Stars Like Fleas is not a chore for the imagination-challenged: Pitchfork called past Fleas album "Sun Lights Down On The Fence" an uninhibited, "precognitive glimpse into the workings of the subconscious mind"(8.2); fellow Brooklyn-ites Grizzly Bear called their live show "absolutely mind blowing" in a Dusted Magazine interview, and Salon.com said "few bands have the resolve to push their music as far toward formlessness, as well as the skill and concentration to coax that formlessness into something listenable, coherent and beautiful....brilliant". "Quietly majestic", said the Village Voice describing an electricity-free acoustic show in the Catskill Mountains.

Stars Like Fleas was formed in Brooklyn in the winter of 1999. Their limited edition debut, mixed by Stars of the Lid's Adam Wiltzie and mastered by Shimmydisc's Kramer (an early fan), perplexed all who heard it, and sold out every copy (and was digitally re-released by File 13 on Sep 12, 2006) - the group soon after disappeared and never played a show until late 2005, when it re-emerged as a 5-11 piece group of friends chewing up and spitting out whatever instruments or objects were needed at the time. Their 2nd record, "Sun lights down on the fence", has been crawling into cultish acclaim since it's 2003 release; the album includes members/ex-members of Out Hud, Other Dimensions in Music, No Neck Blues Band, Gold Sparkle Band, At The Drive-In, Fiery Furnaces, The Silent League, Super Furry Animals and Mercury Rev. Stars Like Fleas spent downtime in 2006 recording at home, at Rare Book Room studio with Nicolas Vernhes (Fischerspooner, Animal Collective, Fiery Furnaces, Cat Power, Black Dice, Oneida), and at the Seaside Lounge with Josh Clark and Charles Burst (Pyschic Ills, The Occasion, The Cloud Room, Radio 4, Beirut) working on what has become "The Ken Burns Effect."

STARS LIKE FLEAS • THE KEN BURNS EFFECT

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Hoax Head | 6. Berbers In Tennis Shoes |
| 2. Karma's Hoax | 7. Toast Siren |
| 3. I Was Only Dancing | 8. See For The Woods |
| 4. Falstaff | 9. You Are My Memoir |
| 5. Early Riser | 10. Some Nettles |

PLEASE SEE LINER NOTES ON REVERSE.

A FUN LIST:


Features (ex) members/contributors of Beirut, Tall Firs, TV On The Radio, Celebration, Fiery Furnaces, Mercury Rev, The Silent League and additional contributions by Trevor Dunn (Mr. Bungle, Sean Lennon, Fantomas), Thomas Bartlett (Yoko Ono, The National, Doveman, David Byrne, Antony & The Johnsons)

"The Ken Burns Effect," out on Hometapes June 3, is an iconoclastic but more immediate, organic and lush album than its predecessor. When Fleas-fan, the composer Nico Muhly (arranger to Björk, Grizzly Bear, and Antony & The Johnsons) helped pass along early recordings drafts from "The Ken Burns Effect" to producer/collaborator Valgeir Sigurðsson, the band were invited to in Reykjavik, Iceland, to complete and mix in the fall of 2006 at Greenhouse with Sigurðsson and Ben Frost (also responsible for the likes of Bjork, Múm, Sigur Ros, Coco Rosie, Bonnie "Prince" Billy). They went. What was created closely mirrors Stars Like Fleas live sound - and, in that way, "The Ken Burns Effect" captures the real essence of a band that is most powerful when they take over a room, a porch, a tent, a clearing...etc. Talitres has released it in parts of Europe - and now Hometapes carries the torch for the rest of the world.

Stars Like Fleas recently made the pilgrimage to SXSW for two performances and various other extracurricular activities among its members. They will be announcing more dates in the coming weeks.


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