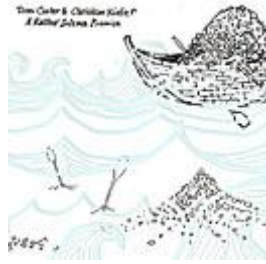


# Mp3 Tom Carter & Christian Kiefer - A Rather Solemn Promise



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Experimental folk music comprised of dueling stringed instruments performed live in the studio. In the vein of Espers, Charalambides, Nels Cline, and Pelt. 9 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Blues, NEW AGE: Ambient Details: Theres not much to say. One sunny afternoon in California two people came together in a small room in Rocklin, a suburb of Sacramento, and started playing music. A few hours later they stopped, one of them to welcome his wife home from her day of work, the other to retrieve his girlfriend from her mothers house and make the drive back to the Bay Area. But what is revealed on tape from those few hours is simply remarkable: a musical landscape that is intense, searching, and emotionally resonant in ways that are unexpected and relevatory. One of the two, Tom Carter, has spent his entire career in the world of improvisational music, with his regular group Charalambides, as a solo performer, and as a member of various other groups devoted to free improvisation and psych-folk. The other, Christian Kiefer, is primarily known for three releases on Australias legendary experimental music label, Extreme, albums that waffle between folk-ambient soundscapes and singer-songwriter material. The product of their meeting is experimental music, Carter and Kiefer performing live improvisations directly to the recorder and is presented here edited but without a single overdub. The beauty of the music lay it the way it which moments of droning, searching, atonal sound coalesces suddenly into chord-based, tonal music, only to fly away again. The process continues without plan, intuitively the music breaks, connects, breaks, connects again, as Carter switches from lap steel to acoustic resonator and Kiefer switches from resonator to banjo and then to dulcimer. Each artists technique informs the other: Carters slabs of sound pressing Kiefers playing into more abstract moments, and Kiefers tendency to search out melody encouraging similar playing from Carters guitar. When the afternoon was over, Kiefer set about editing

down the two hours of recorded sound into an album-length release. It was titled A Rather Solemn Promise only after the fact, a line plucked a near-random from a volume of Dostoevsky and one that seemed to fit the tone of the recordings, for there is both a sense of solemnity here and of promise woven through these tracks.

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