

Mp3 Shannon Roberts - Atom Body



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An insane crush and a reoccurring dream that the world is ending. 13 MP3 Songs POP: with Electronic Production, ROCK: Modern Rock Details: Atom Body has just sold out again but it should be back in stock soon. Thanks! Shannon Roberts was the winner for best song, "She Collects Them" at the 2003 Sweet Pickle Records Demo Derby. The panelists, including the Chicago Tribune's Lou Carlozo, listened to new music from all over the country: Los Angeles, Nashville, New York, and Chicago. *** In this reviewer's brief career at ChicagoGigs.com, a lot of CDs from female singer-songwriters have piled up on the desk. Most of them good, some of them great, and quite a few that left something to be desired. Now with Shannon Roberts' second album, the bar has been raised. Partly because she has a distinctive voice, partly because her lyrics are heads above the high school-style poetry many beginners indulge in, but mostly because the instrumentation and songwriting on Atom Body are ingratiating as well as innovative, judiciously using keyboards and mechanized "beats" as atmospheric embellishments. The only credited musician on this self-produced disc besides Roberts is Theodore Beck (he sings with her on the lovely duet "You're Losing Me") and while the duo's compositions may come across as sparse, they're not barren. The atmospherics, thankfully, aren't just distractions, embellishments or afterthoughts. In fact, the combination of sweet vocals and bittersweet sentiments brings to mind the heyday of mid-80s Cure, or a stripped-down Cocteau Twins. It's far from derivative -- Atom Body also recalls modern techno innovators like Bjork -- but there's a distinctive dreamy yet tortured pop vibe. Roberts begins the disc fatalistically enough with "The Last Great Fatal Romance," conveying a cynically grown-up message for such a child-like voice. On "Hells Augustus," she whisper-sings over a blurry flanged-out guitar and blasts of pointed keyboard. The syncopated beats of "Arc" suggest a danceable dirge--dark yet hopeful enough to sustain its catchy, fragile and angelic chorus. Think of the mood as shards of sun breaking through

clouds--not too dark, not too blindingly bright. And there's variety, too: the songs never blend too seamlessly against one another, but Roberts' sound remains distinctive. "She Collects Them," a country-fied song about hope in a lonely world, won Best Song in local label Sweet Pickle Records' Demo Derby. And it's no surprise--here, Roberts catalogs some "what ifs"-- "What if in the morning/she takes your hand/she makes you laugh/What if you fall to pieces/and she collects them/and she understands." Her sincerity is convincing--small miracles, like this record itself--may be possible. Buy the record and thank her... it's just enough to keep the disheartened curious enough to slog through another wintry Chicago day. - Antonia B. Johnston Chicagogigs.com

AN ATOM BODY EXPERIENCE Shannon Roberts' album, *Atom Body*, might be best experienced early in the morning. You could argue that it might be best if it were a sunny morning, and expectations of a lazy day awaited just outside the doors of your home or apartment. And if, before you had your first cup of coffee, you happened to look over and she was actually there in person, at the end of your bed, singing as you rubbed your eyes and stretched, it would bring a smile to your lips. This is because the voice is soothingly innocent, the melodies are pure and peaceful, and the lyrics comforting in the most poetic of ways. Think Leonard Cohen meets Nico.

Shannon Roberts' seems to breathe life into each delicate song. Her voice comes out hauntingly soft and seeps sleepily around whatever space needs to be filled. It's a bit intoxicating. The songs tell stories of dangerous love affairs, and fragile possibilities. Shannon proves that she possesses acute insight. She understands that true love and the "happy life" exist only in between respites of destructive loneliness and introspection. But don't worry, this isn't an album that makes you want to shave your head and jump into a bathtub with a plugged in toaster oven. It's far too reassuring for all that, and if anyone that works at the suicide hotline is reading this, you might be well-advised to play a song or two off the *Atom Body* disc for your depressed callers. "What if in the morning/she takes your hand/she makes you laugh. What if you fall to pieces/and she collects them/and she understands... You found a home/In this world where loneliness prevails. You are not alone/In this world where loneliness remains," Roberts croons beautifully on "She Collects Them." Yes, a victim wouldn't be able to help saying in response to these words, yes, thank you. There is hope. Instrumental and musical accompaniment is sparse on this record. Nobody will care. In fact, listeners will be delighted to know that they will be able to concentrate on Shannon Roberts' silky lyrics without the racket of unnecessary noises that so often pop up on today's overly wrought studio productions. These songs will resonate long after the first few listens. There is enough variance in each

drifting song to easily carry the most stubborn listener through each track from beginning to end. The Chicago music scene has itself a passionate player in Shannon Roberts. In her second album Roberts shows that, with her warm, inviting tone, and compassionate songwriting, she will capture anyone who dares to listen. Look for her upcoming third attempt, Astralator, to further cement her reputation around town as a mature, sophisticated artist. And one more thing... Maybe I have some strange affinity toward boxing metaphors and anecdotes ever since that pesky Simon and Garfunkel released the Bridge Over Troubled Water album in 1970, but I thought two lines in particular really summed up this album. Listen carefully to track eight, Blaster Mos, when Shannon sings: "It's so interesting/a boxer's way of dancing around pain." You'll have to hear it for yourself. -Simon Smith Fume Magazine fumemagazine.com

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