

## Mp3 Shoes - Propeller



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This 1994 studio release encompasses some of the best songwriting of Shoes' careers. From the rich, mournful ballad of The Last Of You to the rockin' edge of Tore A Hole this is pure pop bliss. 12 MP3 Songs POP: Power Pop, POP: Beatles-pop Details: Biography Gary Klebe - vocals and guitar Jeff Murphy - vocals and guitar John Murphy -vocals and bass April 1994 (written to coincide with the release of Shoes' "Propeller") "From the very beginning, making records has been much more important than playing live or even becoming stars. The joy of making a record is what we live for." --Gary Klebe Along with such seminal artists as Dwight Twilley, The Knack, 20/20 and The Records, Shoes were at the forefront of the power pop movement in the late seventies. Ever resilient, eschewing fads, trends and fashions, Shoes are united in their goal of preserving the legacy of the three-minute pop song. Shoes inaugurate a new chapter in their storied recording history with their latest album Propeller, a power-charged 12-track collection of luscious, melodically-driven pop gems. Supplemented by a talented supporting cast that includes drummers Ric Menck of Velvet Crush and Mike Zelenko of Material Issue, Propeller delivers on all counts. While the self-produced album continues Shoes' healthy obsession with crafting perfectly constructed pop symphonies of sound, Shoes break new ground with Propeller. Just listen to the haunting cello that gracefully frames "In My Mind", the visceral punch of "Animal Attraction", the charming psychedelia of "Treading Water" or the hypnotic sheen of "The Last of You" and prepare to be converted. "This album seems to have a bit more character to it because our approach was to have more fun with it and, with Ric and Mike playing drums, the tracks feel more organic than before," says Jeff Murphy. Even the sonic approach to the band's trademark background vocals take on a deliciously improved texture. According to Jeff Murphy, "We wanted to use the backing vocals as sort of a counter-melody to the main vocals on this album instead of just parallel block harmonies." While on the

surface it may seem that Shoes' lyrical subject matter obsessively concerns relationships, their lyrics often have several layers of meanings there for the listener to explore. "I think it works best when you use simple language to express complex emotional stuff," reveals John Murphy. "And it always seems that when you think you've written something too personal, it actually connects with a lot more people. I guess it means we all go through the same things, somehow or another." Pop with a brain, Propeller is all meat and no filler. "We make albums rather than singles," asserts Gary Klebe. "As kids, we were more into albums like Revolver that we could listen to from beginning to end. Quite often the last song on the record was just as good as the first." In 1990, Shoes embarked on their first national tour ever. Shoes aficionados will be pleased to learn that plans are afoot for the group to take the show on the road once more. Says Jeff Murphy: "When we play live, things automatically take on a more aggressive feel, but we still try to maintain as much of the sound on the record as we can, especially the vocal harmonies." The Shoes' saga all started in the Chicago suburb of Zion, Illinois where brothers John and Jeff Murphy and childhood pal Gary Klebe joined forces in an attempt to recapture the jangly and melodious sounds of their youth. Taking matters into their own hands, Shoes' early recorded efforts were typical DIY affairs, recorded in Jeff Murphy's living room. (They now operate their own recording studio, Short Order Recorder, in their hometown.) Through these charming yet rough-hewn albums, Shoes quickly found their musical feet. In addition to the group's burgeoning songwriting and prodigious musical skills, by sheer necessity sake, Shoes also became experts at production and engineering; a self-contained tradition encompassing all facets of creativity, a la the likes of Prince, that continues to this day. Acclaimed by "The Village Voice" as one of the top albums of the seventies, Black Vinyl Shoes was the first of the group's national releases, followed by three excellent major-label albums, Present Tense which sported the turntable hits, "Too Late" and "Tomorrow Night", Tongue Twister and Boomerang, all recorded for Elektra Records. Further cementing Shoes' reputation as a power pop treasure were two more studio efforts, Silhouette and Stolen Wishes. Shoes are true pop wunderkinds, master tunesmiths juxtaposing their trademark lush three-part harmonies with incisive and wry lyrical wit. Propeller finds the group firing on all pistons and batting a thousand in the songwriting stakes, all marking a welcome return to the halcyon time when "pop" wasn't considered a dirty word. --Ken Sharp

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