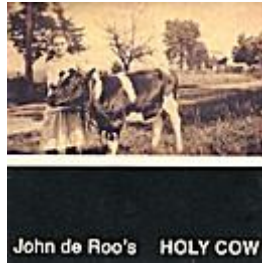


Holy Cow (mp3 Album)



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A crickets and corn silk little gem recorded near Kalamazoo, Michigan, in a dinky cabin next to a pond during the Paleolithic era of the 4-track Porta-studio. 11 MP3 Songs in this album (37:13) ! Related styles: FOLK: Alternative Folk, ROCK: Americana People who are interested in Bob Dylan East River Pipe Iron Wine should consider this download. Details: HOLY COW comes in a sweetly handcrafted package designed by Home Recorded Culture. That's a picture of John's grandma Myrtle Iva with her favorite cow in 1916 on the cover. Nathan Sabatino of Loveland Studio (Neko Case, Howe Gelb, Golden Boots) did the mastering and digital transfer. About John de Roo: John writes meticulously crafted songs with emotional claws. His songs "Boo Radley," "John Hurt," and "Hibernation Song" from the CD GORGEOUS LOST won him Honorable Mention in the Telluride Bluegrass Festival's prestigious Troubadour Contest. He is a two-time finalist in the Tucson Folk Festival's Songwriting Competition. De Roo hails from Kalamazoo, the son of a Michigan hillbilly mom and a Depression dad. He has rambled around to perform at numerous venues in Chicago, Seattle, Tucson, Michigan, and Montana, as well as on public radio and TV. He has been writing and recording songs since he was 12. The songs of HOLY COW: Castle in the Water. My friend dreamt she was a castle in the water -- I wrote about how we're all together and we're all alone, so we might as well just be. Walk Away Renee. I always loved the Four Tops' version, so I tried to sing a little like Levi Stubbs (RIP). Leaky Eyes. Nice guys always have girlfriends who manipulate them by crying, until they figure out how they're being played. Snapping Turtle. All the Creatures of the Pond pitched in for a summer night solo. Turtles have been very kind to me, but they will bite if you do wrong. Knowing Me, Knowing You. I was a fan of ABBA's early records when it wasn't cool to be that. The horn section is inspired by avant-garde jazz. Elizabeth. I left an Orange Crush on Elizabeth's grave. She loved the sound of the glockenspiel, so I played it for her on this song. Steven's Road. My friend down the block

joined the Peace Corps, and I wrote this song missing him. The guitar is talking to the singer. You Make Me Cry. I had a crush on a pretentious Goth girl, but I didn't want to tell her because I was afraid she would hurt me. Good call. Into Thin Air. Rolling in the grass all night with my sweetheart, feeling like we might disappear together any second. I was so shy I could barely sing this. The Great Ice Storm. There was a titanic ice storm in Kalamazoo, every tree branch encased in ice. It was a beautiful thing, but I felt like a tree branch. Never Can Be a Long Time. It's sad when people are so intractable they will never change. What can ya do? HOLY COW features a unique array of usual and unusual musical instruments: John de Roo -- guitars, vocals, mouth harps, percussives, alto sax, flute, drum kit, musical hammers, incredible aint it?, etc., organ, glockenspiel, body sounds, gato drum, fish, farkhorn Other Musicians: "Worthy of my undying regard" -- Joe Conrad Dirk Richardson -- electric bass, bongoes, backing vocals, accordion, cornet, organ, mouth noises, wowwhataguy!, percussion, mbira Gary Germaine -- alto sax Tom Murphy -- drum set Casie DeBoer -- French horn Heather Snelling -- Chinese festival rattle, siren whistle Dana Kathleen -- Leopard vocals Trains by Amtrak Dog courtesy of Amanda

And now, for low-fi enthusiasts, techies, and musicologists -- a review of HOLY COW: "Back in the mid-1980s, folks didn't know everything about everywhere. There were no online virtual communities. Home computers weren't multi-track recorders in waiting. DIY home recordings weren't ubiquitous. We flew a lot more blind, because it wasn't all a keystroke away. You had to know people who knew things. If you didn't, you had to hope you could find some people who did. If you couldn't, you made do with what you had. "In this Paleolithic era of the cassette porta-studio, every thirteen-year-old kid didn't have one yet. In fact, you were lucky if you even knew someone who had one. And notwithstanding Bruce Springsteen's Nebraska, the conventional wisdom was clear: People didn't make records on a porta-studio. "Real" records were made by professionals in big fancy studios that cost lots of money to rent. Even so-called "Indie" records involved open reel tape of some sort. "Those folks audacious enough to make a record on a porta-studio were in for an uphill climb. The available knowledge about recording was spotty and mostly passed on by word of mouth. Equipment was hard to come by. Nobody took you very seriously, either, especially if your musical vision didn't sound like Phil Collins's "In the Air Tonight," with gated digital reverb on the toms and thick layers of Yamaha DX-7 digital synth filling in all the cracks. If you deigned to release the finished product on cassette, well, how could you even really call that a "record"? "But some determined people did--people like John de Roo of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Often,

these folks simply didn't know any better. They had something to say, and they just wanted to capture it before it slipped away forever. So they used the available tools--in this case, Dirk Richardson's Yamaha 4-track cassette recorder and whatever other gear they happened to have. And when it all came together, well, a little gem called HOLY COW was created. "Today, there are whole genre categories like "Lo-Fi" and "Freak Folk" that describe this homemade approach to music making. Nobody questions its legitimacy. When you use those terms, people in the know immediately understand what you mean. But when John de Roo recorded HOLY COW, that stuff was still being figured out. "Guided By Voices hadn't even released their first porta-studio album. So when a friend gave me this cassette and said it was John de Roo's "solo album," I wasn't quite sure what to make of it. To be honest, I was probably in the camp wondering how anything available only on cassette could even be viewed as a legitimate record. "But as I listened to it, I overcame that bias. Maybe it wasn't as slick as Van Halen's 1984, or even Husker Du's Zen Arcade, but between its great songs and arrangement choices, it made a virtue of its limitations. Be it the ethereal beauty of the opener, "Castle in the Water," the acoustic earthiness and pond sounds of "Snapping Turtle," the inspired cover of Abba's "Knowing Me, Knowing You," or the outright weird psychedelic pop of "Elizabeth Loves Orange Soda," HOLY COW delivers from start to finish. "It turned out to be one of my favorite records of 1986. I'm happy to find HOLY COW sounding better than ever in digital format. I'm also hopeful this reissue will help it to find a wider audience. It's most definitely worthy. Stuff like Phil Collins sounds dated today, but HOLY COW is strangely timeless. It almost makes more sense right now than it did back in the day. Whether you're hearing it for the first time, or getting reacquainted all over again, you're in for a treat. Enjoy." --Jake London (Seattle, 2008)

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