

## Mp3 Heather Styka - Travel And Teacups



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If you love the last song of film scores, if you drink tea while thinking of poems, stories, and travel, you'll love Heather Styka: warm, breathy vocals hover over an atmosphere of guitar, cello, piano, harmonium, and accordion. 13 MP3 Songs in this album (53:58) ! Related styles: FOLK: Modern Folk, ROCK: Acoustic People who are interested in Damien Rice Sufjan Stevens Feist should consider this download. Details: Heather Styka's latest release, "Travel and Teacups," features image-based lyrics with a compelling sense of poetry. Her warm, breathy vocals and distinct guitar style hover over an atmosphere of cello, piano, harmonium, and accordion. The production is deliberately sparse. "You spend the early parts of your musical career thinking, 'If only I had a band,' since it's pretty standard to have drums, bass, lead guitar behind you," says Styka. "But the albums that I've gravitated towards -- you know, Nick Drake, Damien Rice, Bon Iver, Emiliana Torrini's 'Fisherman's Women' -- that stuff is beautiful in its simplicity." With that aesthetic in mind, Styka set out to create a polished but minimal sound, retaining the fresh vibrancy of live performance, by using acoustic instruments such as cello, piano, harmonium, and accordion for embellishment. Acoustic arrangements and complex lyrics were a natural choice for Styka. Her background is primarily in folk, having received airplay on folk radio shows from Alaska to Australia, California to her native Chicago. When Styka began writing songs at thirteen, the folk music scene provided supportive venues, such as the renowned Two Way Street Coffee House in Downers Grove. "Being a part of the folk scene has inspired me to write songs with depth," says Styka. "The folk community is similar to the poetry community: it's small. But in that intimacy, artists have the freedom to write with more subtle shades of meaning. And the audiences care about lyrics." Styka has garnered the approval of folk veterans such as Tom Paxton. She was selected to perform as part of the juried showcase at Folk Alliance Regional Midwest (FARM) and has been interviewed on Tom May's nationally

syndicated program, River City Folk. Songs on "Travel and Teacups" differ from her previous releases, "A Little More Time," "Twelve Songs: July Sessions," and the "Golden Light EP." As a guitarist, Styka has started to delve into the worlds of alternate tunings and partial capos, creating more complex chords than before. There's a slightly more developed, breathy, almost Ella Fitzgerald-esque sound to her voice. And since the songs on this album represent three years of Styka's prolific songwriting, each song is solid. "I'm really happy with the songs on this album," says Styka. "I mean, these are the songs I could play at shows, again and again, and still want to play them. Dozens of other songs fell to the wayside, but these guys made the cut." Styka's songwriting has been likened to that of Leonard Cohen, John Prine, Ani DiFranco, and Josh Ritter, but she's inspired by artists outside of the folk and singer/songwriter realms. Styka grew up listening to Talking Heads and Carole King, but she was always drawn to the chords and melodies of Celtic music. "And I love classical and jazz," says Styka. "I could listen to Django Reinhardt and Erik Satie all day. I've always wanted to get a tattoo of the last bar of 'Trois Gnossiennes,' but I'm terrified of needles." As an English major with a focus in creative writing and poetry, Styka appreciates a good story or a poetic image -- and it shows in her songs. Songs such as "Reykjavik" and "Sailors, Prophets &" rely strongly on image and metaphor, "Clementine" and "Golden Light" on wordplay. "Prairie Song" and "What We Have" tell stories from the life of Styka's grandmother Jeanette, who passed away in 2008. Styka's Midwestern background, urban identity, and rural roots are at the forefront of her songs. These are songs of "travel" and "teacups," but more specifically, they analyze the importance of places, relationships, family, imagination, and inspiration itself. There are albums that are meant to be played on repeat, making a morning commute or a walk to the supermarket seem like the end of a good film, albums that are designed to be consumed with a cup of earl grey or green tea. This is one of them.

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