

## Mp3 The Shrinking Islands - In The Black Carpet



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Warm yet jangly pop... Chiming melodies and hard-working drums. 8 MP3 Songs POP: Folky Pop, POP: 80's Pop Details: The Shrinking Islands formed in Cambridge, MA after guitarist/songwriter Kyle Bitteringer handed drummer Andy Tefft a CD of his previous project, the epic and since reformed Casio-pop unit Harm. Compared with this 80's-technology excess, The Shrinking Islands represent a drastic simplification and return to original form. They use a clean guitar plugged directly into the amplifier. Arpeggiated high notes float above chiming melodies, while understated drum-work is suddenly undermined by crashing odes to Keith Moon. Minor chords come and go, cloaking the moment with a mysterious gravity. Maybe the first thing you'll hear in The Shrinking Islands is that they're jangly. Yes, in that late-80's Feelies kind of way, or in that produced-by-Mitch-Easter kind of way. The instruments are clean and bright. The drums are working hard. The pop hook rules the day. Early Yo La Tengo, early R.E.M., The Bats, and The Soft Boys all come to mind. But not ones to paint themselves into a corner- and both painful prog nerds- the group are known to bust out King Crimson and This Heat covers when they kick it live. The "In The Black Carpet" series of songs have a story to them: a kind of "Taking Tiger Mountain (By Strategy)" for the clogged highways and pastoral back roads of New England. A spy has been pulled into his final assignment, feet dragging. The songs describe the return of his nemesis, the closed-doors meetings, tapped wires, smuggled cargo, remembrance of deceased friends. Amidst the simplicity there is much to decipher lyrically. The band set about recording the songs at MIT's WMBR live studio, where Bitteringer is an engineer. His resume includes notable releases by Boston indie-pop stars Pants Yell! and Ponies In The Surf.

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