

## Mp3 Helms - McCarthy



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Hypnotically nodding and angular songs structured in odd meters that wear grooves into your ears. 11 MP3 Songs ROCK: Math Rock, ROCK: Progressive Rock Details: On McCarthy, Helms makes music married to the sensate world. Their songs are testaments to the act of being and the life cycle. It's all in the dynamics, as gentle waves of guitar sound intimating the quietness of birth give way to super squalls of notes and energy, much like life's buffeting winds. Then there are the retrenchments back into silence, and not just at song's end. This is not so much like death as a gathering of strength before the next go-round. The words as sung/spoken by guitarist Sean McCarthy (who with drumming brother Dan McCarthy shares the title of this disc, while the band name's source is bassist Tina McCarthy, whose maiden name is Helms) are mostly concerned with seemingly simple insensate objects which, when acknowledged via lyrical focus, gain totemic power. Their own instruments are self-reflexively appointed to such status in the lyrics (see "It Takes Skin To Win"), as are the homely household objects found and itemized in a dresser drawer (see "Cornish, New Hampshire"). It is Helms's art to place such articles in a firmament of meaning. In Helms's universe even elemental experience, expressed with the shout of "I've got!," becomes an essential act of becoming. Meanwhile the trinity of guitar, bass and drums restlessly search for novel ways to punctuate, embellish, and link the micro-imagery to forces far more sublime. Some have compared Helms to other practitioners of the Chicago School of Post-Slint Rock. With McCarthy, their second album, they take their place at the head of the class--not that such an unassuming band would ever feel comfortable there.

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