

## Mp3 The Array - On Unknown Soil



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"A sterling debut...blends beautifully but still a bare-knuckle ride through sound" - Hot Press 11 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Soundscapes, ELECTRONIC: Experimental Details: Hotpress Magazine 12th Feb 2003 The Array - on unknown soil Karl Burke and Giles Packham have been concentrating on their studio work to date, which explains why they haven't been hob-nobbing with the electronica kids at DEAF or Wonky. Such dedication and diligence shows, as the production standards of their debut are superb. As Kittser recently pointed out in these pages, there are drawbacks in making it too easy to release a record, clogging up the world with good ideas neutered by bargain basement production, therefore it is assuring to hear something as confident and impeccably self-crafted as this sterling debut. Prior to The Array, Giles Packham turned his hand to film and theatre production scores, and it shows on the rich, spookily cinematic layers of On Unknown Soil. This is highly atmospheric stuff, charged with unexpected noises; the rattle and hum of traffic, deranged beatboxes kicking off and settling back into an eerie calm, gentle shuffles and strange clanging. But these days it's nearly predictable and passe to be diverse. Eclectic has become a dirty word, the refuge of the charlatan and the jack of all trades and the master of none. Hence, it's refreshing to hear Arabian and eastern sounds and influences informing the music without sounding in the slightest contrived or forced. On Unknown Soil blends beautifully, but is still a bareknuckle ride through sound. The closing 'Greenland' is a fifteen-minute plus epic, leaving us on a suitably mysterious note. These are fertile lands. Eamon Sweeney -- The Irish Times, The Ticket, Electronica, December 12 2002 It's the Arabic swirl of the title track that alerts you to just how The Array's Karl Burke and Giles Packham differ from your common-or-garden capital city electroids. Both this motif and the simple digi-dub sound-bed on which it's placed are lovingly crafted and speak volumes for the pair's experience to date as film scorers and experimental producers. Elsewhere, it's the energy created when all manner of

sounds from techno to ambient are fused which stands out. While sometimes these creations can be a little too slight and skewered for their own good (see *She Grinds The Coffee*), they do have occasions, like *White Sands*, when that moment extends into something far more interesting and beguiling. Another collection to add to the ever-growing canon of fine Irish electronica. Jim Carroll -- *Sunday Tribune* 01.12.02 These are good days for experimental music in Dublin. The Dublin duo's debut album is a dazzling blend of electronic noodling and clattering beats, but it is not your run of the mill post-rock. There are touches of various genres throughout *On Unknown Soil*; the opening track, unsurprisingly titled 'On Unknown Soil' manages to sound faintly Arabic, with its wild, undulating melodies. Elsewhere cowbells, dubby bass and just about everything you can imagine make an appearance. A promising debut. Anna Carey -- *Exepose - Exeter Student Music* 02.06.03 Most people groan when they hear the term post-rock with its images of dull atmospheric pandered by people like Hood. Thankfully that genre is now deader than Mogwai (new album or not), leaving decent groups like The Array to pick up the mantle and mix it up a bit. Instead of boring you into a coma, The Array add dub, techno and electronica to the beats department and a very distinct Arabic and Bulgarian theme to the whole endeavour. The results are simply amazing, resembling in many senses a sort of ethereal, intellectual take on Natacha Atlas' early New Age albums. Given all these disparate elements you'd be forgiven for thinking they're from Morocco or some trendy area of Eastern Europe but in fact these guys are from Dublin. What's sad is that this album is likely to get very little press despite being very very good. The World music influences are enough to differentiate itself from Fourtet's folk-tronica and he like and being a part (at least in my imagination) of the thriving World/ Dance music trend at the moment. It's worth the special order in Virgin, trust me. (AB) -- *LOGO Magazine* May 2003 An amalgam of Arabian beats, Bulgarian folk, dub, new wave, techno and electronica might not be the first thing that springs to mind when given the information that The Array hail from Dublin, so what to think when told that Giles Packham is a classically trained musician and Karl Burke is a solicitor? Check the calendar, is it April 1st? As career changes go this ranks alongside Elvis Presley swearing celibacy and entering a monastery, and the results can only be labelled post-post-everything. Cowbells clang, wind whistles, things are hit and telephone tones ring out; on many levels this doesn't qualify as music at all. As a sensory experience however it's first rate, although its appeal is likely to be limited to samplers and fellow musos Michael Ornadet

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