

Catalog: ANT/PLA 502
Release Date: 10/21/2003
Format: CD
RIYL: Leonard Cohen, Syd Barrett,
Winfred E. Eye, Nico, Nick Drake

FCC Clean



TRACK LISTING:

1. LES ANGES N'ONT PAS D'AILES
2. CALIFORNIA CRADLED YOU
3. CIRCLES
4. CRAZY EYES
5. WE LOOK AT THE SUN
6. REGRETS
7. SWEET BLUE THING
8. HIGHER THAN THE GRASS
9. JET LAGGED
10. YOU ROCK ME ONCE

DISTRIBUTION:

USA - runt, AEC, forced exposure, get hip
subterranean, carrot top, revolver, city hall,
darla, choke, cargo
CANADA - sonic unyon
UK - cargo
BENELUX - lowlands/bertus
GERMANY/AUSTRIA/SWITZERLAND - cargo
SWEDEN - border
SPAIN - disc medi
JAPAN - disk union
FRANCE - chronowax
ITALY - goodfellas

Guest appearances from:

The Moore Brothers, and members
of **Call and Reponse**, **Cat Five**, and
Subtle/Themselves (Anticon).

Featuring **Mikel Garmendia** (of
Winfred E. Eye) on guitar.



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BEAM "Beam"

During the heady summer of 2000, local balladeer **Bart Davenport's** weekly engagement at San Francisco's Bruno's evolved into a weekly all-star, free-form hootenany. It was at these

now-legendary jam sessions that the members of Oakland, California's Beam met and began collaborating. Beam is led by French ex-patriate **Helene Renaut**, a music major from Brittany. Determined to escape the gloom of her hometown, she busked gypsy songs on the violin to finance a move to San Francisco in 1995. After gradually becoming a fixture on the emerging solo acoustic scene here, Helene was ready to branch out and form a band. For the past 3 years, Beam has been paying homage to the darkly psychedelic folk-pop of the late-sixties with enough originality to pull it off without sounding 'retro' or 'retreaded.' Now, Antenna Farm Records is pleased to present Beam's self-titled debut.

To be sure, it is easy to name check common influences like Leonard Cohen, Syd Barrett and Nick Drake....and there is no doubt that the British Folk revival that is currently in vogue will be producing more than a few aspiring Bert Jansch and Richard Thompson clones. But Beam could never draw on as narrow a range of influences. Listeners will also hear elements of Opal, Jolie Holland, Nico, Winfred E. Eye (with whom Beam shares a member, guitarist Mikel Garmendia) and even Jackie Deshannon. Not surprising considering that Helene grew up obsessing on the songs of Jacques Brel until she discovered Neil Young.

Beam's songs are full of complex, brooding melodies and gentle psychedelia, but like many classic songwriters, Helene also understands the payoff of a good hook. Singing mostly in English, she tells her stories of love, loss, and renewed hope in a voice that is world-weary and yet still recklessly naive. From the driving baroque pop of *California Cradled You* (track 2) to the dreamy canyon rock of *Higher Than the Grass* (track 6) Beam wears it's eclectic pop sensibility on its sleeve. It is this sensibility that has earned Beam a cult-like following in the Bay Area, and they are regulars at SF institutions like the Makeout Room, the Hemlock, and the Hotel Utah.

Beam's self-titled debut album features guest performances from members of **Call and Response**, **Subtle/Themselves**, **The Moore Brothers**, and **Cat Five**. It was recorded by **Mikel Garmendia** and **Jeremy Goody**, the duo responsible for recording the albums by Mikel's other band, **Winfred E. Eye**. And even though the band has added string arrangements, keyboards and hazy vocal harmonies to their more spare live sound, the result is still light and refreshing, lush without sounding overdone. We here at Antenna Farm have been, quite simply, entranced. Give the album a listen and let Beam draw you in as well.



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