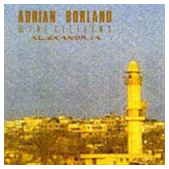
Adrian Borland And The Citizens – Alexandria (1989)



1 Light The Sky 2:40 2 Rogue Beauty 3:15 3 Beneath The Big Wheel 4:20 4 Community Call 3:22 5 No Ethereal 4:40 6 Other Side Of The World 3:14 7 Crystalline 4:40 8 Shadow Of Your Grace 3:51 9 Weight Of Stuff 3:20 10 She's My Heroine 4:12 11 Deep Deep Blue 4:49 Backing Vocals – Audrey, Livia, Steve Sebastian, Sumishta Brahms Bass [String] – Danny Thompson Bass Guitar – Neil Rickerby Cello – Ivan Groznyc Clarinet – Richard Kirstein Drums, Timpani – Graham Ward Keyboards – Colvin Mayers Keyboards, Piano – Chris Payne Percussion – Eddie Sayer Saxophone, Harmonica, Tambourine [Skin] – Anthony Thistlethwaite Viola – John Metcalfe Violin – Louisa, Martin Sutton Violin [Solo] – Simon Walker Vocals, Guitar – Adrian Borland

Adrian Borland is a survivor. His career now spans 13 years and 10 studio albums (including his first 2 LPs with '77-'78 punk band THE OUTSIDERS and one with '78-'79 postpunk band SECOND LAYER). Here Borland takes stock after the break-up of the much missed THE SOUND, whose 6 LPs stand as some of the great works of our time, and gets more reflective. The Sound already were good at mastering a variety of moods to their alternatively austere, sensuous and light-hearted pop; without his long-time band, the same is true only more so. Most of the LP is far lighter, hopeful, watching, acoustic based and romantically dusky. Swimming strings and even inconspicuous horns inform the overall warmth of this record, as if Borland has mellowed out but still holds his touch for graceful and breezy music. In fact, much of it shows a minor Velvet Underground influence.

Recorded once again at Elephant Studios with NICK ROBBINS (as was Jeopardy, All Fall Down, and Thunder Up), the LP starts brisk with the single "Light the Sky," a hard pop song with a catchy pleading chorus, moving right into the album's true masterpiece, the deeply moving "Rogue Beauty," which has the deepest sounding strings we've heard since, well, the last Sound album! "Beneath The Big Wheel" balances a somber detachment with a soulful shuffle. Also notable is the LP's closer, "Deep Deep Blue," which rises from the depths of near-silent resigned despondency to a stirring (with bolts of Borland's familiar electric guitar) "maybe

tomorrow" change of heart. Backing vocals on this chorus are provided by noneother than our dear friend SUMISHTA BRAHM whose voice drops like rain on a heated brow. Gorgeous! Alexandria is a wonderful album; perhaps it is not up there with the best Sound LPs, but as with any solo LP, Borland deserves to be judged anew, solely on the merits of his new career, and he's still making vital, intelligent, sincerely crafted and poignant music. One of the best is back. ---brittleheaven.com

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