

ERIC CHENAUX

Skullsplitter

CD / 180gLP / DL

RELEASE DATE: 17 FEBRUARY 2015

"I'm in love...a sound that is both distant and dreamlike (guitar) and present and natural (voice)." - Stephen Mejias / Stereophile

"Just those perfect things, guitar and voice - coaxed & shattered & sublimated & splintered & mirrored & burned to ash." - Said The Gramophone

"Chenau combines meticulous songcraft with experimental instincts, so no matter how pretty or tuneful a piece is, he adds compelling layers of noise and texture, shaped with an improviser's sense of adventure." - Peter Margasak

Eric Chenaux has emerged as one of the most distinctive, innovative and original voices in what might be called avant-garde balladry, juxtaposing his gorgeously pure and open singing against a guitar sound and style that truly stands alone. *Skullsplitter* is the impressive new album that confirms Chenaux's singular aesthetic: genuine, natural, unaffected vocals gliding through slow, smoky melodies while electric and nylon-string guitars are deployed with adventurously experimental, dextrous, semi-improvisational technique and texture. *Skullsplitter* stands as a welcome and natural evolution from Chenaux's previous song-based album *Guitar & Voice* (2012), his first properly solo record for Constellation (i.e. made without guest musicians or collaborators), which was widely celebrated as his best work to date, championed by *The Wire*, *Said The Gramophone*, *Stereophile* and others for its unique sensibility and sensitivity. *Skullsplitter* builds on these strengths and similarly consists solely of Chenaux's voice and guitar.

When Eric plays guitar, his feet are as busy as his hands (though his hands can keep busy too, as heard on a number of wonderfully fried solos and instrumental excursions on the album); he is continually working his concise array of signal-bending devices - volume, wah and freeze pedals - with a remarkable and idiosyncratic fluidity that's integral to the expressivity he brings to the instrument. His voice is the calm center of this stormy micro-climate of bodily kinetics and woozy playing; indeed, "warm weather" is a metaphor Chenaux has used to describe his music in the past, and it seems ever more suitable as his sound evolves: his vocals are like a high pressure system, riding on clear bright air, stabilizing the roiling, changeable atmosphere of the guitars underneath. *Skullsplitter* is the apotheosis of this evolving tension between the two constituent elements of Chenaux's solo songcraft, where the guitar seems constantly in search of disruption or escape from an accompaniment role. Or perhaps more fittingly, it often sounds as if Chenaux's singing voice and the voice of the guitar just happen to be wandering through the same tune, with their own independent ideas of the route they'll be taking. Yet the songs remain surprisingly, almost effortlessly coherent, and with a languorous groove; the album unfolds like a weirdly bubbling but warmly welcoming bath. Additional familiarity, for fans of the Chenaux songbook, might come from the (barely recognizable) re-interpretations of two 'old' songs, "Have I Lost My Eyes" and the album's title track itself.

Chenaux also has a long history of sonic experimentation through sound-art commissions and collaborations, with analog signal capture through natural oscillation and wave distortion, site-specificity and environmental sound. Working closely with his longtime recording engineer Radwan Ghazi Moumneh, Chenaux brings this experience to bear on the production side of *Skullsplitter* as well, with the use of physically swinging speakers and radical gating and panning to tease out further fluctuations in the barometer of the guitar sound. The result is a gem of an album in Chenaux's increasingly luminous discography.

ERIC CHENAUX

SKULLSPLITTER the wind has
made a coast of me the dawn wears us like jewelry
the gun powder's all over me like green light on thin
ice a plum all old and rosey summer lightening's
got its hooks in me stuck here to an old crab tree
my favourite hat is your drinking glass bitter and
twisted golden spring its riches fifty blue ghosts
of a heart blue bird the darkest fruit is ruby a
real skullsplitter to get us through the winter a
real skullsplitter to get us through the winter

CST112 • CONSTELLATION • 

ARTIST: Eric Chenaux

TITLE: *Skullsplitter*

TRACKLIST:

01. Have I Lost My Eyes?
02. The Pouget
03. Skullsplitter
04. My Romance
05. Spring Has Been A Long Time Coming
06. The Henri Favourite
07. Poor Time
08. Le Vieux Favori
09. Summer & Time

GENRE: Indie Rock / Avant-Folk

DURATION: 42:06

CD IN 100% RECYCLED GATEFOLD PAPERBOARD JACKET

VINYL IS NON-RETURNABLE

180gLP INCLUDES ART PRINT POSTER + DL COUPON

NO EXPORT TO ISRAEL

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180gLP BOX LOT: 40

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