

## Loren Connors – Red Mars (2011)

Wpisany przez bluesever

Sobota, 15 Październik 2011 18:35 - Zmieniony Wtorek, 13 Kwiecień 2021 08:09

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1 *On Our Way* 10:23 2 *Red Mars I* 1:56 3 *Red Mars II* 10:45 4 *Showers of Meteors* 6:52 5 *Little Earth* 4:33 [play](#) Loren Connors - Adaptation, Guitar, Guitar (Electric)  
Margarida Garcia - Bass

It may be difficult to believe given the prolific number of recordings guitarist Loren Connors has amassed (over 50), but *Red Mars* is the first new solo music we've heard from him since 2004's *Departing of a Dream, Vol. 3: Juliet*, which was followed by a slate of reissues, live recordings, and collaborations. In its way, *Red Mars* is an event. For anyone familiar with his work, this five-piece suite reflects a shift in Connors' sound. Most of his trademarks are in place -- sparse, skeletal phrasing, long sonorous spaces, etc.-- but his approach here features almost none of the blues orientation that is his signature. His approach to recording differs, too; he adds many more -- albeit lo-fi -- elements. Opener "On Our Way Out" is the only track with accompaniment, from Portuguese bassist Margarida Garcia. Connors uses reverb, multi-layered note and chord voicings, and controlled distortion and feedback, to illustrate an interior view of outer space. With bowed bass, hints of melody are approached but abandoned; stages of development are left behind even as they are introduced, and the work moves further afield, yet very gently.

The short, atmospheric "Red Mars I" is amorphous; individual strings are sounded for a few seconds at a time, then are broodingly buried under unidentifiable tones and rumbling effects. On "Red Mars II," the guitar returns to the fore. That said, there are places in the piece where its notes are so far back in the mix, they seem to come from inside the warm blanket of ambient sound without being swallowed, creating new textural spaces. "Showers of Meteors" begins with chords that don't follow a progression, though they are spaced too perfectly to be random. As they give way to more single-string improvising, a ghost of Connors' approach to the blues returns, but it's momentary; the piece first re-enters the fragmented tonal space the chords offer and then deepens, with tougher, single notes from the low end before breaking apart amidst a sparse flurry of high-note shards. "Little Earth" closes the work with a recurrent theme, as chords and Spanish-tinged notes suggest an identifiable sense of place regarded with loss,

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longing, and a detached acceptance. Only in the silence that follows can the listener fully grasp the poetic exploration Connors undertakes on Red Mars. It marks not only a new direction, but a great achievement as well. ---Thom Jurek, allmusic.com

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