

REVIEWS

MAPS & ATLASES

**Beware and Be Grateful**

[Barusk]

On their second full-length set, the members of Chicago-based band Maps & Atlases again take an approach that frequently defies easy categorization. It's a collision of styles and genres that combine pulsating tempos with quirky off-kilter pop. "Old Ash" and "Silver Self" recall the intoxicating essence of Paul Simon's *Graceland*, with each song incorporating the infectious shuffle and giddy exuberance that made those world rhythms so engaging. Yet at other times the melodies seem to teeter on disconnect, evidenced in the angular, spindly sound of "Remote & Dark Years" and the skittish delivery that propels "Be Three Years Old." Listeners are directed to take heed of both aspects of the album title, which sums up the experience of *Beware and Be Grateful* succinctly. —Lee Zimmerman

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