



## HIGHLIFE

### *Best Bless*

WAR FAIR (0.46) • F KENYA RIP (5.38) • BURYING STONES (5.10)  
TUAREG DANCEHALL (6.52) • WET PALM TREES (2.23)

LABEL: THE SOCIAL REGISTRY  
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#### SELLING POINTS:

1. ON BEST BLESS HIGHLIFE IS BACKED BY A BAND THAT INCLUDES MEMBERS OF WHITE MAGIC, GANG GANG DANCE AND ARIEL PINK'S HAUNTED GRAFFITI.
2. HIGHLIFE HAS ALREADY RECEIVED FAVORABLE PRESS FROM PITCHFORK, NME, THE FADER, GORILLA VS BEAR, DAZED & CONFUSED AND OTHERS.
3. HIGHLIFE HAS TOURED WITH THE LIKES OF ANIMAL COLLECTIVE, GANG GANG DANCE, ARIEL PINK'S HAUNTED GRAFFITI, ERIC COPELAND, WILL OLDHAM, AND A HAWK AND A HACKSAW AMONGST OTHERS.
4. HIGHLIFE WILL BE TOURING NORTH AMERICA, UK AND EUROPE AROUND THIS RELEASE.
5. LP INCLUDES BONUS 7" AND A FREE DIGITAL DOWNLOAD.

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*"Is Highlife the next Animal Collective / Ariel Pink / Gang Gang Dance / Conceptual Core Buzzband? I am considering 'getting very excited' about this..." – Hipsterrunoff.com*

*"A summer-suited sprawl, with tuck-and-roll guitar lines like kids on a grassy slope, tip-tapping percussion breezy as a white linen shirt, and backing singers so sanguine in their hums and coos and "woos," they can only be supine in swaying hammocks" – Pitchfork*

*"These songs sound like they belong to the earth itself and have been playing themselves forever in some enchanted wonderland woodland clearing - there's a brilliant cyclical feeling to them that seems endless and natural." - Transparent*

**Best Bless** is the debut EP from **Sleepy Doug Shaw's Highlife**. Shaw moved from his hometown of London, England at the age of 19, arriving onto the NYC music scene in 2003. At that time accompanied by only by an acoustic guitar, he was soon showcasing his preternatural singing abilities and strong focused fingerpicking blues skills around the city playing under the moniker **Sleepy Doug Shaw**; and before long he had joined the entrancing psychedelic soul band **White Magic**.

**Highlife** was born in 2008 when Shaw, along with White Magic collaborator **Mira Billotte**, retreated from New York to the small island of Gaspar Grande off the coast of Trinidad, at the southernmost point of the Caribbean trail. The pair spent long, wandering nights chanting and inducing trance, recording on a portable setup that Shaw had lugged along. Shaw chose the name **Highlife** to imbue a feeling of rejoicing and high consciousness, while also giving a nod to the genre of african music 'Highlife', which has greatly influenced his guitar style. With the sun indelible in mind, Shaw and Billotte crossed the Atlantic, returning to his hometown of London. It was there at Southern Studios that full-band versions of the songs were recorded by the brilliant **Harvey Birrel (Crass, Sir Richard Bishop, Buzzcocks)**. Shaw and Billotte were joined on these sessions by **Tim Koh (Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti)** and **Jesse Lee (Gang Gang Dance)**, who play bass and drums respectively on 'Burying Stones'.

Whistling missiles drop and machine-gun guitars unload over a **Mahmoud Ahmed** percussion loop for **Best Bless'** opening song "War Fair." Next, "F Kenya Rip" leaps into it's bright circular canter, guitars intertwine - teasing at becoming tangled, as Shaw begins the inquiry and a chorus of Billotte's voices bursts forth. A blissful West-African style lilt ensues, with piano cascading and bass bouncing - and the song circles itself in it's reverie as though it is intent on it's eternity. Shaw drew influence for "F Kenya Rip" from the style of the **F Kenya Guitar Band**, in particular their song "Madame Zehae Ala" (Just As I Am), whose refrain is repeated throughout "F Kenya Rip".

"Burying Stones" is a tripped out, circular four to the floor, devotional anthem. A hysteria inducing loop is swallowed by bubbling guitars and pianos, as drums build and Shaw pronounces "The old new was like new". Therein the song drops into an incessant groove, as harmonizing guitars jump down the neck, oscillating against one another in echoed tremolo. "Tuareg Dancehall" plays to it's name, invoking the melodic musical rudiments of the Tuareg nomads, as a journey unfurls towards a distant desert dancehall." **Best Bless** closes out with the subdued home recording of "Wet Palm Trees." It represents the earliest recording on this record - being penned and recorded on the eve of Shaw's departure from Trinidad.

As of late Sleepy Doug Shaw has relocated back to NYC where he has been gracing stages of all sizes, quickly become a local favorite, and has still found time to moonlight as **Gang Gang Dance's** Bass Player...

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