



## HIGH PLACES

**Experimental pop duo, High Places, have rapidly scaled the ladder of the indie pantheon in the last year or so. They perform with good friends The Ruby Suns at Beck's Music Box this Saturday, March 7.**

The music of High Places is dreamy, playful and innocent. Mary Pearson's voice, simple and endearing, forms a fabric with the ambiguous sounds and syncopated percussion of partner in crime Rob Barber.

The instrumentation mixes organic with electronic, seamlessly blurring the borders between the two. The percussion especially stands out, with Pearson's voice the final glue to bind it all together. The combination clearly works, with both their self-titled of last year and *03/07-*

*09/07* (a release gathering loose ends) receiving warm critical reception. On top of that High Places have toured relentlessly since their inception, not that Pearson is complaining.

"It's pretty nice," says Pearson. "The other day I was thinking, *'It's so cool that I get to go out and do shows every night.'* I forget to be grateful for that. To be able to write songs and perform them and pay your rent with that, to get to travel and go to new places is amazing."

Another challenge of being on the road is working on new material in a less than ideal setting, an alien motel room or cramped van. But it's a situation Pearson and Barber are coming to terms with.

"We're still trying to figure it out," she says. "It's always tricky to have any degree of normalcy in your life when you're on tour. I've started making video stuff on the road and we're slowly learning how to work on music on the road

too. When we were home in January we finished up a recording for a split 12-inch with Soft Circle. We'll be back home in a couple of months for a break and we'll start working on our new record then."

High Places' creative process has been described previously by the band as 'exquisite corpse' songwriting. Not entirely sure what to make of the phrase, I ask Pearson to expand on their songwriting philosophy.

"The idea behind High Places is that we both make visual art and music, so the way we approach making music is visual in a way; we think a lot about colours and textures. The exquisite corpse idea is that we trade ideas back and forth, always throwing the other person for a loop with what we come up with. I think we're such different people that we approach everything from a different perspective.