



HELMS ALEE

Night Terror

As tired listeners curse the fact that there are so many bands out there, optimists and, quite possibly, the folks in **Helms Alee** revel in it. There are many influences notably encased in the trio's debut album, *Night Terror*, but all rear their beautiful heads at opportune times and are too numerous to classify. How does one travel from an unearthly, trance-like fury to the calm lap of the Breeders in the span of a minute? "A New Roll," with its furious drumming descending into a serene backdrop

of middle-America basements, does the trick flawlessly. It isn't but a few minutes later that the ruckus is back on par with the noisiest outfits today—in "Rogue's Yarn," where between the full frontal assaults comes a mellower version complete with muted, rhythmic metal down strokes and a post-punk upswing.

The roller coaster continues into the frightening "Big Spider," with minor scales and shrieking like the long-gone Karp. The mix never comes across as awkward, but rather as evidence of a strong collaboration and trust between the three members: drummer Hozoji Matheson-Margullis, bassist Dana James, and guitarist / front man Ben Verellen. [LR]

Hydra Head Records: www.hydrahead.org