

# ever

## Music For Ever . Take Your Time

CYANN & BEN

*Sweet Beliefs*

Ever Records, Release: March 20, 2007

Those who like their music to be served in bitesize chunks should back away now, and those for whom an artist's value is based upon how many convictions they have received from the local constabulary should move on, because there's nothing to see here. But those for whom music is a joy, a world in which to marvel at the patterns that sound can draw in one's mind, will want to settle in for the long haul. *Sweet Beliefs*, the third album by Paris based **Cyann & Ben**, is about "the whole", the experience, and it demands your attention right from the outset. It's an epic and yet intimate album that draws upon a wide variety of influences, giving the space rock template a Gallic makeover by adding a much needed romantic grandeur. But because **Cyann & Ben's** Paris is not the one you see in *Amelie* - it's dirty, dark and stressful as much as beautiful - *Sweet Beliefs*, with its multi-layered and ambitious sweep, sounds as unsettling as it is irresistible.

The seeds for the enigmatically, altruistically named **Cyann & Ben** were sown in the cold, grey, rainy city of Charleville-Mezieres. A small provincial French town on the border with Belgium, it was the birthplace of the legendary French poet Arthur Rimbaud. But even he, locals are forced to concede, tried to run away four times by the time he was 17. Now it is due to be the site for the trial of Michel Fourniret, a self-confessed serial killer who claims to have murdered up to 20 people in France and Belgium between 1987 and 2001. Three of **Cyann & Ben's** four members - Cyann (keyboards, vocals), Ben (vocals, guitars), and Charlie (drums, samplers, synth) - grew up there, experimenting with music in various configurations before finally making good their escape to Paris.

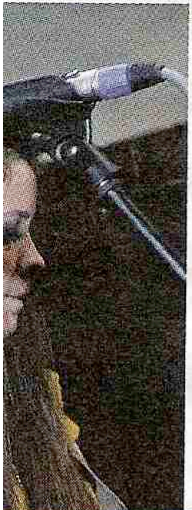
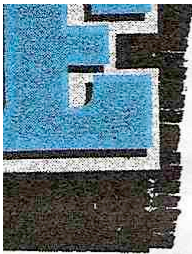
**Cyann & Ben** as an entity, however, was formed in spring 2001, soon after the two started working together, and they were joined by Charlie and Loïc (guitars, keyboards) for their first studio recordings. The chemistry that developed, especially when the four of them left the studio and took to the stage, was such that they soon started working and writing together regularly. Within a year they were signed to the currently dormant Goom Records - former home to M83 - and not long afterwards released their debut album, *Spring*, to wide acclaim in their homeland. A second album, *Happy Like A Tree*, followed in late 2004, consolidating their reputation and, despite limited distribution, won a small army of fans across Europe. Both albums were also released in the US by Locust Music, home to - amongst others - releases by Espers, Matmos, Allen Ginsberg and Timothy Leary.

With their third album, however, **Cyann & Ben** have significantly refined their sound. The nine songs on *Sweet Beliefs* form a collection of noble but gritty beauty, its escapist enchantment anchored by a human frailty and vulnerability. But they also stand up for themselves: immerse yourself in tracks like "Words", with its inexorable journey towards its Pete Townsend conclusion; "Sparks of Love"'s gravity-defying magic; the heartbreaking intimacy of "Somewhere In The Light Of Time" or the tension of the album's title track as it draws towards an inevitable crescendo. As a suite of songs, its slow burning pleasures take a while to reveal themselves, but the majesty within is worth your patience. Memorably described by *Magnet* as "a slow motion hurricane ripping apart your temporal lobe", **Cyann & Ben's** music offers an otherworldly grandeur: psychedelic, noble, fragile, pastoral, experimental and incandescent all at once, the sound of Sonic Youth reared on Pink Floyd's lost masterpiece *Soundtrack To 'More'*, or maybe Low picking Mogwai to pieces.

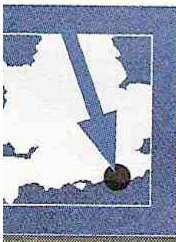
*Sweet Beliefs* was largely recorded in Paris at Vogue Studios, home of the legendary French label Vogue, where legions of French stars of the 60s and 70s, including Françoise Hardy, cut many of their classic albums. After being closed and left to decay for many years it was recently renovated and **Cyann & Ben** were amongst the first to work there. *Sweet Beliefs*, like the studio and indeed Paris itself, is steeped in musical history but no stranger to hard times. It acknowledges the fact that wherever you are - Charleville-Mezieres or Paris - there is no such thing as a perfectly happy ending, but the efforts to find one can still be vastly rewarding. That is the secret of its success, and its conviction, honesty and optimism give us all a reason to believe...

*"I have stretched ropes from steeple to steeple; garlands from window to window; golden chains from star to star, and I dance." Arthur Rimbaud*

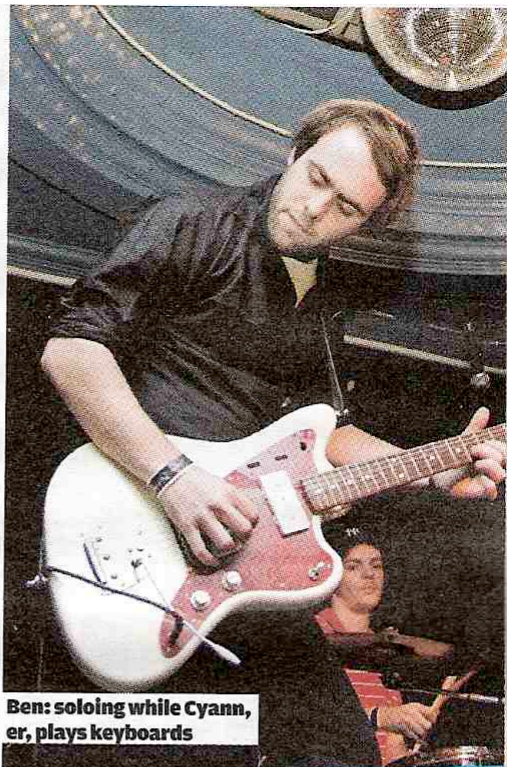
**For more information on Cyann & Ben contact Jessica Linker at Pitch Perfect PR:**  
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**Mollie: she bangs the cowbells**



In the past the sky limbs flail as he delivers and intoxicating audience grin his album, 'Life In a Feel-good, but live in order to try. Roll up, roll mind blown.



**Ben: soloing while Cyann, er, plays keyboards**

## Cyann & Ben

- ▶ Luminaire, London
- ▶ Wednesday, Nov 15



**M**ogwai have just released a soundtrack to the film *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*. It's actually their best record in a while, but you can't help thinking, why look as far afield as Scotland to soundtrack a film about the best French footballer of all time when Paris-based noise rockers Cyann & Ben already exist on Partisan shores? Not only is the four-piece's sky scraping indie-rock thang reminiscent of Mogwai's brilliant early missives, but their lovely girl/boy harmonies (courtesy of, yup, Cyann & Ben) take said template to a whole new league. From opener (and highlight of recently-released third album 'Sweet Beliefs') 'Let It Play' onwards, tonight's set is one of contrasting extremes - veering from moments of folky, introspective, effortless beauty (think: Zidane's exquisite volley that won the 2002 Champions League Final for Real Madrid), to the intense, overwhelming and ear-splitting loudness of closer 'Sparks Of Love' (think: Zidane's headbutt of Marco Materazzi that got him sent off in this year's World Cup Final). Whatever their preference of palate - Cyann & Ben: they shoot, they score, they roar. **Nathaniel Cramp**  
[www.cyannandben.com](http://www.cyannandben.com)

SONIA MELOY/TOM OXLEY