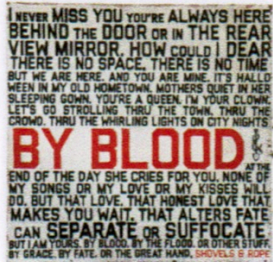


THE BUST GUIDE / MUSIC

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SHOVELS & ROPE *By Blood*

(Dualtone)



Springsteen and Petty. Sweet and X. Shovels & Rope have certain threads running through their decade-long magic, but *By Blood* is its own sorcery. The latest from married duo Michael Trent and Cary Ann Hearst is about *people*—our hopes and disappointments, dreams and failures—all drawn perfectly over fuzzed-out stomping rhythm and crackling harmony. *By Blood* doesn't seem to care much about breathing room—it's varying shades of full force from the word "go"—but this kind of raw, goose-bump-inducing realness is so rare you can't waste a second. —MOLLIE WELLS