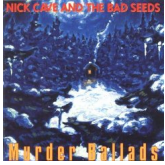


Nick Cave – Murder Ballads (1996)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 12 October 2009 13:38 - Last Updated Tuesday, 11 September 2018 13:35

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1 *Song Of Joy* 6:47 2 *Stagger Lee* 5:15 3 *Henry Lee* 3:58 4 *Lovely Creature* 4:13 5
Where The Wild Roses Grow 3:57 6 *The Curse Of Millhaven* 6:55 7 *The Kindness Of*
Strangers 4:39 8 *Crow Jane* 4:14 9 *O'Malley's Bar* 14:28 10 *Death Is Not The End* 4:27
Jenny Anderson Violin Blixa Bargeld Guitar, Sound Effects, Vocals, Voices Katharine Blake
Choir/Chorus, Vocals Martyn Casey Bass, Choir/Chorus, Guitar (Bass), Vocals Nick Cave
Arranger, Choir/Chorus, Guitar, Organ, Organ (Hammond), Piano, Sound Effects, String
Arrangements, Vocals Liz Corcoran Vocals Kerran Coulter Viola Mariella del Conte Vocals
Terry Edwards Horn Warren Ellis Accordion, Choir/Chorus, Violin, Vocals Dave Graney
Choir/Chorus, Vocals Mick Harvey Arranger, Bass, Drums, Guitars, Organ, Percussion, Space
Belt, String Arrangements, Vocals (Background) PJ Harvey Vocals Brian Hooper Bass,
Choir/Chorus, Vocals Rowland S. Howard Choir/Chorus, Vocals Geri Johnson Choir/Chorus,
Vocals Ian Johnson Choir/Chorus James Johnston Choir/Chorus, Vocals Spencer P. Jones
Choir/Chorus, Vocals Anita Lane Sound Effects, Vocals Shane MacGowan Guest Artist,
Vocals Kylie Minogue Guest Artist, Vocals Clare Moore Choir/Chorus, Vocals Helen
Mountfort Cello Astrid Munday Choir/Chorus, Vocals Hugo Race Guitar Conway Savage
Choir/Chorus, Organ, Piano, Vocals, Vocals (Background) James Sclavunos Bells, Drums,
Percussion, Tambourine Sue Simpson Violin Thomas Wydler Choir/Chorus, Drums,
Maracas, Tambourine, Trombone, Vocals

In some ways, *Murder Ballads* is the record Nick Cave was waiting to make his entire career. Death and violence have always haunted his music, even when he wasn't explicitly singing about the subject. On *Murder Ballads*, he sings about nothing but death in the most gruesome, shocking fashion. Divided between originals and covers, the record is awash in both morbid humor and sobering horror, as the Bad Seeds provide an appropriate backdrop for the carnage, alternating between blues, country, and lounge-jazz. Opening the affair is "Song for Joy," a tale from a father who has witnessed his family's death at the hands of serial killer. It is the most disturbing number on the record, lacking any of the gallows humor that balances out the other songs. Cave's duets with Kylie Minogue ("Where the Wild Roses Grow") and PJ Harvey ("Henry Lee") are intriguing, but the true tours de force of the album are "Stagger Lee" and "O'Malley's Bar." Working from an obscure, vulgar variation on "Stagger Lee," Cave increases the

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sordidness of the song, making Stagger an utterly irredeemable character. The original "O'Malley's Bar" is even stronger, as he spins a bizarrely funny epic of one man's slaughter of an entire bar. During "O'Malley's Bar," Cave and the Bad Seeds are at the height of their powers and the performances rank among the best they have ever recorded. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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