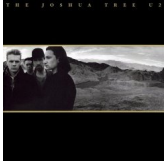


U2 - The Joshua Tree (20th Anniversary Super Deluxe Limited Edition) [1987/2007]

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 02 March 2017 12:59 - Last Updated Wednesday, 13 March 2019 21:54

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CD 1 : 1. *Where The Streets Have No Name* 2. *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For*
3. *With Or Without You* 4. *Bullet The Blue Sky* 5. *Running To Stand Still* 6. *Red Hill Mining Town*
7. *In God's Country* 8. *Trip Through Your Wires* 9. *One Tree Hill* 10. *Exit* CD
2 :

1. *Luminous Times (Hold On To Love)* 2. *Walk To The Water* 3. *Spanish Eyes* 4. *Deep In The Heart*
5. *Silver And Gold* 6. *Sweetest Thing* 7. *Race Against Time* 8. *Where The Streets Have No Name (Single Edit)*
9. *Silver And Gold (Sun City)* 10. *Beautiful Ghost/Introduction To Songs Of Experience* 11. *Wave Of Sorrow (Birdland)*
12. *Desert Of Our Love* 13. *Rise Up* 14. *Drunk Chicken/America*

Bass – Betty Dalton Drums – Duke Dalton Guitar – Luke Dalton Harmonica – Bono
Tambourine, Rhythm Guitar [Additional], Omnichord – Daniel Lanois Vocals, Guitar – Alton Dalton
Backing Vocals – Brian Eno, Daniel Lanois, The Edge

It's hard to say much about U2's *The Joshua Tree* that hasn't been said before. A standout album in a standout year (1987 would also see such releases as Pink Floyd's *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*, Def Leppard's *Hysteria* and Guns N' Roses' *Appetite for Destruction*, just to name a few), *The Joshua Tree* is universally recognized as one of the finest albums ever recorded by critics and fans alike. Twenty years later, the album that launched U2 from promising young political rockers to the biggest band in the world has not diminished one iota in its beauty or power.

The 20th anniversary deluxe edition of *The Joshua Tree* consists of two CDs accompanied by a hardbound book with essays by Bill Flanagan (on the album's place in U2's development as a band) and The Edge (on *The Joshua Tree* sessions and the history behind the new songs on Disc 2). Disc 1 contains the original *Joshua Tree* album remastered in its entirety. Intimately familiar with the original CD from countless listening over the years, I can honestly say that the music has never sounded better. From the very beginning of the first track, "Where the Streets Have No Name", I heard a distinct improvement in audio clarity and overall quality.

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Disc 2 maintains the crystal-clear audio on a collection of songs initially recorded during The Joshua Tree sessions but not included on the album, for whatever reason. Some of these have been heard before, such as the single edit of “Where the Streets Have No Name” and several B-sides included on Disc 2 of the limited edition version of The Best of 1980-1990: “Walk to the Water”, “Spanish Eyes”, “Sweetest Thing”, “Luminous Times (Hold On To Love)” and “Silver and Gold” (the latter better known for the live rendition on Rattle and Hum). Also included is an alternate version of “Silver and Gold”, “Silver and Gold (Sun City)” that appeared on the 1985 benefit album Sun City – Artists United Against Apartheid, featuring Keith Richards, Ron Wood and Steve Jordan.

The other songs are decidedly more rare: two are B-sides never before put out on an album (“Deep in the Heart” and “Race Against Time”); one (“Beautiful Ghost/Introduction to Songs of Experience”) only appeared in The Complete U2 collection on iTunes; and the five remaining are released here for the very first time.

Collected together, these rare tracks are somewhat of a mixed bag. Overall, Disc 2 lacks the musical cohesiveness of Disc, although there is much to like here. What catches one off guard is how some of these songs feel like they belong on the band’s latter albums. On the one hand you have my personal favorite, “Rise Up”, which would fit seamlessly on The Joshua Tree; another, “Desert of Love”, also has a Joshua Tree sensibility, albeit somewhat more raw, as if the track hasn’t been finished. On the other hand, “Deep in the Heart” falls somewhere between The Joshua Tree and Achtung Baby in style, while “Beautiful Ghost” and the pseudo-ambient “Race Against Time” sound sonically more appropriate for Pop or Zooropa. The moody piano-driven “Wave of Sorrow” skews even more recent, as if it belongs on All That You Can’t Leave Behind or How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb (initially left unfinished during The Joshua Tree sessions, “Wave” was finally completed for this collection, although the only new element is the vocal track). The last song may be the most unique of all; “Drunk Chicken/America”, with spoken word by Allen Ginsberg, is unlike any other song on either disc. Unfortunately, it is also the weakest. While the funky beat has potential, it’s paring with Ginsberg’s spoken word just doesn’t click.

Listening to the other tracks from The Joshua Tree sessions, one is left with the impression that synchronicity was in the air when U2 picked the songs for the original Joshua Tree album, nailing every choice perfectly and, in the process, crafting a rock music masterpiece. ---Steve 'Frosty' Weintraub, collider.com

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