

David Bowie - Low (1977/1991)

Written by bluesever

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1. "Speed of Life" 2:46 2. "Breaking Glass" (Bowie, Dennis Davis, George Murray) 1:52
3. "What in the World" 2:23 4. "Sound and Vision" 3:05 5. "Always Crashing in the Same Car" 3:33 6. "Be My Wife" 2:58 7. "A New Career in a New Town" 2:53 8. "Warszawa" (Bowie, Brian Eno) 6:23 9. "Art Decade" 3:46 10. "Weeping Wall" 3:28 11. "Subterraneans" 5:39 12. "Some Are" (previously unreleased) 3:24 13. "All Saints" (previously unreleased) 3:25 14. "Sound and Vision (1991 remix by David Richards) 4:43
David Bowie – vocals (2-6, 8, 10-12, 14), saxophones (4, 11), guitar (6, 9-11), pump bass (6), harmonica (7), vibraphone (9-10), xylophone (10), pre-arranged percussion (10), keyboards: ARP synthesiser (1, 10-11), Chamberlin: Credited on the album sleeve notes as "tape horn and brass" (1), "synthetic strings" (1, 4, 9-10), "tape cellos" (5) and "tape sax section" (7), piano (7, 9-11), "instruments" (13) Brian Eno – keyboards: Minimoog (2, 8-9), ARP (3, 11), E.M.I. (3, 5), piano (7-9, 11), Chamberlin (8-9), other synthesisers, vocals (4, 14), guitar treatments (5), synthetics (7), "instruments" (12-13) Carlos Alomar – rhythm guitars (1, 3-7, 14), guitar (2) Dennis Davis – percussion (1-7, 14) George Murray – bass (1-7, 11, 14) Ricky Gardiner – rhythm guitar (2), guitar (3-7, 14) Roy Young – pianos (1, 3-7, 14), Farfisa organ (3, 5) + Iggy Pop – backing vocals (3) Mary Visconti – backing vocals (4, 14) Eduard Meyer – cellos (9) Peter and Paul (Brian Eno under a gag pseudonym) – pianos and ARP

Following through with the avant-garde inclinations of *Station to Station*, yet explicitly breaking with David Bowie's past, *Low* is a dense, challenging album that confirmed his place at rock's cutting edge. Driven by dissonant synthesizers and electronics, *Low* is divided between brief, angular songs and atmospheric instrumentals. Throughout the record's first half, the guitars are jagged and the synthesizers drone with a menacing robotic pulse, while Bowie's vocals are unnaturally layered and overdubbed. During the instrumental half, the electronics turn cool, which is a relief after the intensity of the preceding avant pop. Half the credit for *Low*'s success goes to Brian Eno, who explored similar ambient territory on his own releases. Eno functioned as a conduit for Bowie's ideas, and in turn Bowie made the experimentalism of not only Eno but of the German synth group Kraftwerk and the post-punk group Wire respectable, if not quite mainstream. Though a handful of the vocal pieces on *Low* are accessible -- "Sound and Vision" has a shimmering guitar hook, and "Be My Wife" subverts soul structure in a surprisingly catchy

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fashion -- the record is defiantly experimental and dense with detail, providing a new direction for the avant-garde in rock & roll. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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