

## Keith Richards - Crosseyed Heart (2015)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Crosseyed Heart* 2 *Heartstopper* 3 *Amnesia* 4 *Robbed Blind* 5 *Trouble* 6 *Love Overdue* 7 *Nothing On Me* 8 *Suspicious* 9 *Blues In The Morning* 10 *Something For Nothing* 11 *Illusion* 12 *Just A Gift* 13 *Goodnight Irene* 14 *Substantial Damage* 15 *Lover's Plea*

Acoustic Guitar – Keith Richards (tracks: A1 to A4, B1 to B4, C2, C3, DD1 to D3) Backing Vocals – Bernard Fowler (tracks: B1, B2, C3, D2, D4), Blondie Chaplin (tracks: C3, D1, D2, D4), Keith Richards (tracks: A3, B1, D3, D4), Meegan Voss (tracks: A3, B4), Steve Jordan (tracks: A2 to A4, B1 to B3, C1 to C3, D1 to D4) Bass – Keith Richards (tracks: A2, A3, B1 to B4, C1, C2, D3, D4) Drums – Steve Jordan (tracks: A2 to A4, B1 to B4, C1 to C3, D1 to D4) Electric Guitar – Keith Richards (tracks: A2, A3, B1 to B4, C1 to C3, D1, D3, D4), Waddy Wachtel (tracks: A2, B1, B4) Lead Vocals – Keith Richards Organ [Farfisa Organ] – Keith Richards (tracks: B4, C3) Organ [Hammond] – Charles Hodges (tracks: B3, C2, D3, D4) Pedal Steel Guitar – Larry Campbell (tracks: A2, A4) Percussion – Steve Jordan (tracks: B1, B2) Piano – Keith Richards (tracks: A2 to A4, B4, C1 to C3, D1) Saxophone – Bobby Keys (tracks: A3, C1) + others

Keith Richards took his time to complete *Crosseyed Heart*. It arrives 23 years after *Main Offender*, his last solo studio album, but also 11 years after *A Bigger Bang*, the last official Rolling Stones record, but Richards hasn't exactly been quiet in all those years. He helped Mick Jagger flesh out the leftover demos for expanded editions of *Exile on Main St.* and *Some Girls* -- conspiracists argued some of the writing happened in the new millennium -- and toured with the Stones on various anniversaries, but the feather in his cap was *Life*, the 2010 memoir that established Keith as a razor-sharp raconteur for the masses that may never have paid attention to *Talk Is Cheap*. When compared to that publication date, *Crosseyed Heart* arrives a mere five years later, so that's not such a long wait. Certainly, *Crosseyed Heart* hardly feels like it was labored over; it's not the work of a perfectionist hoping every element lands in its right place. It sounds like it was knocked out in a week, which is about the highest compliment that can be paid to a record as casual as this. *Main Offender* felt like the result of endless hours of expensive studio jams, but *Crosseyed Heart* feels like it fell into place, with its songs arising out of jams with a drummer instead of being excuses for jams. Bookended by acoustic numbers -- the first is the charmingly tossed-off title track, a song that feels clipped in its conclusion, the last

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a version of Lead Belly's "Goodnight Irene," with the lyrics slightly modified -- the album does indeed bear the suggestion of a construction, a record that slides from obsession to obsession without calling attention to transitions. Nothing here is surprising, not the overdriven Chess boogie of "Blues in the Morning" or the ska shuffle of "Love Overdue," but that familiarity is an asset, because Keith luxuriates in his detours so much he winds up synthesizing his affections into a signature, a move highlighted by the soulful crawl of the Norah Jones duet "Illusion," a song where both singers seem seduced by the slow groove. "Illusion" mildly recalls "Make No Mistake," but where that Talk Is Cheap number underlined its Stax connections, Crosseyed Heart isn't so edgy: Keith no longer has to prove what he has to contribute to either the Stones or the culture at large, so he settles into his favorite sounds, loving to play the blues, rock & roll, country, and folk he's always savored, then sliding into the open-chord boogie that's unmistakably his. He may not forcibly claim this ground here but that's the appeal of Crosseyed Heart: it's a winningly low-key record, where the atmosphere matters more than the songs, yet Richards doesn't neglect writing tunes this time around. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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