



BILL CALLAHAN

WOKE ON A WHALEHEART

DC332 ▶▶ LP/CD

PREVIOUS
RELEASES
from
BILL CALLAHAN



"DIAMOND DANCER"
DC335 CD single

Songs:

FROM THE RIVERS TO THE OCEANS

FOOTPRINTS

DIAMOND DANCER

SYCAMORE

THE WHEEL

HONEYMOON CHILD

DAY

NIGHT

A MAN NEEDS A WOMAN OR A MAN

TO BE A MAN

You could say this is Bill Callahan's debut album. Although he's sired a dozen albums under the name of **Smog**, he has laid that name to rest and, well, **WOKE ON A WHALEHEART**. Another debut.

With the same maverick spirit of, say, a **Nilsson** or a **Cat Stevens**, Bill Callahan has made an album that is born of no school of music other than what is in his heart and soul.

Boasting the propulsive, glittering and classically pretty arrangements of **Neil Michael Hagerty**, this album manages to bypass the trends of the modern day while shunning retro entrapments.

With a mix of gospel backing vocals by **Deani Pugh-Flemmings** of the **Olivet Baptist Church**, the incendiary guitar work of **Pete Denton**, and the honeyed violins of **Elizabeth Warren**, the music on this album touches on gospel, tough pop and American Light Opera.



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SMOG

A Biography

In 1987 Bill Callahan of Smog went on a freighter cruise.

“I don’t know if you know what these are,” Bill says, “It’s these barges you see out in the ocean that don’t ever look like they’re moving. They are full of cinnamon or raw wicker, some cargo like that, and they sell a few berths. There were spaces for seven passengers on the one I went on. For six weeks I was on that thing with my cousin Lee, a couple retirees with absolutely nothing to do and a guy who turned out to be a famous crime novelist who was there to work on his next book. My parents had insisted that I needed to cool my wheels because I was getting into some trouble, as was Lee. So we went to Papeete, Tuamotu, Suva.

When we finally pulled back into Baltimore’s harbor, I was struck by one thing: the smog. The skyscrapers came in a close second, but they sort of looked like seashells to me. The seashells I’d been collecting at all the ports. But the smog made me say, ‘I live in smog.’ And that stuck with me. I had been writing some ‘instant songs’ while on the journey, short things i could dilute the sea fever with.

When I got home my parents presented me with a bill for 2 grand so I decided to make a record to make some quick cash. Four years later I had the two grand to pay them back.

That was my first album, SEWN TO THE SKY, which came out in 1990.

I was like a caged animal set free after that. Roaming the world with a variety of pick-up bands and making a record wherever I could.”



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