

= Black Holes and Revelations =

Black Holes and Revelations is the fourth studio album by English alternative rock band Muse , released on 3 July 2006 in the United Kingdom . It gets its title from a line in the song " Starlight " , which is the second track on the album . Recording was split between New York and France , and it was the first time Muse had taken a more active role in the album 's production . The album was a change in style from Muse 's previous albums , and the band cited influences that included Depeche Mode , Millionaire , Lightning Bolt , Sly and the Family Stone , and music from southern Italy .

Black Holes and Revelations was placed at number 34 in a public vote conducted by Q Magazine for " The Best British Albums of all time " in February 2008 .

Like their two previous albums , Black Holes and Revelations has political and science @-@ fiction undertones , with the lyrics covering topics as varied as political corruption , alien invasion , revolution and New World Order conspiracies as well as more conventional love songs .

= = Background and recording = =

Muse 's previous album , Absolution , was released in 2003 to critical acclaim . Absolution had brought the band mainstream exposure in the United States for the first time .

The band retired to an old château in France to write for a new album . Lead singer Matthew Bellamy said that this was because the band wanted to be free from distractions so that they could " concentrate , spend time and be surrounded by different musical influences " . The album was partially recorded in the same studio in France as Pink Floyd 's album The Wall , of which fact bassist Chris Wolstenholme said it was a " great feeling to know that something big had been done [there] " . However , the band found recording there very slow and had difficulties deciding which songs to include on the album . They travelled to New York to finish the recording .

Wolstenholme considered writing and recording for Black Holes and Revelations more relaxed than it had been for previous albums , as the band did not have a deadline to work to . It was the first time they had learned about the technology in the studio , having previously left the use of it to the sound engineers . Bellamy said that this was the first time Muse made an album without being concerned about how they would play it live .

" Soldier 's Poem " , stood out as being " quite unlike anything [they 'd] ever done before " . Drummer Dominic Howard said they were originally going to record it with a " massive , epic " approach , but then decided to strip it down and record it in a small studio with vintage equipment and a few microphones . Muse were pleased with the result and Howard described it as a " real highlight " , describing the vocals as " some of the most amazing vocals I 've ever heard Matt do " .

= = Lyrical content = =

Black Holes and Revelations was said by some reviewers to carry a political message . The album begins with the track " Take a Bow " , which is an " attack on an all but unnamed political leader " , incorporating lyrics such as " Corrupt , you corrupt and bring corruption to all that you touch " . These themes are carried through the album in the tracks " Exo @-@ Politics " and " Assassin " . The album often touches on controversial subject matters , such as " The New World Order conspiracy , unjustifiable war , abusive power , conspiratorial manipulation and populist revolt , " and is influenced by the conspiracy theories that the band are interested in . Matt Bellamy stated that he finds " the unknown in general a stimulating area for the imagination " , and this interest is reflected throughout the album , which features alien invasion (in " Exo @-@ Politics ") and rebellious paranoia (particularly during " Assassin ") . The album also includes more emotional themes , including regret , ambition , and love .

The title , taken from lyrics in " Starlight " , is explained by Bellamy in his September 2006 interview for Q magazine : " Black holes and revelations ? they 're the two areas of songwriting for me that make up the majority of this album . A revelation about yourself , something personal , something genuine of an everyday nature that maybe people can relate to . Then the black holes are these

songs that are from the more ... unknown regions of the imagination . "

= = Artwork = =

The sleeve 's designer Storm Thorgerson said : " This design was executed on location in Bardenas ? The central motif came from ' galloping ' horses (' Knights of Cydonia ' , ' Invincible ') and from the biblical allusion to horsemen , namely the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse , now represented in contemporary mode . "

= = Release = =

The album was released on 3 July 2006 in the UK , followed by releases in the US , Australia , Taiwan and Japan . The album was also available as a limited edition CD / DVD combination , that featured videos and live renditions of the band playing " Supermassive Black Hole " , " Knights of Cydonia " and " Starlight " . In addition , the album was re @-@ released in the USA on vinyl LP on 18 August 2009 . The album received double platinum certification in the UK on 22 December 2006 and triple platinum on 6 December 2010 . Singles were released in both the UK and the US , though they were released in different orders in each country . All singles excepting " Map of the Problematique " were available on vinyl LP , CD , DVD (containing the music video for the single) and as a digital download .

In the UK , the first single from the album was " Supermassive Black Hole " and it was released prior to the album , on 19 June 2006 . The single reached number four in the UK Singles Chart , making it the highest charting single in the UK for the band to date . The single was followed by " Starlight " , " Knights of Cydonia " , " Invincible " and " Map of the Problematique " , the only one of which to reach the top 10 was " Knights of Cydonia " at number ten . The album itself charted at number one for two straight weeks in the UK album chart , with the band 's largest sales up to that point .

The first single released in the U.S. was " Knights of Cydonia " , on 13 June 2006 , which peaked at number 10 on the Billboard Modern Rock Tracks chart . It was followed by " Starlight " and " Supermassive Black Hole " . " Starlight " was their most popular single in the U.S. at that point , reaching number two on the Modern Rock Tracks . The album became Muse 's first top ten entry in the U.S. , debuting at number nine .

= = Critical reception = =

Black Holes and Revelations was met with positive reviews from critics . Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating based on a range of reviews from mainstream critics , aggregated the album 's average review score to 75 out of 100 , based on 32 reviews . The album received top ratings from Observer Music Monthly , Q , E ! Online , and Alternative Press . Planet Sound named Black Holes and Revelations their Album of the Year for 2006 and the album was placed third in the NME Albums of the Year list for 2006 , as well as being named Q 's second @-@ best album of the year . The album also received a Mercury Prize nomination . It was featured in the updated 2007 version of the music reference book 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die , edited by Robert Dimery . The album was named as one of Classic Rock ? s 10 essential progressive rock albums of the decade .

In contrast , several critics called the album " overblown " , including RTÉ 's Bill Lehane , NME 's Anthony Thornton , and Rolling Stone 's Christian Hoard . Hoard went on to describe " Knights of Cydonia " and " City of Delusion " " ridiculous " , but concluded that it was " surprising " , that the album worked . The A.V. Club 's Noel Murray , on the other hand , gave the band credit for reworking themselves , but called the album a " nightmare " and gave it a D + . The album also garnered some crossover appeal , with Oakland hip hop group Zion I releasing a notable remix of " Knights of Cydonia " in 2008 .

= = Commercial reception = =

The album sold 115 @, @ 144 copies in its first week in the UK , which was more than the first week sales of Muse 's previous album , Absolution . The album is also a BPI triple platinum album , and was nominated for a Mercury Prize . It has sold 1 @, @ 060 @, @ 765 copies in the UK as of June 2015 .

Five singles were released in the UK , of which three were released in the US . A world tour followed the release of the album that included dates in the UK , the US , Canada , Australia and most of Europe and Asia .

= = Tour = =

In July 2006 the band announced that they would be going on their " biggest ever tour " in support of the album . The first shows included the Leeds and Reading Carling Weekend festivals , followed by a tour that visited most of the world 's major continents . The tour saw them travelling over most of the world , including countries such as the UK , most of Europe , the USA , Canada , Australia , Japan , China and Korea . Some dates that were booked to play in support of My Chemical Romance in the USA were cancelled after members of both bands were affected by food poisoning . The USA stretch of the tour included dates at Madison Square Garden and a headlining slot at Lollapalooza .

The biggest concert of the tour was the two nights that they played in the new Wembley Stadium on 16 and 17 June 2007 . They were the first band to sell @-@ out the newly built stadium and play there . The show incorporated extensive special effects that included huge satellite dishes , " futuristic " antennas , giant white balls and thousands of lights . The encore featured two acrobats that floated high above the crowd suspended on floating white balloons . Footage of the latter concert was released on DVD whilst a live CD album contained a selection of recorded tracks from the two nights . Both discs were released as a joint package under the title HAARP .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Matt Bellamy .

= = = Tracks featured on limited edition DVDs = = =

" Supermassive Black Hole " (video)

" Starlight " (video)

" Knights of Cydonia " (video)

" Supermassive Black Hole " (Live from Paris)

" Starlight " (Live from Copenhagen at the MTV Awards)

" Knights of Cydonia " (Live from London)

A longer and heavier version of " Assassin " , dubbed the " Grand Omega Bosses Version " was also recorded and is available on the vinyl issue of " Knights of Cydonia " single .

= = = In the media = = =

" Take a Bow " was featured on an episode of Top Gear , when Richard Hammond tested the Noble M15 . The song also featured prominently in the second released trailer for Watchmen and a John Debney 's orchestrated remix of the song was used in the second trailer for the 2016 Universal / Columbia / Legendary Pictures / MGM co @-@ production film The Jungle Book while the original version will be used for the film 's TV spots and featurette . " Knights of Cydonia " was featured as a playable track in Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock and Rocksmith 2014 and " Assassin " was featured as a playable track in Guitar Hero World Tour . " Knights of Cydonia " was also featured in a trailer for Series 5 of the TV show Merlin , as well featured in the launch trailer for the videogame

Halo 5 : Guardians . " Assassin " was also featured in the Torchwood episode entitled " Combat " . " Supermassive Black Hole " was featured at the start of the Series 6 Doctor Who episode , " The Rebel Flesh " , in the baseball scene of the film Twilight , and in the season 2 episode of Supernatural , " Hunted " . " Map of the Problematique " was featured in trailer for The Tourist .

= = Personnel = =

Muse

Matthew Bellamy ? lead vocals , lead and rhythm guitars , piano , synthesizers , production

Christopher Wolstenholme ? bass , backing vocals , double bass on " Soldier 's Poem " , some synthesizers on " Map of the Problematique " and " Hoodoo " , production

Dominic Howard ? drums , percussion , brief vocals and electronic drums on " Supermassive Black Hole " , Buchla 200e on " Take a Bow " , production

Additional personnel

Edoardo de Angelis ? first violin on " Take a Bow " , " City of Delusion " , " Hoodoo " and " Knights of Cydonia "

Around Art ? strings on " Take a Bow " , " City of Delusion " , " Hoodoo " and " Knights of Cydonia "

Marco Brioschi ? trumpet on " City of Delusion " and " Knights of Cydonia "

Tommaso Colliva ? engineer

Myriam Corregge ? assistant engineer

Rich Costey ? production

Max Dingle ? mixing assistant

Tom Kirk ? antique items crushed on " Exo @-@ Politics "

Roger Lian ? mastering assistant

Vlado Meller ? mastering

Mauro Pagani ? string arrangements , string conductor

Ross Peterson ? assistant engineer

Audrey Riley ? string arrangements , string conductor

Mark Rinaldi ? mixing assistant

Ryan Simms ? assistant engineer

Derrick Santini ? photography

Storm Thorgerson ? cover photo

Rupert Truman ? cover photo

Howie Weinberg ? mastering

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Single releases = =