

= The Sea ( Corinne Bailey Rae album ) =

The Sea is the second studio album by English singer @-@ songwriter Corinne Bailey Rae , released on 20 January 2010 by EMI . It is the follow @-@ up to her eponymous 2006 debut and was conceived following her hiatus from recording , taken in the wake of her husband Jason Rae 's death . She recorded the album at Limefield Studios in Manchester , England during 2009 , working mostly with a host of session musicians and the record producers Steve Brown and Steve Chrisanthou . The Sea features songs written by Rae before and after her husband 's death , touching on themes of love , lament , and solace .

In the United Kingdom , The Sea debuted at number five on the UK Albums Chart and was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry ( BPI ) . It also charted at number seven on the Billboard 200 in the United States , where it reached sales of 156 @,@ 000 by April 2010 . A critical success , The Sea received mostly positive reviews and was nominated for the 2010 Mercury Prize . Rae toured in promotion of the album on The Sea Tour in early 2010 .

= = Writing and recording = =

Following the multi @-@ platinum and award @-@ winning success of her eponymous debut album in 2006 , Corinne Bailey Rae began to work on songs for a follow @-@ up album at the end of 2007 . She took a hiatus from music , however , after the death of her husband , Scottish saxophonist Jason Rae , in March 2008 to an accidental overdose of methadone and alcohol . For a long period of time , Rae said , " I didn 't really hear any songs . Normally in my everyday life , I 'd be in the car and come up with a little line , or I 'd look at something and try to describe it ... I didn 't really think in that way anymore . Nothing was coming in . " After months of grief and isolation , Rae revisited her work the following year and composed additional material for The Sea .

The Sea contains songs written before and after the death of Rae 's husband , all of which she said resonated with her : " The circumstances have cast it all in a different light . It began as a ' before and after ' record , but it 's become an ' after ' record " . The ballad " I 'd Do It All Again " was written by Rae in January 2008 after an argument with her husband . She told NME that writing the rest of the album helped her handle the different emotions she felt after her husband 's death : " When I started writing that I was thinking , ' I don 't really want this song to go into the world , ' cause it 's so naked ? ' But I had to " . " I Would Like to Call it Beauty " , she said , was written about finding beauty in the " darkest times " , later telling journalist Sean O 'Hagan :

" There is something miraculous that pushes you along , makes you keep going , makes you carry on . It 's really about the mystery of that . In fact , the whole album is about that in a way ; it 's about loss but it 's also about hope , about keeping going and trying to find that beauty . "

Rae recorded most of The Sea in 2009 at Manchester 's Limefield Studios . She co @-@ produced the record mostly with Steve Brown and Steve Chrisanthou , both of whom had worked on her debut album . Rae pursued a sound more aggressive than on her debut . During the recording process , Rae listened to the 1973 Sly & the Family Stone record Fresh and Curtis Mayfield 's There 's No Place Like America Today ( 1975 ) , as well as the music of Nina Simone and Leonard Cohen . A live band was used in the album 's recording , which was also a departure from her debut . " On the first album , it was me and a producer in a basement going through hundreds of snare drum sounds to find the right one " , she recalled . " With a live band , you can stretch out more and try new things out without feeling you 're having to undo this meticulously built @-@ up track " .

The album was titled after the recurring theme of water in songs such as " Diving for Hearts " and " I Would Like to Call It Beauty " , while the music was said by Rae to possess " a kind of tidal movement to it too , in the way that we recorded the songs . You know , sometimes it would just be me and my guitar . Then we 'd really sort of swell up into these big arrangements , only to then retreat back to it just being me and my guitar again . " According to Chris Mugan from The Independent , The Sea was a departure from the polished sound of Rae 's debut album , while Paste magazine 's Steve Labate said Rae expanded on her debut 's mix of contemporary R & B and older soul music by incorporating pop rock , singer @-@ songwriter influences , and occasional

elements of bossa nova and trip hop . In the opinion of Craig McLean from The Daily Telegraph , the record 's music evoked Simone 's singing and the 1968 Van Morrison album Astral Weeks .

= = Release and reception = =

Before releasing *The Sea* , Rae showcased songs from the album on a preview concert tour in late 2009 , playing venues in England , Canada , Los Angeles , and New York . She premiered the songs during a 23 November 2009 performance at The Tabernacle in London , her first complete gig since her hiatus from the music scene . She also showcased its songs on 7 December at New York City 's Hiro Ballroom , which was recorded for the public television series *Live from the Artists Den* . Rae also promoted the album with guest performances on the talk shows *Today* and *Later ... with Jools Holland* . Three singles were released from the album : " I 'd Do It All Again " on 12 January , " Paris Nights / New York Mornings " on 29 March , and " Closer " on 2 August . Rae 's record label EMI sent the singles to music video / radio stations of multiple formats , including urban adult contemporary , smooth jazz and adult album alternative .

When *The Sea* was released in 2010 , it debuted at number five on the UK Albums Chart , and number seven on the Billboard 200 in the US , where it sold 53 @,@ 000 copies in its first week . On 19 February , the album was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry ( BPI ) , and by April , it had sold 156 @,@ 000 copies in the US , according to Nielsen SoundScan . On 27 February 2010 , Rae embarked on the European leg of her supporting tour for the album , *The Sea Tour* , which featured singer @-@ songwriter Daniel Merriweather as her opening act ; the tour began its North American leg on 9 April .

*The Sea* received generally positive reviews from critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalised rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream publications , the album received an average score of 78 , based on 21 reviews . AllMusic 's David Jeffries called it " a testament to Rae 's artistic growth " , and Kitty Empire from The Observer found it " saturated in feeling and graced by superior musicianship " . Steve Leftridge of PopMatters said it was " richer " than her debut , with a " darker and more sophisticated sonic palette " . Q credited Rae for making the album never sound " exploitative or mawkish , just truthful and real " . In the Los Angeles Times , Powers deemed the album a " remarkable accomplishment " and " a step toward something ? Rae 's inner peace , and her next artistic breakthrough ? that has its own considerable rewards " . In a less enthusiastic review , The Observer 's Graeme Thompson felt the album 's strong points offered " glimpses of a new horizon shining beyond the riptides of pain and sorrow " , but at times it sounded " dull and flat " . Slant Magazine 's Nick Day was more critical , finding the music forgettable and the lyrics introspective but vague . Hot Press critic Patrick Freyne believed the music exhibited an " excessive tastefulness " while panning the contributions of the session musicians , whom he said were " technically proficient " but sounded soulless .

At the end of 2010 , *The Sea* was named the year 's best album by The Guardian 's Caroline Sullivan , while Powers ranked it ninth on her year @-@ end list of 2010 's best albums . It was also nominated for the 2010 Mercury Prize , awarded annually for the best record from the UK or Ireland ; Rae lost out to The xx 's self @-@ titled 2009 album .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Credits are adapted from the album 's liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Weekly charts = = =

=== Year @-@ end charts ===

== Release history ==