

= Ocean Rain =

Ocean Rain is the fourth studio album by the English post-punk band Echo & the Bunnymen . It was released on 4 May 1984 and reached number four on the UK Albums Chart , number 87 on the United States Billboard 200 , number 41 on the Canadian RPM 100 Albums and number 22 on the Swedish chart . Since 1984 the album has been certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry . Ocean Rain includes the singles " The Killing Moon " , " Silver " and " Seven Seas " .

The band wrote the songs for the new album in 1983 . In early 1984 they recorded most of the album in Paris using a 35-piece orchestra , with other sessions taking place in Bath and Liverpool . Receiving mixed reviews the album was originally released as an LP and a cassette in May 1984 before it was reissued on CD in August . The album was reissued on CD in 2003 , along with the other four of the band 's first five studio albums , having been remastered and expanded before again being reissued in 2008 with a live bonus disc . The artwork for the album was designed by Martyn Atkins and the photography was by Brian Griffin . Echo & the Bunnymen played a number of concerts in 2008 where they performed Ocean Rain in full and with the backing of an orchestra .

= = Background = =

Following the poor reception of Echo & the Bunnymen 's third album , 1983 's Porcupine , the band recorded the single " Never Stop " . The title track of the single was produced by Hugh Jones , who had produced the band 's second album , 1981 's Heaven Up Here . The single introduced a new sound for the band with an expanded arrangement including congas , marimbas , violins and cellos . After " Never Stop " was released on 8 July 1983 the band toured the Outer Hebrides in Scotland before two successful concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in London on 18 and 19 July . Also that month , the band was filmed by RPM Productions for the Channel 4 documentary series Play at Home . Filmed in a café used by the band they recorded acoustic versions of two old songs , " Stars Are Stars " and " Villiers Terrace " , as well as two new songs , " The Killing Moon " and " Silver " , for their episode of Play at Home titled Life at Brian 's .

After spending some time in Liverpool writing new songs for the album , the band recorded their sixth session for John Peel 's radio show on BBC Radio 1 on 6 September 1983 . The songs recorded were " Nocturnal Me " , " Ocean Rain " , " My Kingdom " and " Watch Out Below " , which would all later appear on the band 's fourth album Ocean Rain ? " Watch Out Below " was later renamed " The Yo Yo Man " . When the band 's John Peel session was broadcast on 10 October 1983 , the punk zine Jamming said , " [The songs] hint at a readjustment and a period of new positive recovery . "

Echo & the Bunnymen were booked to headline a two-week youth festival at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon on the evening of 23 October 1983 . Due to a high demand for tickets a matinee performance was added . The matinee concert at Stratford-upon-Avon saw the live debut of " The Killing Moon " , " Seven Seas " and " Silver " . With representatives from the band 's record company and lead singer Ian McCulloch 's mother in the audience , the performance was nervous and uncertain ; although the evening performance , without the record company representatives and McCulloch 's mother , was much improved .

At the end of 1983 Echo & the Bunnymen recorded a live special called A Crystal Day for the Channel 4 programme The Tube . Ignoring their old material , the band played " The Killing Moon " , " Nocturnal Me " , " Ocean Rain " ? which had now developed into a ballad ? and an early version of " Thorn of Crowns " called " Cucumber " .

= = Recording and music = =

The band recorded and self-produced " The Killing Moon " ? which was released on 20 January 1984 ? at Crescent Studio in Bath , Somerset . After catching a cold , McCulloch completed the recording of the vocals for the song at Amazon Studio in Liverpool , where de Freitas also completed the drumming . The band then went to Paris where they were booked into Les Studios

des Dames and Studio Davout . Henri Loustau , the engineer at des Dames , assisted on the string passages and Adam Peters provided the string arrangements and played cello and piano . McCulloch , not happy with the lead vocals he had recorded in Paris , re @-@ recorded most of the vocals at Amazon Studio in Liverpool .

Continuing the band 's prominent use of strings ? which began with the 1982 single " The Back of Love " ? they recorded Ocean Rain using a 35 @-@ piece orchestra . Lead guitarist Will Sergeant said , " We wanted to make something conceptual with lush orchestration ; not Mantovani , something with a twist . It 's all pretty dark . ' Thorn of Crowns ' is based on an eastern scale . The whole mood is very windswept : European pirates , a bit Ben Gunn ; dark and stormy , battering rain ; all of that . " During recording De Freitas used xylophones and glockenspiels in addition to his usual percussion , bass player Les Pattinson used an old reverb machine at des Dames and Sergeant 's solo on " My Kingdom " was played using a Washburn acoustic guitar which he distorted through a valve radio .

= = Cover = =

As with their previous albums , the album cover was designed by Martyn Atkins and the photography was by Brian Griffin . With the band wanting to continue the elemental theme of the previous three albums , the photograph used on the front cover of the album is a picture of the band in a rowing boat which was taken inside Carnglaze Caverns , Liskeard , Cornwall . In his 2002 book *Turquoise Days : The Weird World of Echo & the Bunnymen* , author Chris Adams describes the cover as " a perfect visual representation of arguably the Bunnymen 's finest album " .

The picture on the front cover of the original album was kept for the 2003 reissue . However , the design was altered slightly by graphic designer Rachel Gutek of the design company guppyart . This release contains an expanded booklet written by music journalist Max Bell giving the background to the album . The booklet contains a number of photographs which are credited to Sergeant and Pattinson .

= = Releases = =

Ocean Rain was first released on 4 May 1984 as an LP and on cassette by Korova in Europe . It was subsequently released by Sire Records in the United States on 14 May and on CD in Europe and the United States on 24 August 1984 . The album was marketed as " the greatest album ever made " and McCulloch later said it was because they believed it was . Although he also said it was meant as a joke when he said , " That wasn 't my idea ! I was on the phone to [Rob Dickins , managing director of Warner Bros.] , just joshing and I said ' Oh , it 's the greatest album ever made . ' And he used it on the poster . " In a 2005 interview for *Record Collector* magazine , Sergeant asked , " Why not ? " . After wondering " what all the fuss was about " , he went on to ask , " Doesn 't every band think that way when they 've got a new record out ? " .

Along with the other four of the band 's first five albums , Ocean Rain was remastered and reissued on CD in 2003 ? these releases were marketed as 25th anniversary editions . Eight bonus tracks were added to the album : " Angels and Devils " , which had been recorded at The Automatt in San Francisco , was the B @-@ side to the single " Silver " and was produced by The Bunnymen and Alan Perman ; five Life at Brian 's ? Lean and Hungry tracks (" All You Need Is Love " , " The Killing Moon " , " Stars Are Stars " , " Villiers Terrace " and " Silver ") which had been recorded for the Channel 4 programme *Play at Home* ; and two live tracks (" My Kingdom " and " Ocean Rain ") which were recorded for *A Crystal Day* , a Channel 4 special for The Tube . The Life at Brian 's ? Lean and Hungry track , " Silver " , and the two *A Crystal Day* tracks had previously been unreleased .

The reissued album in 2003 was produced by Andy Zax and Bill Inglot . A collector 's edition was released in October 2008 which , while still including " Angels and Devils " , replaced the bonus tracks of the 25th anniversary edition with the extended 12 @-@ inch single versions of " Silver " and " The Killing Moon " . The collector 's edition also includes a bonus disc containing a recording

of the band 's 1983 Royal Albert Hall concert .

There were three tracks from the original Ocean Rain album which have been released as singles . The first of these was " The Killing Moon " which was released on 20 January 1984 . The second single was " Silver " which was released on 13 April 1984 . The final single to be released from the original album was " Seven Seas " which was released on 6 July 1984 . This was the first time Echo & the Bunnymen have released more than two singles from one album .

= = Reception = =

The album was released to mixed reviews . Describing Echo & the Bunnymen 's change from the more rock sound of their previous albums to the lighter sound of Ocean Rain , music journalist Max Bell said in his 1984 review for The Times newspaper , " This time vocalist Ian McCulloch has tempered his metaphysical songs with a romantic sweetness and the band 's melodies are more to the fore . Acoustic guitars , brushes and sparingly used keyboards all add to the album 's optimistic warmth and there is a consistency of atmosphere in songs like ' Seven Seas ' and ' Silver ' , the current single , which justifies the departure . "

However , Rolling Stone described the album as " too often a monochromatic dirge of banal existential imagery cloaked around the mere skeleton of a musical idea " . Saying that the album had some nifty choruses and nice atmospheres , the review went on to say it " evinces too little melodic development and too much tortured soul @-@ gazing " . In his 1984 review for NME , Biba Kopf said , " ... Ocean Rain has been designed to buttress the notion of the group 's importance . Not unnaturally the results have the opposite effect . " He went on to criticise McCulloch 's lyrics , which he described as " tired juxtapositions of mysterious buzzwords , nonsense , and banality " , and the music , " mellotron @-@ style wash of strings and bleating wood winds " .

Ocean Rain reached number four on the UK Albums Chart in its first week of release and stayed on the chart for 26 weeks . In the United States it entered the Billboard 200 at number 172 on 9 June 1984 and stayed on the chart for 11 weeks , reaching a peak of number 87 . It entered the Canadian RPM 100 Albums chart at number 89 before it reached a peak of number 41 . Staying on the Swedish chart for three weeks the album reached a peak of number 22 . As of 1984 , Ocean Rain has been certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for having sold more than 100 @,@ 000 copies .

Of the singles from the album ; " The Killing Moon " , which was released on 20 January 1984 , reached number nine on the UK Singles Chart and number seven on the Irish Singles Chart ; " Silver " , released on 13 April 1984 , reached number 30 on the UK Singles Chart and number 14 on the Irish Singles Chart ; and " Seven Seas " , released on 6 July 1984 , reached number 16 on the UK Singles Chart and number 10 on the Irish Singles Chart .

= = Legacy = =

The album still attracts mixed critical commentary . In a highly positive retrospective review on AllMusic , Jason Ankeny gave the album a 5 @-@ star rating . He described the album as " dramatic and majestic " , praising the " sweeping string arrangements and hauntingly evocative production . " He felt that in comparison to the band 's album Porcupine , the " conventional and simple structural parameters " of Ocean Rain made it Echo & the Bunnymen 's " most beautiful and memorable effort " and he asserted that " The Killing Moon " was the band 's " unrivalled pinnacle " .

When reissued in 2003 , Andrew Harrison in Blender described the album as " a portrait of splendid derangement with spectacular orchestrations " . Mojo said the album had " effervescent songs , sympathetically orchestrated " .

In his 2005 book Rip It Up and Start Again : Post Punk 1978 ? 1984 , British music journalist Simon Reynolds describes the album as " lush , orchestrated and [...] overtly erotic " . Mark Blacklock , in Robert Dimery 's 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die , wrote that the album 's confidence , lush strings , romance , warmth and poetry , means that " it stands the test of time better than any

other Bunnymen album " .

Among less positive commentaries , Pitchfork described the album as being " stuffed with queasy midtempo tracks and bizarre orchestration " although they did say that the album was not impenetrable , ultimately giving it an 8 @. @ 6 / 10 . Reviewing the collector 's edition for the BBC , Chris Jones described the album as " the point where the cracks began to show , but were masked with such beauty as to hardly matter " . Jones went on to say how the 35 @- @ piece orchestra helped on tracks such as " Nocturnal Me " but made others , such as " The Yo @- @ Yo Man " , " flounder under the weight of intrusive arrangements " .

= = Ocean Rain tour = =

On 16 September 2008 , Echo & the Bunnymen played a concert at the Royal Albert Hall in London playing the album with the backing of a 16 @- @ piece orchestra . Two similar concerts subsequently took place at Radio City in New York City on 1 October 2008 and at the Liverpool Echo Arena on 27 November 2008 . These concerts were played with a 10 @- @ piece orchestra which was conducted by Rupert Christie . The posters used to advertise the concerts have the image of the band from the cover of the album overlaying an image of the venue . Further concerts took place in Europe and North America during 2009 .

The concerts were received well . Simon O 'Hagan , reviewing the London concert in The Independent , described it as " a moving , memorable evening " and went on to describe McCulloch 's voice as " torn silk " and " magnificent " . Giving the London concert five out of five stars , Angus Batey , writing in The Guardian , described " The Killing Moon " as a " dizzying high " which was " topped by ' Ocean Rain ' itself , where the strings are held back until the end of the second verse so that they hit with a euphoric punch of almost physical intensity , sunny melodic optimism piercing the lyrics ' chiaroscuro of storm clouds and ' blackest thoughts ' . " However , Adam Sweeting , for The Daily Telegraph , said the orchestra " often didn 't add much beyond a vague sonic sludge " .

Reviewing the New York concert for Rolling Stone , Jim Allen described Radio City as an " appropriately dramatic , grandiose setting " , and added that McCulloch " was in fine voice , growling and sneering wondrously " . Reviewing the Liverpool concert , Jade Wright wrote in the Liverpool Echo that McCulloch " was on form ? one part Lou Reed , one part Oliver Reed , with a bit of Jim Morrison thrown in for good measure . "

= = Track listing = =

All tracks written by Will Sergeant , Ian McCulloch , Les Pattinson and Pete de Freitas except where noted .

= = Personnel = =