

= Songs in the Key of X : Music from and Inspired by the X @-@ Files =

Songs in the Key of X : Music from and Inspired by The X @-@ Files is a 1996 compilation album released in association with the American science fiction television series The X @-@ Files . The album contained a mixture of songs that were either featured in the series , or shared thematic elements with it . Songs in the Key of X peaked at No. 47 on the Billboard 200 album sales chart after its release .

The album has received positive reviews from critics , with one review describing it as " easily the most ambitious record ever assembled for a TV soundtrack " . The song " Hands of Death (Burn Baby Burn) " received a nomination for the Grammy Award for Best Metal Performance in 1997 , losing to Rage Against the Machine . The album also features two songs hidden in the pregap before the start of the first track , both recorded by Nick Cave .

= = Production = =

When plans for the album were initially proposed , executives at both Fox Broadcasting Company ? the network responsible for the series ? and Warner Bros. Records began compiling a list of possible inclusions , most of which were eventually rejected . Artists such as Tom Petty , Bruce Springsteen and Seal were approached to possibly contribute material . Although all three were admitted fans of the series , none were able to get involved in the project ? Petty was unable to commit due to a tour , Springsteen was contractually tied to Sony Music Entertainment , while Seal was " snowboarding in South America or somewhere " .

Elvis Costello and Brian Eno 's track , " My Dark Life " , came about as a result of album producer David Was asking Costello to provide a song that would sound like " ' you went into the studio with Brian Eno " ? the two musicians had recently met at a film screening at Paul McCartney 's home , and reconvened to record the song the following week . R.E.M. and author William S. Burroughs collaborated on a new version of " Star Me Kitten " , a song that had originally appeared on the band 's 1992 album Automatic for the People . Rob Zombie has described his collaboration with Alice Cooper on the song " Hands of Death (Burn Baby Burn) " as one of the " great moments where you really feel like you 've made your dreams come true " . Zombie and Cooper were nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Metal Performance in 1997 for the song , losing out to Rage Against the Machine 's " Tire Me " .

Several of the songs on the album were used in episodes of the series . Soul Coughing 's " Unmarked Helicopters " appeared in the fourth season episode " Max " , while Nick Cave 's " Red Right Hand " was heard during the second season episode " Ascension " . Three of the artists featured on the album would also go on to contribute songs to The X @-@ Files : The Album , the soundtrack to the series ' 1998 feature film adaptation ? Foo Fighters ' " Walking After You " , Soul Coughing 's " 16 Horses " and Filter 's " One " .

= = Track listing = =

Producers used the Compact Disc 's pregap , so a listener would have to actually manually rewind the first track a full nine minutes to hear two additional hidden tracks , " Time Jesum Transeuntum Et Non Riverentum " and a cover of The X @-@ Files theme song , both performed by Nick Cave and Dirty Three . This is hinted at in the album 's liner booklet , which notes " Nick Cave and the Dirty Three would like you to know that " 0 " is also a number " . The use of these hidden tracks has been described as " just the sort of surprise one might have suspected from a show that deals in unexplainable mysteries " . Not all CD or DVD players will allow the album to be " rewound " back to these tracks as this violates Red Book standards .

= = Release and reception = =

Songs in the Key of X was released on March 19 , 1996 . It would eventually reach a peak chart

position of 47 in the Billboard 200 album chart on April 13 that same year , spending a total of ten weeks in the chart . The album also spent five weeks in the Swedish Sverigetopplistan charts , peaking at number 42 , and six weeks in the Finland 's Official List chart , reaching a peak at number 24 .

Reviews for Songs in the Key of X were generally positive . Upon the album 's release , Entertainment Weekly 's David Browne rated it a B , calling it " easily the most ambitious record ever assembled for a TV soundtrack " . Browne felt that the contributions to the album by Sheryl Crow and William S. Burroughs were amongst its highlights , though felt that the compilation was " dragged down by ponderous contributions " from Nick Cave and Elvis Costello . AllMusic 's Steven McDonald was mostly positive towards the album , rating it three stars out of five and stating that " while not perfect , the album makes a nice alternative compilation " , noting that it shares the television series ' " blue @-@ light glow of twisted mystery " . McDonald felt that the Foo Fighters cover of Gary Numan 's " Down in the Park " and Elvis Costello 's " My Dark Life " , along with Mark Snow 's theme for the series , were the highlights of the compilation . Sandy Masuo , writing for the Los Angeles Times , rated the album three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four , finding that the compilation 's " unsettling ambience " suited the " deliciously creepy " atmosphere of the series . Masuo felt that the collaborations between R.E.M. and William S. Burroughs , and Elvis Costello and Brian Eno , ultimately turned out to be " more interesting in theory than in practice " ; although adding that " Down in the Park " was the best track present on the compilation , with the contributions of Rob Zombie , Alice Cooper and P.M. Dawn also noted as highlights .

A review for the album in The Independent noted that none of the songs " can really hold a candle to Cave 's " Red Right Hand " in capturing the show 's sense of fatalistic futility " , adding that there seemed to be " a shared soul thing " between Cave and Carter . Ted Cox , writing for the Daily Herald , described the album as " a who 's who of modern rock " . Cox rated the album three stars out of five , noting that " most of the material hits the fair @-@ to @-@ middling quality level of a neglected album cut or a good B @-@ side " ; adding , however , that the album 's overall " atmosphere of paranoia and alienation " helped to tie it together . Writing for The Buffalo News , Anthony Violanti rated the album four stars out of five , calling it " a strange , delightful trip " . Violanti felt that " Star Me Kitten " was the album 's best song , and that Danzig 's " Deep " was its " weakest cut " . Writing for the Los Angeles Daily News , Fred Shuster felt that compared to other television tie @-@ ins that " aren 't worth the aluminum they 're recorded on " , Songs in the Key of X " is a rare exception because of the unusual quality and rarity of the tracks " . Shuster rated the album three stars out of five , describing it as " more imaginative than the show that inspired it " .