

= Station to Station =

Station to Station is the tenth studio album by English musician David Bowie , released by RCA Records in 1976 . Commonly regarded as one of his most significant works , Station to Station was the vehicle for his last distinct performance persona , the Thin White Duke . The album was recorded after he completed shooting Nicolas Roeg 's The Man Who Fell to Earth , and the cover artwork featured a still from the movie . During the sessions Bowie was heavily dependent on drugs , especially cocaine , and later claimed that he recalled almost nothing of the production .

Musically , Station to Station was a transitional album for Bowie , developing the funk and soul music of his previous release , Young Americans , while presenting a new direction towards synthesisers and motorik rhythms that was influenced by German electronic bands such as Neu ! and Kraftwerk . This trend culminated in some of his most acclaimed work , the so @-@ called " Berlin Trilogy " , recorded with Brian Eno in 1977 ? 79 . Bowie himself said that Station to Station was " a plea to come back to Europe for me " . The album 's lyrics reflected his preoccupations with Friedrich Nietzsche , Aleister Crowley , mythology and religion .

Blending funk and krautrock , romantic balladry and occultism , Station to Station has been described as " simultaneously one of Bowie 's most accessible albums and his most impenetrable " . Preceded by the single " Golden Years " , it made the top five in both the UK and US charts . In 2003 , the album was ranked No. 323 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time .

= = Background = =

According to biographer David Buckley , the Los Angeles @-@ based David Bowie , fuelled by an " astronomic " cocaine habit and subsisting on a diet of peppers and milk , spent much of 1975 ? 76 " in a state of psychic terror " . Stories ? mostly from one interview , pieces of which found their way into Playboy and Rolling Stone ? circulated of the singer living in a house full of ancient Egyptian artefacts , burning black candles , seeing bodies fall past his window , having his semen stolen by witches , receiving secret messages from The Rolling Stones , and living in morbid fear of fellow Aleister Crowley aficionado Jimmy Page . Bowie would later say of L.A. , " The fucking place should be wiped off the face of the earth " .

It was on the set of his first major film , The Man Who Fell to Earth , that Bowie began writing a pseudo @-@ autobiography called The Return of the Thin White Duke . He was also composing music on the understanding that he was to provide the picture 's soundtrack , though this would not come to fruition . (At Bowie 's recommendation , John Phillips of the Mamas and the Papas would write and produce all the original music for the film instead .) Director Nicolas Roeg warned the star that the part of Thomas Jerome Newton would likely remain with him for some time after production completed . With Roeg 's agreement , Bowie developed his own look for the film , and this carried through to his public image and onto two album covers over the next twelve months , as did Newton 's air of fragility and aloofness .

The Thin White Duke became the mouthpiece for Station to Station and , often during the next six months , for Bowie himself . Impeccably dressed in white shirt , black trousers and waistcoat , the Duke was a hollow man who sang songs of romance with an agonised intensity , yet felt nothing ? " ice masquerading as fire " . The persona has been described as " a mad aristocrat " , " an amoral zombie " , and " an emotionless Aryan superman " . For Bowie himself , the Duke was " a nasty character indeed " .

= = Production = =

Station to Station was recorded in late 1975 at Cherokee Studios , Los Angeles . In 1981 , NME editors Roy Carr and Charles Shaar Murray surmised that it was cut ? " in 10 days of feverish activity " ? when Bowie decided that there was no hope of his producing a soundtrack for The Man Who Fell to Earth . More recent scholarship contends that the album was recorded over a couple of

months ? with the sessions beginning in late September or early October 1975 and ending in late November ? so that it was in the can before Bowie began his abortive sessions on the soundtrack .

At various times to be titled *The Return of the Thin White Duke* , or *Golden Years* , *Station to Station* was co @-@ produced by Harry Maslin , Bowie 's associate for " *Fame* " and " *Across the Universe* " on *Young Americans* . Tony Visconti , who after a three @-@ year absence had recently returned to the Bowie fold mixing *Diamond Dogs* and co @-@ producing *David Live* and *Young Americans* , was not involved due to competing schedules . However , the recording did cement the band line @-@ up that would see Bowie through the rest of the decade , with bassist George Murray joining *Young Americans* drummer Dennis Davis and rhythm guitarist Carlos Alomar .

The recording process developed with this team set the pattern for Bowie 's albums up to and including *Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)* in 1980 : backing tracks laid down by Murray , Davis and Alomar ; saxophone , keyboard and lead guitar overdubs (here by Bowie , Roy Bittan and Earl Slick , respectively) ; lead vocals ; and finally various production tricks to complete the song . According to Bowie , " I got some quite extraordinary things out of Earl Slick . I think it captured his imagination to make noises on guitar , and textures , rather than playing the right notes . " Alomar recalled , " It was one of the most glorious albums that I 've ever done ... We experimented so much on it " . Harry Maslin added , " I loved those sessions because we were totally open and experimental in our approach " .

Bowie himself remembered almost nothing of the album 's production , not even the studio , later admitting , " I know it was in LA because I 've read it was " . The singer was not alone in his use of cocaine during the sessions , Carlos Alomar commenting , " if there 's a line of coke which is going to keep you awake till 8 a.m. so that you can do your guitar part , you do the line of coke ... the coke use is driven by the inspiration . " Like Bowie , Earl Slick had somewhat vague memories of the recording : " That album 's a little fuzzy ? for the obvious reasons ! We were in the studio and it was nuts ? a lot of hours , a lot of late nights . "

The sleeve front cover used a black @-@ and @-@ white still from *The Man Who Fell to Earth* , in which Bowie , as the character Thomas Jerome Newton , steps into the space capsule that will return him to his home planet . Bowie had insisted on the cropped black @-@ and @-@ white image as he felt that in the original coloured full @-@ size image the sky looked artificial ; when Rykodisc reissued Bowie 's catalogue in the early 1990s the colour version was used . The back cover showed Bowie sketching the Kabbalah Sephirot with chalk ? something he had been doing on the set of the film .

= = Style and themes = =

Station to Station is often cited as a transitional album in Bowie 's career . Nicholas Pegg , author of *The Complete David Bowie* , called it a " precise halfway point on the journey from *Young Americans* to *Low* " , while for Roy Carr and Charles Shaar Murray , it " effectively divides the ' 70s for David Bowie . It ties off the era of Ziggy Stardust and plastic soul , and introduces the first taste of the new music that was to follow with *Low* . "

In terms of Bowie 's own output , *Station to Station* 's Euro @-@ centric flavour had its musical antecedents in tracks like " *Aladdin Sane* 1913 @-@ 1938 @-@ 197 ? " and " *Time* " (1973) , while its funk / disco elements were a development of the soul / R & B sound of *Young Americans* (1975) . More recently Bowie had begun to soak up the influence of krautrock and electronic music by bands like Neu ! , Can , and Kraftwerk . Thematically the album revisited concepts dealt with in songs such as " *The Supermen* " from *The Man Who Sold the World* (1970) and " *Quicksand* " from *Hunky Dory* (1971) : Nietzsche 's ' *Overman* ' , the occultism of Aleister Crowley , Nazi fascination with Grail mythology , and the Kabbalah . Pegg considered the album 's theme to be a clash of " occultism and Christianity " .

AllMusic 's Stephen Thomas Erlewine wrote that , " at its heart , *Station to Station* is an avant @-@ garde art @-@ rock album , most explicitly on " *TVC 15* " and the epic sprawl of the title track . " The musical style of " *Golden Years* " , the first track recorded for the album , built on the funk and soul of *Young Americans* but with a harsher , grinding edge . It has been described as carrying with it "

an air of regret for missed opportunities and past pleasures " . Bowie said that it was written for ? and rejected by ? Elvis Presley , while Bowie 's wife at the time Angie claimed it was penned for her . Though a top ten single on both sides of the Atlantic , it was rarely performed live on the subsequent Station to Station tour . " Stay " was another riff @-@ driven funk piece , " recorded very much in our cocaine frenzy " , according to Alomar . Its lyrics have been variously interpreted as reflecting on " the uncertainty of sexual conquest " , and as an example of " the Duke 's spurious romanticism " .

The Christian element of the album was most obvious in the hymn @-@ like " Word on a Wing " , though for some commentators religion , like love , was simply another way for the Duke to " test his numbness " . Bowie himself has claimed that in this song , at least , " the passion is genuine " . When performing it live in 1999 , the singer described it as coming from " the darkest days of my life ... I 'm sure that it was a call for help " . The closing ballad , " Wild Is the Wind " , was the album 's sole cover , and has been praised as one of the finest vocal performances of Bowie 's career . Bowie was inspired to record it after he met singer / pianist / songwriter Nina Simone (whose version is on the eponymous 1966 album) .

The spectre of The Man Who Fell to Earth 's Thomas Jerome Newton sprawled in front of dozens of television monitors is said to have partly inspired the album 's most upbeat track , " TVC15 " . Supposedly also about Iggy Pop 's girlfriend being eaten by a TV set , it has been called " incongruously jolly " and " the most oblique tribute to The Yardbirds imaginable " .

The title track has been described as heralding " a new era of experimentalism " for Bowie . " Station to Station " was in two parts : a slow , portentous piano @-@ driven march , introduced by the sound of an approaching train juxtaposed with Earl Slick 's agitated guitar feedback , followed by an up @-@ tempo rock / blues section . In 1999 Bowie told UNCUT magazine , " Since Station To Station the hybridization of R & B and electronics had been a goal of mine " . Despite the noise of a train in the opening moments , Bowie says that the title refers not so much to railway stations as to the Stations of the Cross , while the line " From Kether to Malkuth " relates to mystical places in the Kabbalah , mixing Christian and Jewish allusions . Fixation with the occult was further evident in such phrases as " white stains " , the name of a book of poetry by Aleister Crowley . The lyrics also gave notice of Bowie 's recent drug use (" It 's not the side effects of the cocaine / I 'm thinking that it must be love ") . With its krautrock influence , it was the album 's clearest foretaste of Bowie 's subsequent ' Berlin Trilogy ' .

Speaking to Creem magazine in 1977 , Bowie proclaimed that Station to Station was " devoid of spirit ... Even the love songs are detached , but I think it 's fascinating . "

= = Singles and unreleased tracks = =

Every song on Station to Station eventually appeared on a single . " Golden Years " was released in November 1975 , two months before the album . Bowie allegedly got drunk to perform it on TV for the American show Soul Train , resulting in the film clip seen on music video programmes . It reached No. 8 in the UK and No. 10 in the US (where it charted for sixteen weeks) but , like " Rebel Rebel " ' s relationship to Diamond Dogs (1974) , was a somewhat unrepresentative teaser for the album to come .

The title track was released as a promo 7 @-@ inch single in January 1976 . The single was exclusively released in France and featured a shortened version of the track , lasting just over three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half minutes , on the a @-@ side as well as the album version of " TVC 15 " on the b @-@ side . The single did not chart in any countries .

" TVC 15 " was released in edited form as the second single in May 1976 , reaching No. 33 in the UK and No. 64 stateside . " Stay " , also shortened and appearing the same month , was issued as a companion 45 to RCA 's Changesonebowie greatest hits collection , though it did not appear on the compilation (Changesonebowie was itself packaged as a uniform edition to Station to Station , featuring a black @-@ and @-@ white cover and similar lettering) . In November 1981 , as Bowie 's relationship with RCA was winding down , " Wild Is the Wind " was issued as a single to push the Changestwobowie compilation . Backed with " Word on a Wing " and accompanied by a video shot

especially for the release , it made No. 24 in the UK and charted for ten weeks .

Another song purportedly recorded during the album sessions at Cherokee Studios , a cover of Bruce Springsteen 's " It 's Hard to Be a Saint in the City " , went unreleased at the time but was issued in 1990 on the Sound + Vision box set . Harry Maslin and Carlos Alomar have claimed that they never recorded the song during the Cherokee sessions , while Tony Visconti believes that the song most likely consisted of overdubs to a track originally cut at Olympic and Island Studios during the Diamond Dogs sessions , with Aynsley Dunbar on drums , Herbie Flowers on bass and Mike Garson on keyboards . The song would later be re @-@ released on The Best of David Bowie 1974 / 1979 .

= = Release and reception = =

Station to Station was released in January 1976 . Billboard considered that Bowie had " found his musical niche " following songs like " Fame " and " Golden Years " but that " the 10 @-@ minute title cut drags " . NME called it " one of the most significant albums released in the last five years " and named it the second greatest album of the year . Both found the meaning of the lyrics difficult to fathom . In his consumer guide for The Village Voice , critic Robert Christgau gave the album an A rating , indicating " a great record both of whose sides offer enduring pleasure and surprise . You should own it " . Christgau wrote that Bowie " can merge Lou Reed , disco , and Huey Smith " and found the album a progression from his previous albums , stating " Miraculously , Bowie 's attraction to black music has matured ; even more miraculously , the new relationship seems to have left his hard @-@ and @-@ heavy side untouched " .

Rolling Stone writer Teri Moris applauded the album 's ' rockier ' moments but discerned a move away from the genre , finding it " the thoughtfully professional effort of a style @-@ conscious artist whose ability to write and perform demanding rock & roll exists comfortably alongside his fascination for diverse forms ... while there 's little doubt about his skill , one wonders how long he 'll continue wrestling with rock at all " . Circus , noting that Bowie was " never one to maintain continuity in his work or in his life " , declared that Station to Station " offers cryptic , expressionistic glimpses that let us feel the contours and palpitations of the masquer 's soul but never fully reveal his face . " The review also found various allusions to earlier Bowie efforts , such as the " density " of The Man Who Sold the World , the " pop feel " of Hunky Dory , the " dissonance and angst " of Aladdin Sane , the " compelling percussion " of Young Americans , and the " youthful mysticism " of " Wild Eyed Boy from Freecloud " , concluding that " it shows Bowie pulling out on the most challenging leg of his winding journey " .

Station to Station was Bowie 's highest @-@ charting album in the US until 2013 's The Next Day , reaching No. 3 and remaining for 32 weeks . It was certified gold by the RIAA on 26 February 1976 . In the UK , it charted for seventeen weeks , peaking at No. 5 , the last time one of his studio albums placed lower in his home country than in America .

= = Aftermath = =

With the Station to Station sessions completed in December 1975 , Bowie started work on a soundtrack for The Man Who Fell to Earth with Paul Buckmaster as his collaborator . Bowie expected to be wholly responsible for the film 's music but found that " when I 'd finished five or six pieces , I was then told that if I would care to submit my music along with some other people 's ... and I just said " Shit , you 're not getting any of it " . I was so furious , I 'd put so much work into it . " Notwithstanding , Harry Maslin argued that Bowie was " burned out " and couldn 't complete the work in any case . The singer eventually collapsed , admitting later , " There were pieces of me laying all over the floor " . In the event , only one instrumental composed for the soundtrack saw the light of day , evolving into " Subterraneans " on his next studio album , Low .

After abandoning the soundtrack album , Bowie went on tour in support of Station to Station , commencing 2 February 1976 and completing on 18 May 1976 . Kraftwerk 's " Radioactivity " was employed as an overture to the shows , accompanying footage from Luis Buñuel 's and Salvador

Dalí 's surrealist film *Un Chien Andalou* . The staging featured Bowie , dressed in the Duke 's habitual black waistcoat and trousers , a pack of Gitanes placed ostentatiously in his pocket , moving stiffly among " curtains of white light " , an effect that spawned the nickname ' the White Light Tour ' . In 1989 Bowie reflected , " I wanted to go back to a kind of Expressionist German @-@ film look ... and the lighting of , say , Fritz Lang or Pabst . A black @-@ and @-@ white movies look , but with an intensity that was sort of aggressive . I think for me , personally , theatrically , that was the most successful tour I ? ve ever done . " The Station to Station tour was the source of one of the artist 's best @-@ known bootlegs , culled from an FM radio broadcast of his 23 March 1976 concert at Nassau Coliseum .

Bowie drew criticism during the tour for his alleged pro @-@ fascist views . In a 1974 interview he had declared , " Adolf Hitler was one of the first rock stars ... quite as good as Jagger ... He staged a country " , but managed to avoid condemnation . On the Station to Station tour , however , a series of incidents attracted publicity , starting in April 1976 with his detention by customs in Eastern Europe for possession of Nazi memorabilia . The same month he was quoted in Stockholm as saying that " Britain could benefit from a Fascist leader " . Bowie would blame his addictions and the persona of the Thin White Duke for his lapses in judgment . The controversy culminated on 2 May 1976 , shortly before the tour completed , in the so @-@ called ' Victoria Station incident ' in London , when Bowie arrived in an open @-@ top Mercedes convertible and apparently gave a Nazi salute to the crowd that was captured on film and published in NME . Bowie claimed that the photographer simply caught him in mid @-@ wave , a contention backed by a young Gary Numan who was among the throng that day : " Think about it . If a photographer takes a whole motor @-@ driven film of someone doing a wave , you will get a Nazi salute at the end of each arm @-@ sweep . All you need is some dickhead at a music paper or whatever to make an issue out it ... " The stigma remained , however , to the extent that the lines " To be insulted by these fascists / It 's so degrading " from Scary Monsters ' opening track " It 's No Game " , four years later , were interpreted as an attempt to bury the incident once and for all .

= = Legacy = =

Station to Station was a milestone in Bowie 's transition to his late 1970s ' Berlin Trilogy ' . Bowie himself has said of the album , " As far as the music goes , Low and its siblings were a direct follow @-@ on from the title track " , while Brian Eno opined that Low was " very much a continuation from Station to Station " . It has also been described as " enormously influential on post @-@ punk " . Roy Carr and Charles Shaar Murray wrote in 1981 , " If Low was Gary Numan 's Bowie album , then Station to Station was Magazine 's . " However , Stylus declared in 2004 that " just as few had anticipated Bowie ? s approach , few copied it ... for the most part this is an orphaned , abandoned style " .

More than twenty years after its release , Bowie considered both Station to Station and Low " great , damn good " albums , but due to his disconnected state during its recording , listened to Station to Station " as a piece of work by an entirely different person " . He elaborated :

In 1999 , music biographer David Buckley described Station to Station as a " masterpiece of invention " that " some critics would argue , perhaps unfashionably , is his finest record " . The same year , Eno called it " one of the great records of all time " . In 2003 , the album was ranked No. 323 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time . A year later , The Observer ranked the album No. 80 on its list of the 100 greatest British albums .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by David Bowie , except where noted .

= = = CD releases = = =

The album has been released several times on CD , the first being in 1985 by RCA , with the

original black @-@ and @-@ white cover art . The album was released again in 1991 by Rykodisc , with two , live bonus tracks . A 1999 rerelease by EMI featured 24 @-@ bit digitally remastered sound and no bonus tracks . The 1991 and 1999 rereleases used colour cover art . EMI Japan replicated the original , black @-@ and @-@ white artwork on a 2007 release . The album was released by EMI in Special and Deluxe Editions in 2010 , both of which presented the album in a mini @-@ LP @-@ replica sleeve , within a larger box .

= = = 2010 reissues = = =

A deluxe edition was released in 2010 , including a Dolby 5 @. @ 1 mix of the album and the entire 1976 Nassau Coliseum show on two CDs . On 1 July 2010 , Bowie 's official website announced the contents of the reissues , which was then released on 20 September .

= = = Special edition and digital download = = =

The special edition features three CDs in a special CD sized packaging , including a 16 @-@ page booklet and three photocards . The digital download edition includes the same audio content and a bonus track .

2010 transfer of Station to Station from the original stereo analogue master ; CD in mini @-@ LP @-@ replica sleeve .

Recorded live at the Nassau Coliseum , Uniondale , New York , U.S. on 23 March 1976 ; CDs in gatefold wallet .

Recorded live at the Nassau Coliseum , Uniondale , New York , U.S. on 23 March 1976 .

= = = Deluxe edition = = =

The deluxe edition features five CDs , one DVD and three 12 " LPs in a sturdy box lined with studio @-@ style acoustic foam reminiscent of the sleeve photo background . It also includes a 24 @-@ page booklet , a poster and two folders of replica collectible material .

CD 1 : Station to Station 2010 transfer

CD 2 : Station to Station 1985 CD master

CD 3 : Station to Station single edits five track EP

" Golden Years "

" TVC 15 "

" Stay "

" Word on a Wing " (First time on CD)

" Station to Station " (Previously unreleased version)

CD 4 & 5 : Live Nassau Coliseum ' 76

DVD

Station to Station (Original analogue master , 96 kHz / 24 bit LPCM stereo)

Station to Station (New Harry Maslin mix , 96 kHz / 24 bit DTS 5 @. @ 1 surround sound mix)

Station to Station (New Harry Maslin mix , 48 kHz / 24 bit Dolby Digital 5 @. @ 1 AC3 surround sound mix)

Station to Station (New Harry Maslin mix , 48 kHz / 24 bit LPCM stereo)

LP 1 : Heavyweight 12 " of Station to Station from the original stereo analogue master in replica sleeve

LP 2 & 3 : Heavyweight 12 " s of Live Nassau Coliseum ' 76 in gatefold sleeve

24 @-@ page booklet including text and rare photographs

David Bowie on Stage 1976 replica collectibles folder (for example , a backstage pass)

1976 Fan Club Folder replica collectibles folder (for example , two badges / pins)

Fold @-@ out Poster

= = Personnel = =

== Musicians ==

David Bowie ? vocals , guitar , tenor and alto saxophone , Moog synthesiser , Mellotron

Carlos Alomar ? guitar

Roy Bittan ? piano

Dennis Davis ? drums

George Murray ? bass guitar

Warren Peace ? backing vocals

Earl Slick ? guitar

On Live Nassau Coliseum ' 76 :

David Bowie - vocals

Stacey Heydon - lead guitar , backing vocals

Carlos Alomar - rhythm guitar , backing vocals

George Murray - bass , backing vocals

Tony Kaye - keyboards

Dennis Davis - drums , percussion

== Production ==

David Bowie ? producer

Harry Maslin ? producer

Steve Shapiro ? photography

== Charts ==

== Certifications ==