

= Why Should the Fire Die ? =

Why Should The Fire Die ? is the third major album release and fifth album overall by progressive acoustic trio Nickel Creek . The album was released on Sugar Hill on August 9 , 2005 in the United States , and on August 8 in the United Kingdom . Why Should the Fire Die ? is the first Nickel Creek album to feature string bassist Mark Schatz .

The album peaked at # 17 on the Billboard 200 , making it the highest charting Nickel Creek album on the chart to date . Why Should the Fire Die ? also topped both the magazine 's Top Internet Albums and Top Bluegrass Albums charts . By November 2006 , the album had sold 258 @, @ 784 copies . The album earned Nickel Creek two Grammy Award nominations : the award for Best Contemporary Folk Album , an award which they previously won for This Side , and the award for Best Country Instrumental Performance (" Scotch & Chocolate ") .

Why Should the Fire Die ? was praised by contemporary music critics primarily for its creativity , and for its instrumental quality , with one critic complimenting the album 's " sheer musical brilliance " .

= = Conception and production = =

In the time that Nickel Creek spent writing songs for Why Should the Fire Die ? , numerous songs did not make the cut , and only fourteen were used in the final draft of the album . When discussing the album , Sean Watkins said that the band " did so much co @-@ writing together and filtering . I mean there ? s like 30 songs that didn ? t get used . " After writing the songs , Sara Watkins said in her online journal that the trio spent five days " going over the details of the arrangements on each of the seventeen songs we 're seriously considering for the record and making good demos of each of them " . The band started recording the album in November 2004 , and the album was " completed , mixed , and mastered " by April 2005 .

The recording for Why Should the Fire Die ? took place at Barefoot Recording in Los Angeles , California . In an interview with Rolling Stone , Thile said : " The studio needs to be dark . I don 't want to be reminded by my surroundings that what I 'm singing about isn 't happening right then . I like to really dissolve into the story . But the Jamesons I use more for keeping my vocal cords relaxed and clear . "

The release of Why Should the Fire Die ? marked the first major Nickel Creek release with Alison Krauss absent as a producer . The album 's producing duties were carried out by Tony Berg and former Smash Mouth producer Eric Valentine . Sara Watkins stated in an interview with Paste Magazine that the producer change made for a " more congruent project overall " . The band attributed much of the credit for their morphing sound to both their new producers and Krauss . The album was not recorded digitally , but in a more old @-@ fashioned way using Telefunken microphones , and the special effects in the fiddle on the track " First and Last Waltz " was reel tape delay .

= = Songs = =

" When in Rome " , the opening track on Why Should the Fire Die ? , was chosen as the lead , and only single . The song 's title alludes to the American proverb " When in Rome , do as the Romans do " , and Chris Thile , the song 's author , said " The idea behind the song ? and I do love it ! - is if there is something better , it 's worth leaning towards just a little bit because you 'll have a great time here regardless . " Critics commented on the song favorably , with George Graham saying that " When in Rome " has " rock energy level and some sonic manipulation , with hints of old @-@ time Appalachian music in the fiddle , while the lyrics are definitely in the rock mode . "

The second track , " Somebody More Like You " was written by guitarist Sean Watkins . The break @-@ up song , written from Watkins ' perspective , was described as " scathing " , and like " Aimee Mann @-@ style modern pop " , with lyrics like " I hope you meet someone your height so you can see eye to eye / With someone as small as you " . Watkins said the song wasn 't written for anyone

in particular , but said " I had this clever line and decided to build a song around it . " " Jealous of the Moon " , the third track , was co -@-@ written by Chris Thile and Gary Louris of Jayhawks fame . This song was released as a promotional single in the United States . The fourth track and first instrumental on Why Should the Fire Die ? , " Scotch & Chocolate " , earned Nickel Creek a Grammy Award nomination for Best Country Instrumental . However , the song lost to the trio 's former record producer Alison Krauss with her band Union Station for " Unionhouse Branch " , from the band 's twelfth album , Lonely Runs Both Ways . As with the first three songs on the album , critics responded favorably to " Scotch & Chocolate " . Rolling Stone considered the song to be " Celtic @-@ infused " , Slant Magazine named it the best song on the album , and Stylus Magazine called it a " brisk , lively instrumental " . The latter also said the song was " every bit as physically exciting as Shooter Jennings or Big and Rich . "

" Can 't Complain " , a Chris Thile @-@ composed piece , was the fifth track on Why Should the Fire Die ? . According to Sean Watkins , the song was written by Thile " from the point of view of a friend " . Unlike the first four songs on the album , the song received mixed reviews . Being There called it " nothing more than a generic ballad with little merit " , and PopMatters said that it was a " one @-@ too @-@ many Thile tune about screwed @-@ up relationships " . However , some critics found it amazing ; Village Voice called the song a " lushly arpeggiated ballad " . The sixth track , a Bob Dylan cover , " Tomorrow is a Long Time " , was the only track on the album not composed at least partially by one of the members of Nickel Creek . The track had previously been covered by " Watkins Family Hour " , a duo that consists of Sara Watkins and Sean Watkins , at their home base of Largo in Los Angeles . Both the album version and the live Watkins Family Hour version feature Sara Watkins as the lead vocalist . Watkins was heavily praised for her " graceful " and " beautifully " sung rendition of the song . " Eveline " , a tribute to the James Joyce short story of the same name , was the seventh track on the album . A Thile @-@ Sean Watkins composed piece , " Eveline " has been said to feature " irregular tunings " , and vocal harmonization that is similar to that on Radiohead 's OK Computer . Allmusic cited this track as the " brooding centerpiece " of the album .

The eighth song and second instrumental on Why Should the Fire Die ? , " Stumptown " , was written by Chris Thile . The song was written as a tribute to Stumptown Coffee Roasters , Chris Thile 's favorite coffee house in the world . " Stumptown " is also the album 's shortest song , at one minute and forty three seconds . " Anthony " , the ninth track , is the only song recorded by Nickel Creek that was written solely by Sara Watkins . " Anthony " , which features a ukulele melody , was described by several critics to be " old @-@ timey " . One of three Thile @-@ Watkins @-@ Watkins composed pieces on the album , " Best Of Luck " was the tenth track on Why Should the Fire Die ? . Sara Watkins had the lead vocal for " Best Of Luck " , and was complimented by critics for her " snippy " and " assertive " vocal. prefix Magazine pegged the song to be the formula that makes " this album , and trio , unstoppable " . The eleventh track , " Doubting Thomas " , was written by Chris Thile and is named after Doubting Thomas , a biblical term . All the members of Nickel Creek came from devout Christian families , and the song is about questioning faith . The third and final instrumental , " First and Last Waltz " , is Why Should the Fire Die ? 's twelfth track . One of the three songs written by all of Nickel Creek 's members , it comes before the penultimate track , " Helena " . At Nickel Creek 's concerts , the song was played as a segue into " Helena " . The album recording of " First And Last Waltz " has been called a " chilly effects @-@ draped recital piece " , due to its use of sound effects . " Helena " , the penultimate track , was written by Chris Thile . Producer Eric Valentine provided drumming duties for this song . Thile described the track to be what he considered " the ultimate climax " of Why Should the Fire Die ? , and some contemporary critics found the song to be the highlight of the album . The final song on Why Should the Fire Die ? , the title track , is a slow waltz . PopMatters described the song as being " gorgeously sung " , but " an odd choice to conclude a record that is so often bidding for the true fun of pop music " .

= = Critical reception = =

For the majority , Why Should the Fire Die ? received positive reviews from United States contemporary music critics . PopMatters said that the album was " hardly the stuff of mountain

music ", and Village Voice described it to be " much sleeker , sexier , and more carefully assembled than work by the competition . " A review from the Houston Chronicle also stated that Why Should the Fire Die ? is " like Wilco with country rock and Radiohead with guitar riff rock , " and that " the trio has successfully proved the vitality of creative Darwinism . " Some critics even went as far as to call the album 's musical genre " emo @-@ grass " .

The album also received much critical praise for its instrumental strength , with BBC stating that " what shines through immediately is the sheer musical brilliance . " The magazine Being There said that " like any good bluegrass band , Nickel Creek proves capable of playing rousing instrumentals . " BBC also discussed the difference between the three instrumentals featured on the album , stating " " First And Last Waltz " is smooth and dreamy , " Stumptown " is a merry little jig , and " Scotch And Chocolate " is just reel @-@ y (sic) good . "

Reviews for Why Should the Fire Die ? also included praise of the album 's vocals , particularly Sara Watkins ' " snippy " , " beautifully sung " and " assertive " vocals on various tracks , and the trio 's vocal harmonization was also complimented .

= = Track listing = =

" When in Rome " (Thile) ? 4 : 14
" Somebody More Like You " (Sean Watkins) ? 3 : 01
" Jealous of the Moon " (Gary Louris , Thile) ? 4 : 41
" Scotch & Chocolate " (instrumental) (Thile , Sara Watkins) ? 3 : 07
" Can 't Complain " (Thile) ? 5 : 34
" Tomorrow Is a Long Time " (Bob Dylan) ? 3 : 36
" Eveline " (Thile , Sean Watkins) ? 3 : 11
" Stumptown " (instrumental) (Thile) ? 1 : 43
" Anthony " (Sara Watkins) ? 1 : 55
" Best of Luck " (Thile , Sean Watkins , Sara Watkins) ? 3 : 22
" Doubting Thomas " (Thile) ? 3 : 19
" First and Last Waltz " (instrumental) (Thile , Sean Watkins , Sara Watkins) ? 1 : 53
" Helena " (Thile) ? 4 : 45
" Why Should the Fire Die ? " (Thile , Sean Watkins , Sara Watkins) ? 2 : 50

= = Chart performance = =

= = Personnel = =

= = = Nickel Creek = = =

Chris Thile ? mandolin , vocals , mandola , bouzouki , banjo , tenor guitar , stomping
Sara Watkins ? fiddle , vocals , ukulele , stomping
Sean Watkins ? guitars , vocals , piano , bouzouki , stomping

= = = Other musicians = = =

Mark Schatz ? bass , stomping
Eric Valentine ? drums

= = Credits = =