

= Amnesiac ( album ) =

Amnesiac is the fifth studio album by the English rock band Radiohead , released on 5 June 2001 internationally by Parlophone and in the United States by Capitol Records . Recorded during the same sessions for the band 's previous album Kid A ( 2000 ) and produced by Nigel Godrich , the album incorporates similar influences of electronic music , 20th century classical music , jazz and krautrock . Its lyrics and artwork explore themes influenced by ancient Greek and Egyptian mythology . Bassist Colin Greenwood described Amnesiac as having " more traditional Radiohead @-@ type songs together with more experimental , non @-@ lyrical based instrumental @-@ type stuff as well . " Singer Thom Yorke described it as " another take on Kid A , a form of explanation . " Three singles were released from the album , which were " Pyramid Song " , " I Might Be Wrong " and " Knives Out " .

The album debuted at # 1 on the UK Albums Chart and # 2 on the US Billboard 200 chart , and has sold over 900 @, @ 000 copies worldwide as of October 2008 . Though many critics considered it inferior to Kid A , Amnesiac received positive reviews and in 2012 Rolling Stone ranked the album at number 320 in their updated version of The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time .

= = Recording = =

Almost all of Amnesiac was recorded during the same sessions as its predecessor , Kid A , released eight months earlier in October 2000 . The sessions took place in Paris , Copenhagen , and in Radiohead 's Oxfordshire studio from January 1999 to mid @-@ 2000 . Unlike Radiohead 's previous " anthemic " rock albums , the sessions saw influences from electronic music , classical music , jazz and krautrock , using synthesisers , drum machines , ondes Martenot ( an early electronic instrument ) , strings and brass . Drummer Phil Selway said the Kid A and Amnesiac sessions had " two frames of mind ... a tension between our old approach of all being in a room playing together and the other extreme of manufacturing music in the studio . I think Amnesiac comes out stronger in the band @-@ arrangement way . " Strings , arranged by Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood , were performed by the Orchestra of St John 's and recorded in Dorchester Abbey , a 12th @-@ century church about five miles from Radiohead 's studio .

The sessions produced more than twenty finished tracks . Radiohead considered releasing them as a series of EPs or a double album , but struggled to find a track listing that satisfied them . Guitarist Ed O 'Brien felt the material was too dense for a double album , and that listeners might skip tracks . Singer Thom Yorke said Radiohead split the work into two albums because " they cancel each other out as overall finished things . They come from two different places , I think ... In some weird way I think Amnesiac gives another take on Kid A , a form of explanation . " The band stressed that they saw Amnesiac not as a collection of B @-@ sides or " leftovers " from Kid A but an album in its own right .

Only one track , " Life in a Glasshouse " , was recorded after Kid A was released . In late 2000 , Greenwood wrote to jazz trumpeter Humphrey Lyttelton to ask the Humphrey Lyttelton Band to play on the song , explaining that Radiohead were " a bit stuck " . Greenwood told MOJO : " We realised that we couldn 't play jazz . You know , we 've always been a band of great ambition with limited playing abilities . " Lyttelton agreed to help after his daughter showed him Radiohead 's 1997 album OK Computer .

= = Music and lyrics = =

" Packt Like Sardines in a Crushd Tin Box " is an electronic song built from compressed loops and vocals manipulated with pitch @-@ correcting processor Auto @-@ Tune to create a " nasal , depersonalised sound . " " Pyramid Song " was inspired by the Charlie Mingus song " Freedom " , with lyrics inspired by an exhibition of ancient Egyptian underworld art Yorke attended while the band was recording in Copenhagen and ideas of cyclical time discussed by Stephen Hawking and Buddhism . Selway said the song " ran counter to what had come before in Radiohead in lots of

ways ... The constituent parts are all quite simple , but I think the way that they then blend gives real depth to the song . "

" Pulk / Pull Revolving Doors " was built on a Roland MC @-@ 505 sequencer with loops of found sounds recorded in the OK Computer sessions . The band disabled the erase heads on their tape recorders so that the tape head repeatedly recorded over itself , creating a " ghostly " repeating melody . " The band used Auto @-@ Tune again to process speech into melody . Yorke described " You and Whose Army ? " as being " about someone who is elected into power by people and who then blatantly betrays them ? just like Blair did . " Attempting to capture the " soft , warm , proto @-@ doowop sound " of the 1940s harmony group the Ink Spots , Radiohead muffled microphones with eggboxes and used the ondes Martenot 's resonating palme diffuseur loudspeaker to treat the vocals .

MOJO described " I Might Be Wrong " as a " venomous guitar riff " over a " trance @-@ like metallic beat " . Colin Greenwood 's bassline was inspired by Chic bassist Bernard Edwards . The lyric " never look back " came from advice given to Yorke by his partner : " Be proud of what you 've done . Don 't look back and just carry on like nothing 's happened . Just let the bad stuff go . " According to a studio diary kept by O 'Brien , " Knives Out " took 373 days to record , " a ridiculously long gestation period for any song . " It was influenced by the guitar work of Johnny Marr of the Smiths .

" Morning Bell / Amnesiac " is an alternative version of " Morning Bell " from Kid A. O 'Brien said that Radiohead often record and abandon different versions of songs , but that this version was " strong enough to bear hearing again . " On Radiohead 's official website , Yorke wrote that " Morning Bell / Amnesiac " was included on Amnesiac " because it came from such a different place from the other version . Because we only found it again by accident after having forgotten about it . Because it sounds like a recurring dream . It felt right . "

" Dollars and Cents " was edited down from an eleven @-@ minute jam inspired by krautrock band Can . Colin Greenwood played a record by jazz musician Alice Coltrane over the recording , inspiring his brother Jonny to write a " Coltrane @-@ style " string arrangement . Yorke said the lyrics were " gibberish but they come out of ideas I 've been fighting with for ages about how people are basically just pixels on a screen , unknowingly serving this higher power which is manipulative and destructive , but we 're powerless because we can 't name it . "

" Hunting Bears " is a short instrumental on electric guitar and synthesiser . " Like Spinning Plates " was constructed from components of another song , " I Will " , which Radiohead had tried to record in the same sessions . Unsatisfied with the results , which Yorke described as " dodgy Kraftwerk " , the band reversed the recording and used it to create a new track . Yorke said : " We 'd turned the tape around , and I was in another room , heard the vocal melody coming backwards , and thought , ' That 's miles better than the right way round ' , then spent the rest of the night trying to learn the melody . " Yorke sang the lyrics backwards ; this recording was in turn reversed to create " backwards @-@ sounding " vocals . " I Will " was later released in a different arrangement on Radiohead 's subsequent album Hail to the Thief ( 2003 ) .

" Life in a Glasshouse " features jazz band the Humphrey Lyttelton Band . After listening to a demo of the song , trumpeter and bandleader Humphrey Lyttelton suggested arranging it in a New Orleans jazz funeral style . He described the song as starting " with me doing a sort of ad @-@ libbed , bluesy , minor key meandering , then it gradually gets so that we 're sort of playing real wild , primitive , New Orleans blues stuff . " According to Lyttelton , Radiohead " didn 't want it to sound like a slick studio production but a slightly exploratory thing of people playing as if they didn 't have it all planned out in advance . " The lyrics were inspired by a news story Yorke read of a celebrity 's wife so harassed by paparazzi that she papered her house windows with their photographs .

= = Art and packaging = =

Amnesiac 's cover art was created by Yorke and artist Stanley Donwood , who has worked with Radiohead since The Bends ( 1995 ) . It depicts a weeping minotaur of Greek mythology . Donwood said the artwork was inspired by " taking the train to London , getting lost and taking notes " . Likening London to the mythological labyrinth , he saw the city as " an imaginary prison , a place

where you can walk around and you are the Minotaur of London , we are all the monsters , we are all half human half beast . We are trapped in this maze of this past . "

For the " special limited edition " of the album , Donwood designed a hardback CD case in the style of a mislaid library book , and said : " We wanted it to be like a book . And someone made these pages in a book and it went into drawer in a desk and was forgotten about in the attic . And the attic was then forgotten . And visually and musically the album is about finding the book and opening the pages . " The special edition won a Grammy Award for Best Recording Package in the 44th Grammy Awards .

= = Promotion and tour = =

Unlike having released no singles for Kid A , Radiohead released three singles from Amnesiac ? " Pyramid Song " , " I Might Be Wrong " and " Knives Out " ? accompanied by music videos . In October 2000 , Radiohead began a world tour in support of Kid A , playing songs later released on Amnesiac . In June 2001 , they began the Amnesiac tour , incorporating their first North American tour in three years . Recordings from both tours are included on the live EP I Might Be Wrong : Live Recordings , released in November 2001 .

= = Reception = =

Amnesiac debuted at number 2 on the US Billboard 200 with sales of 231 @,@ 000 , surpassing Radiohead 's 207 @,@ 000 first @-@ week sales of their previous album , Kid A. It was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of Japan for shipments of 100 @,@ 000 copies across Japan .

At Metacritic , which assigns a normalised rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , Amnesiac has an average score of 75 , five points lower than its sister album Kid A , indicating " generally favorable reviews " . Pitchfork founder Ryan Schreiber wrote that " quality aside , the questionable sequencing of Amnesiac does little to hush the argument that the record is merely a thinly veiled b @-@ sides compilation ... Still , Amnesiac 's highlights were undeniably worth the wait , and easily overcome its occasional patchiness . " Guardian critic Alex Petridis wrote that " with the benefit of hindsight , Kid A 's wilful racket now recalls the clatter of a rattle being thrown from a pram . Tantrum over , Radiohead have returned to their role as the world 's most intriguing and innovative major rock band . " Robert Hilburn of the Los Angeles Times felt that Amnesiac , compared to Kid A , " is a richer , more engaging record , its austerity and troubled vision enriched by a rousing of the human spirit . "

AllMusic critic Stephen Thomas Erlewine wrote that " where Kid A had shock on its side ... Amnesiac often plays as a hodgepodge " , albeit one with some " amazing moments " , and that the two " clearly derive from the same source and have the same flaws ... the division only makes the two records seem unfocused , even if the best of both records is quite stunning " . Robert Christgau of The Village Voice wrote that the album " makes a lot more sense if you 're already feeling down in the mouth " , assigning it a three @-@ star honorable mention rating .

= = = Accolades = = =

Several music publications ranked Amnesiac one of the best albums of 2001 . Q placed it among its top 50 , Rolling Stone ranked it the 10th , Kludge the 9th , the Village Voice Pazz and Jop poll the 6th , the Los Angeles Times the 5th , and Alternative Press ranked it best . In 2009 , Pitchfork ranked Amnesiac the 34th best album of the 2000s and Rolling Stone ranked it the 25th . In 2012 , Rolling Stone ranked Amnesiac 320th in its updated list of the The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time . The album was also included in the book 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die .

Amnesiac was nominated for the 2001 Mercury Music Prize , losing to PJ Harvey 's Stories from the City , Stories from the Sea , for which Yorke provided guest vocals . It was the fourth consecutive Radiohead album nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Alternative Album , and the special

edition won a Grammy Award for Best Recording Package in the 44th Grammy Awards . " Pyramid Song " was ranked one of the best tracks of the decade by Rolling Stone , the NME and Pitchfork .

= = Reissue = =

In 2007 , Radiohead left EMI , parent company of Parlophone , after failed contract negotiations . EMI retained the copyright to Radiohead 's back catalogue . After a period of being out of print on vinyl , EMI reissued a double @-@ LP of Amnesiac on 19 August 2008 , along with albums Kid A , Hail to the Thief and OK Computer as part of the " From the Capitol Vaults " series .

On 31 August 2009 , EMI reissued Amnesiac in a 2 @-@ CD " Collector 's Edition " and a 2 @-@ CD 1 @-@ DVD " Special Collector 's Edition " . The first CD contains the original studio album ; the second CD collects B @-@ sides from Amnesiac singles and live performances ; the DVD contains music videos and a live television performance . Radiohead had no input into the reissue and the music was not remastered . In Pitchfork 's review of the reissue , Scott Plagenhoef wrote : " More than Kid A ? and maybe more than any other LP of its time ? Amnesiac is the kickoff of a messy , rewarding era ... disconnected , self @-@ aware , tense , eclectic , head @-@ turning ? an overload of good ideas inhibited by rules , restrictions , and conventional wisdom . "

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Radiohead ( Colin Greenwood , Ed O 'Brien , Jonny Greenwood , Philip Selway , Thom Yorke ) .

Notes

= = Personnel = =

Adapted from the Amnesiac liner notes .

Radiohead

Colin Greenwood

Jonny Greenwood

Ed O 'Brien

Philip Selway

Thom Yorke

Additional musicians

The Orchestra of St John 's conducted by John Lubbock ? strings on " Pyramid Song " and " Dollars and Cents "

On " Life in a Glasshouse " :

Paul Bridge ? double bass

Jimmy Hastings ? clarinet

Humphrey Lyttelton ? trumpet and bandleader

Adrian Macintosh ? drums

Pete Strange ? trombone

Additional personnel

Stanley Donwood ? cover art and packaging

Nigel Godrich ? production and engineering

Dan Grech @-@ Marguerat ? engineering on " Life in a Glasshouse "

Gerard Navarro ? engineering

Graeme Stewart ? engineering

= = Chart positions = =

= = Certifications = =

