

= Neon Bible =

Neon Bible is the second studio album by the Canadian rock band Arcade Fire , released in March 2007 on Merge Records . Originally announced on December 16 , 2006 through the band 's website , the majority of the album was recorded at a church the band bought and renovated in Farnham , Quebec . The album is the first to feature drummer Jeremy Gara , and the first to include violinist Sarah Neufeld among the band 's core line @-@ up .

Neon Bible became Arcade Fire 's highest charting album at the time , debuting on the Billboard 200 at number two , selling 92 @,@ 000 copies in its first week and more than 400 @,@ 000 to date . Being released within a month of similarly successful releases by The Shins (Wincing the Night Away) and Modest Mouse (We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank) , Neon Bible was cited as an example of the popularization of indie rock . Critics offered the self @-@ produced Neon Bible mostly favorable reviews , although with division over the album 's sound . Publications like NME and IGN praised the album for its grandiose nature , while Rolling Stone and Uncut said that it resulted in a distant and overblown sound .

= = Production = =

Following the release of Funeral (2004) , which had been recorded in an attic studio known as Hotel2Tango , Arcade Fire decided a permanent recording location was necessary . Following their tour in support of Funeral , the band bought the Petite Église in Farnham , Quebec . Being used as a café at the time of purchase , the Petite Église had once been a church and a Masonic Temple . Once renovation of the church was complete , the band spent the latter half of 2006 recording a majority of the album there . Michael Pärt produced additionally recordings in Budapest , recording the Budapest Film Orchestra and a military men 's choir . Other sessions included one in New York , where the band recorded along the Hudson River to be near water .

Having produced most of the album themselves , the band decided to bring in someone else for the mixing . Tracks were sent to several well @-@ known mixers / producers to experiment with and after deciding they liked Nick Launay 's ideas best , the band invited him to their studio to work on the songs further . For a month Launay worked with the album 's engineer and co @-@ producer Marcus Strauss on the mixing of each song , with the band regularly driving up from Montreal to assess their progress . In an interview with HitQuarters , Launay described the mixing process as a " playful thing " .

= = Composition = =

Beginning work on Neon Bible immediately following a North American tour in support of the band 's first album , Funeral , songwriter Win Butler , born in the United States but having lived in Canada for several years , said that he felt he was observing his homeland from an outsider 's point of view . The album is rooted in Americana themes , with Bob Dylan , Bruce Springsteen and Elvis Presley being cited as influences .

Arcade Fire began recording with what would become " Black Mirror " and a reworking of the Arcade Fire EP song " No Cars Go " as their starting point . Once the title of the album was decided upon , the band was further inspired after they , according to Will Butler , " watched a lot of TV preachers , get @-@ rich @-@ quick schemes on YouTube . " The band was also attracted to using the ocean and television as central images for the album , with Win Butler saying the ocean imagery symbolizes a lack of control ; of television , Butler stated that :

People don 't necessarily know that they 're taking on a worldview , or absorbing ideas [while watching television] . It doesn 't necessarily seem like [it 's happening] , but it definitely does . I find it very easy to get sucked in . It starts to affect the way you see the world .

These ideas are reflected in the arrangement and composition of the album , which lead to a sound of dread and dissonance . The band used a number of less common instruments to achieve this sound ; in addition to the orchestra and choir , Neon Bible features a hurdy @-@ gurdy , mandolin ,

accordion and pipe organ . Win Butler has said that in conceiving the album he hoped for a more stripped @-@ down sound but the songs demanded further instrumentation .

= = Artwork = =

The artwork for the album is a photograph of a six @-@ foot neon sign that the band commissioned for use while on tour . In the photograph used for the cover , the lighted Bible is caught in mid @-@ flicker . Rolling Stone named the artwork one of the five best of the year . AOL Music cited the cover as an example of an artist " keeping artwork alive . " The artwork would go on to win Tracy Maurice and François Miron the Juno Award for best CD / DVD Artwork Design of the Year . Frontman Win Butler stated in an interview that the album title is derived from him being particularly attracted to the image , not from the John Kennedy Toole novel *The Neon Bible* .

= = Promotion = =

Largely due to band member Régine Chassagne 's Haitian ancestry , the band has tried to raise support and awareness for the socio @-@ economic problems in Haiti throughout their career . The Haitian people had 15 @,@ 000 dollars donated to them on November 5 , 2005 . On December 26 , 2006 , they supported Haitian charity organization Partners in Health by releasing the song " Intervention " on iTunes and donating the proceeds . However , they accidentally uploaded " Black Wave / Bad Vibrations " , the track after " Intervention " on *Neon Bible* . While the song was quickly removed once the problem was discovered , file sharers quickly circulated it on various P2P networks . On his blog , Win Butler quipped , " I guess it is sort of charming that we can send the wrong song to the whole world with a click of a mouse ... Oh well . "

On December 28 , 2006 , the band allowed listeners to listen to their first single , " Black Mirror " , by calling the number (866) NEON @-@ BIBLE , extension number 7777 . The song was also streamed on the band 's website beginning on January 6 , 2007 . The following day , the band revealed a variety of information about the album through a YouTube video . The video , which played a number of sound clips from the upcoming album and featured " Juno award @-@ winning guitarist Richard Reed Perry " , gave the album 's track listing , release date , and record label .

On February 2 , 2007 , all the lyrics to *Neon Bible* were released on the band 's website . Also included was the text and an audio clip of a child reading " The Wolf and the Fox " , a French fable allegedly written by 17th century French poet Jean La Fontaine , an allusion to " The Well and the Lighthouse " , which is loosely based around the fable . This was followed on February 5 , 2007 with the band releasing a promotional pamphlet as a JPEG image on their website that included album @-@ related imagery and much of the French and English text from " The Wolf and the Fox " .

In October 2007 , Arcade Fire created a website at beonlineb.com with the date October 6 displayed on it . After speculation over what the website was about , including rumors of new material or a live streaming of a concert , it was eventually revealed to be a video for " Neon Bible " , featuring Win Butler 's face and hands , which the viewer can interact with during the song . " Neon Bible " was the first song on the album to have a music video .

= = Tour = =

Arcade Fire began their tour in support of the album in January and February 2007 , playing a series of concerts at churches and other small venues in Ottawa , Montreal , London and New York . This was followed by a 23 date European tour in March and early April , though the last 9 dates of this were cancelled due to illness . The first North American leg of the tour began April 26 in San Diego and April 28 at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival and contained 26 dates . This leg contained openings by The National , St. Vincent , and Electrelane . The band then began an 11 @-@ date European leg at Glastonbury Festival on June 22 before returning to North America for 10 more LCD Soundsystem @-@ supported dates beginning September 15 at Austin City Limits . The *Neon Bible* tour continued with 14 more dates in Europe between October 25 and November 19

, and six dates beginning January 18 , 2008 in Australia and New Zealand as part of the Big Day Out festival . The tour then ended after three more shows from February 7 in Japan .

= = Reception = =

Compared to the band 's debut , Funeral , Neon Bible has experienced breakthrough commercial success . During its first week , it debuted at number one in both Canada and Ireland , and number two in the United States , the United Kingdom and Portugal . Neon Bible was out @-@ charted only by Notorious B.I.G. ' s greatest hits compilation in the U.S. and the Kaiser Chiefs 's Yours Truly , Angry Mob in the UK . It was certified gold by the CRIA in Canada in March 2007 .

Upon release , Neon Bible garnered universal acclaim , receiving an 87 ? the seventh highest score of 2007 ? from review aggregator Metacritic . NME reviewer Mark Beaumont commented the album " is a climactic monolith of a record in the grand tradition of melodic transatlantic clamour rock . " The A.V. Club reviewer Kyle Ryan interpreted the album as a commentary on the post @-@ 9 / 11 American world , saying that " the band is seemingly sending a beacon to other reasonable people forced underground by the world 's insanity . " Stylus contributor Derek Miller saw the album in similar terms , saying that while the album touches on " violence , paranoia , the falsity of simple labor , the war @-@ call of organized religion ? a what 's what of indie turmoil after 2003 " the band go further to the point where its " thematic threads bind the songs . " Robert Christgau gave the album a " A + " grade , saying that Butler and co . " thud rather than thunder . But what a loud and joyous thud it is . "

IGN , in giving the album 8 @.@ 9 out of 10 , said " the playing overall seems tighter and more cohesive " and that the album is a " grandiose project , one teeming with jubilant enthusiasm and reverent abundance . " Other publications agreed , but felt such was a negative . Rolling Stone reviewer David Fricke wrote that he was surprised such a large band could " sound so distant here so often , " saying that " the result is a huge sound that only sparkles on the edges , leaving Butler alone in the middle . " However , Rolling Stone also named it the fourth best album of the year . Uncut 's three @-@ star review of the album said that " at its overblown worst Neon Bible is one of those records that takes itself too seriously to be taken seriously . "

Neon Bible was a finalist for the 2007 Polaris Music Prize . Neon Bible was nominated for Best Alternative Album for the 50th Annual Grammy Awards . It was # 4 in NME albums of the year , fourth in Rolling Stone 's list of albums of the year and album of the year in Q in December 2007 . The album won the 2008 Juno Award for Alternative Album of the Year .

= = Accolades = =

= = Editions = =

Neon Bible was released in three versions . They included :

A traditional compact disc in a jewel case .

A deluxe compact disc packaged in a paperboard clamshell box with a lenticular front cover and accompanied by two 32 @-@ page flip books designed by Tracy Maurice using material shot in 16mm film by filmmaker Francois Miron .

A double LP that featured the album on three sides of the vinyl at 180 @-@ gram quality and an etching on the fourth side . This release also came with a code to allow purchasers to download the entire album in MP3 format . Due to manufacturing delays , this release came out more than two months after the previous versions , on May 8 , 2007 .

= = In popular culture = =

" My Body is a Cage " was featured in a TV spot for the 2008 film The Curious Case of Benjamin Button .

Peter Gabriel 's cover of " My Body is a Cage " was featured in the House episode " Out of the Chute " , and was used in the soundtrack for the video game Assassin 's Creed III .

= = Track listing = =

" Black Mirror " ? 4 : 13
" Keep the Car Running " ? 3 : 29
" Neon Bible " ? 2 : 16
" Intervention " ? 4 : 19
" Black Wave / Bad Vibrations " ? 3 : 56
" Ocean of Noise " ? 4 : 53
" The Well and the Lighthouse " ? 3 : 57
" (Antichrist Television Blues) " ? 5 : 10
" Windowsill " ? 4 : 16
" No Cars Go " ? 5 : 43
" My Body Is a Cage " ? 4 : 47

= = Personnel = =

= = Charts and certifications = =