



Concept Albums

Gareth Shute

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This book is the first indepth, critical account of the concept album from its highest creative moments to its most pretentious, flailing abominations. This work rediscovers the pre-history of the form in folk and country music, before covering its rise to prominence during the era of psychedelia and prog. It goes on to cover some of the most successful albums in the history of popular music, including - The Beatles' Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, The Who's Tommy, David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars, and Pink Floyd's The Wall. The lean years of the concept album are also discussed, especially the eighties when it was kept alive within heavy metal, before being subtly resurrected by the alternative and hip hop artists of the nineties. Now the concept album is back, with artists as varied as Green Day, Arcade Fire, Mastodon, and My Chemical Romance releasing conceptual work in the new millennium, as a way to keep the album format relevant in the digital era. This book reveals the subtle currents that brought the concept album in and out of fashion, showing a new way to look at popular music over the last fifty years and unearthing some of the most ambitious and most bizarre musical projects ever conceived. Its time to delve into the world of the concept album... This is a revised and updated version which also includes images of some of the major artists along the way.

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