



IRASCIBLE MUSIC



IRON & WINE (USA)

Epic Beast

Label: Sub Pop

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Web: ironandwine.com

EPK: irascible.ch/releases/iron-wine/beast-epic

beast epic. n. ; A long, usually allegorical verse narrative in which the characters are animals with human feelings and motives.

I must confess that I've always shied away from album introductions citing the usual "dancing to architecture" cop out. Speaking to their own work is uncomfortable for many artists, but I've made a new album called *Beast Epic* which is important to me and I wanted to take a moment to talk about why. I've been releasing music for about fifteen years now and I feel very blessed to have put out five other full lengths, many EPs and singles, a few collaborations with people much more talented than myself, and made contributions to numerous movie scores and soundtracks. This is my sixth collection of new Iron & Wine material and I'm happy to say that it's my fourth for Sub Pop Records.

It's a warm and serendipitous time to be reuniting with my Seattle friends because I feel there's a certain kinship between this new collection of songs and my earliest material, which Sub Pop was kind enough to release. In hindsight, both *The Creek Drank the Cradle* (2002) and *Our Endless Numbered Days* (2004) epitomize a reflective and confessional songwriting style (although done with my own ferocious commitment to understatement, of course.) I have been and always will be fascinated by the way time asserts itself on our bodies and our hearts. The ferris wheel keeps spinning and we're constantly approaching, leaving or returning to something totally unexpected or startlingly familiar. The rite of passage is an image I've returned to often because I feel we're all constantly in some stage of transition. *Beast Epic* is saturated with this idea but in a different way simply because each time I return to the theme I've collected new experiences to draw from. Where the older songs painted a picture of youth moving wide-eyed into adulthood's violent pleasures and disappointments, this collection speaks to the beauty and pain of growing up after you've already grown up. For me, that experience has been more generous in its gifts and darker in its tragedies.

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The sound of *Beast Epic* harks back to previous work, in a way, as well. By employing the old discipline of recording everything live and doing minimal overdubbing, I feel like it wears both its achievements and its imperfections on its sleeve. Over the years, I've enjoyed experimenting with different genres, sonics and songwriting styles and all that traveled distance is evident in the feel and the arrangements here, but the muscles seemed to have relaxed and been allowed to effortlessly do what they do best.

I've been fortunate to get to play with some very talented musicians over the years who are both uniquely intuitive and also expressive in exciting ways. This group was no different. We spent about two weeks recording and mixing but mostly laughing at The Loft in Chicago.

To be honest, I've named this record *BEAST EPIC* mostly because it sounds really fucking cool! However, with that said and perhaps to be completely honest, "a story where animals talk and act like people" sounds like the perfect description for the life of any of us. If not that, then it's at least perfect for any group of songs I've ever tried to make. I hope you enjoy it.

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