

The Questions of Nebraska

Written by Matt Browning

Saturday, 24 November 2007 19:31 - Last Updated Sunday, 25 November 2007 11:35

Bruce Springsteen released the album *Nebraska* over 25 years ago. The album was originally recorded by Springsteen in his home with a 4-track cassette recorder.

These recordings were only meant to serve as demos of the songs that would be recorded later in the studio with the E Street Band, but after recording these songs in the studio with the entire band Springsteen and the producers decided to release the stripped down demos instead of the studio recordings.

In doing so they created an album full of sparse, haunting folks songs, matching the landscape of the state the album is named after and the lyrical content of these songs.

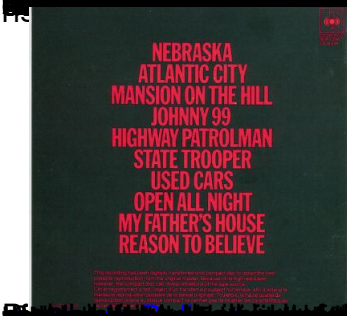
{xtypo_quote}Still at the end of every hard earned day people find some reason to believe{/xtypo_quote}

This album never gained popular success, but was met with some critical acclaim. It isn't, after all, the large, pop sound of other Springsteen albums like *Born in the USA* or his latest album, [Magic](#). And unlike the pop albums of the time the mode of *Nebraska* is mostly narrative. But there is something very big at stake in these songs. More than any other Springsteen album, *Nebraska* deals with the limits and capacity of the human soul in a world that seems so out of our direct control. Springsteen touches on the ethics of the American system in "Johnny 99", "Atlantic City", "Used Cars", "the evil that exists in humanity on the title track", "the bonds of family verse the obligations doing what is right on "Highway Patrolman", "the gap between the atonement of the afterlife and our current existence on "My Father's House", and in the end the resilience of the human soul on "Reason to Believe."

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