Fear of the Dark (Iron Maiden album)

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Fear of the Dark is the ninth studio album released by English heavy metal band Iron Maiden. Released on 11 May 1992, it was their third studio release to top the UK albums chart and last to feature Bruce Dickinson as lead vocalist until his return in 1999.

It was the first album to be produced by bassist and band founder Steve Harris, and last to feature the work of producer Martin Birch (who retired after its release).

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Fear of the Dark



Studio album by Iron Maiden

Released	11 May 1992
Recorded	1991 – April 1992 at Barnyard Studios, Essex, England
Genre	Heavy metal
Length	57:58[1]
Label	EMI Epic (US)
Producer	Martin Birch, Steve Harris

Iron Maiden studio albums chronology

No Prayer for the Dying (1990)	***Fear of the Dark*** (1992)	*The X Factor* (1995)

Singles from *Fear of the Dark*

1. "Be Quick or Be Dead"
   Released: 13 April 1992
2. "From Here to Eternity"
   Released: 29 June 1992
3. "Wasting Love"
   Released: 1 September 1992

History

After recording its predecessor (1990's *No Prayer for the Dying*) in a barn on Steve Harris' property with the Rolling Stones Mobile Studio, leading to negative results, for this album Harris had the building converted into a proper studio (christened "Barnyard").[2] Bruce Dickinson describes the results as "a slight improvement because Martin [Birch] came in and supervised the sound. But there were big limitations on that studio – simply because of its physical size, things like that. [It] actually ended up not too bad, but, you know, a little bit under par."[3]

The album's musical style showed some experimentation with "Be Quick or Be Dead", a fast tempo song released as the album's first single,[4] and "Wasting Love", the group's first power ballad,[5] which dates back to Dickinson's first solo album, *Tattooed Millionaire*.[6] Both songs were Dickinson/Gers collaborations, which contrasted with Harris' "Afraid to Shoot Strangers", a political song from the point of view of a soldier in the

Gulf War,[7] Dickinson would often introduce the song as an anti-war narrative.[8] "Fear is the Key" is about the fear in sexual relationships resulting from AIDS. The song was written around the time when the band learned about the death of Queen singer Freddie Mercury. Dickinson affirmed: "There's a line in 'Fear Is the Key' that goes: "nobody cares 'til somebody famous dies". And that's quite sadly true. [...] As long as the virus was confined to homosexuals or drug-addicts, nobody gave a shit. It's only when celebrities started to die that the masses began to feel concerned".[9] "Weekend Warrior" is about football hooliganism.[9]

Only two of the album's songs, the title track and "Afraid to Shoot Strangers", would survive on tours past 1993. "Fear of the Dark" has been on the set list of every subsequent tour except 2005,[4] in which the band only played songs from their first 4 albums,[10] and was the only song played on the Somewhere Back in Time World Tour and the Maiden England World Tour (other than "Afraid to Shoot Strangers") which was not from the 1980s. "Afraid to Shoot Strangers" became a frequent addition on setlists during Blaze Bayley's tenure with Iron Maiden, following which it returned in 2012.[11]

"Be Quick or Be Dead", "From Here to Eternity" and "Wasting Love" were released as singles.

Fear of the Dark Tour was the tour supporting the album.

Album cover

According to the band's biographer, Mick Wall, the *Fear of the Dark* album cover depicts their mascot, Eddie, "as some sort of Nosferatu tree figure leering at the moon".[7] It was the group's first not to be designed by artist Derek Riggs, whose contributions were rejected in favour of Melvyn Grant's.[7] According to Iron Maiden's manager, Rod Smallwood, the band began accepting contributions from other artists as "We wanted to upgrade Eddie for the 90s. We wanted to take him from the sort of comic-book horror creature and turn him into something a bit more straightforward so that he became even more threatening."[7] Following *Fear of the Dark*, Grant has produced several more covers for Iron Maiden, making him the band's second most-frequent artist after Riggs.

Reception

Reviews for the album were mixed, with AllMusic commenting that, while "easily an improvement over 1990's lackluster *No Prayer for the Dying* (both musically and sonically)," the release "still wasn't quite on par with their exceptional work from the '80s."[4] Sputnikmusic were more positive about the release, stating that "though many of the songs are still sub-par by their standards... the band returns to the lofty heights that they enjoyed for the entirety of the 80's."[5] *Billboard* gave it a positive review on release, saying Dickinson's voice "shows no sign of wear and tear" and the guitar work "sounds fresh and crisp".[12]

Professional ratings	
Review scores	
Source	Rating
AllMusic	★★★★★[4]
Billboard	favourable[12]
Sputnikmusic	3.5/5[5]

In October 2011, *Fear of the Dark* was ranked No. 8 on *Guitar World* magazine's top ten list of guitar albums of 1992.[13]

Fear of the Dark became the third Iron Maiden album to top the UK Albums Chart.[14] It is the band's most successful record in North America after the inception of Nielsen SoundScan in 1991, with 438,000 copies sold

as of 2008.[15]

Track listing

No.	Title	Writer(s)	Length
1.	"Be Quick or Be Dead"	Bruce Dickinson, Janick Gers	3:21
2.	"From Here to Eternity"	Steve Harris	3:35
3.	"Afraid to Shoot Strangers"	Harris	6:52
4.	"Fear Is the Key"	Dickinson, Gers	5:30
5.	"Childhood's End"	Harris	4:37
6.	"Wasting Love"	Dickinson, Gers	5:46
7.	"The Fugitive"	Harris	4:52
8.	"Chains of Misery"	Dickinson, Dave Murray	3:33
9.	"The Apparition"	Harris, Gers	3:53
10.	"Judas Be My Guide"	Dickinson, Murray	3:06
11.	"Weekend Warrior"	Harris, Gers	5:37
12.	"Fear of the Dark"	Harris	7:16
		Total length:	**57:58**

1995 reissue bonus CD

No.	Title	Writer(s)	Length
1.	"Nodding Donkey Blues"	Harris, Dickinson, Murray, Nicko McBrain, Gers	3:18
2.	"Space Station No. 5" (Montrose cover)	Ronnie Montrose, Sammy Hagar	11:58
3.	"I Can't See My Feelings" (Budgie cover)	Tony Bourge, Burke Shelley	3:50
4.	"Roll Over Vic Vella" (Parody of Chuck Berry's "Roll over Beethoven")	Chuck Berry, Harris (adapted lyrics)	4:48
5.	"No Prayer for the Dying" (Live)	Harris	4:23
6.	"Public Enema Number One" (Live)	Murray, Dickinson	3:58
7.	"Hooks in You" (Live)	Dickinson, Adrian Smith	3:44

- "Space Station No. 5" contains a hidden track entitled "Bayswater Ain't a Bad Place to Be" (Previously available as a hidden track on the UK Single of "Be Quick or Be Dead")

Personnel

Production and performance credits are adapted from the album liner notes.[1][16]

Iron Maiden

- Bruce Dickinson – vocals
- Dave Murray – guitar
- Janick Gers – guitar
- Steve Harris – bass guitar, producer, mixing
- Nicko McBrain – drums

Additional musicians

- Michael Kenney – keyboards

Production

- Martin Birch – producer, engineer, mixing
- Mick McKenna – assistant engineer
- Melvyn Grant – sleeve illustration
- George Chin – photography
- Phil Anstice – photography
- Rod Smallwood – management
- Andy Taylor – management
- Hugh Gilmour – art direction, design (1998 edition)

Chart performance

Album

Singles

Country	Chart (1992)	Peak position
Australia	ARIA Charts	11[17]
Austria	Ö3 Austria Top 40	8[18]
Finland	The Official Finnish Charts	4[19]
Germany	Media Control Charts	5[20]
Hungary	Mahasz	25[21]
Japan	Oricon	11[22]
Netherlands	MegaCharts	36[23]
New Zealand	RIANZ	4[24]
Norway	VG-lista	6[25]
Sweden	Sverigetopplistan	8[26]
Switzerland	Swiss Hitparade	5[27]
United Kingdom	Official Albums Chart	1[14]
United States	*Billboard* 200	12[28]
Country	**Chart (2010)**	**Peak position**
Greece	IFPI Greece	53[29]

Single	Chart (1992)	Peak position	Album
"Be Quick or Be Dead"	Australian Singles Chart	47[30]	*Fear of the Dark*
	Belgian Singles Chart (Flanders)	47[31]	
	Dutch Singles Chart	26[32]	
	German Singles Chart	32[33]	
	Irish Singles Chart	10[34]	
	New Zealand Singles Chart	12[35]	
	Norwegian Singles Chart	3[36]	
	Swedish Singles Chart	15[37]	
	Swiss Singles Chart	15[38]	
	UK Singles Chart	2[39]	
"From Here to Eternity"	Irish Singles Chart	27[34]	
	UK Singles Chart	21[40]	
Single	**Chart (1993)**	**Peak position**	**Album**
"Fear of the Dark" (Live)	Irish Singles Chart	17[34]	*A Real Live One*
	UK Singles Chart	8[41]	

Certifications

Region	Certification	Certified units/Sales
Canada (Music Canada)[42]	Gold	50,000^
France (SNEP)[43]	Gold	100,000*
United Kingdom (BPI)[44]	Gold	100,000^
^shipments figures based on certification alone		

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