

Music Shop

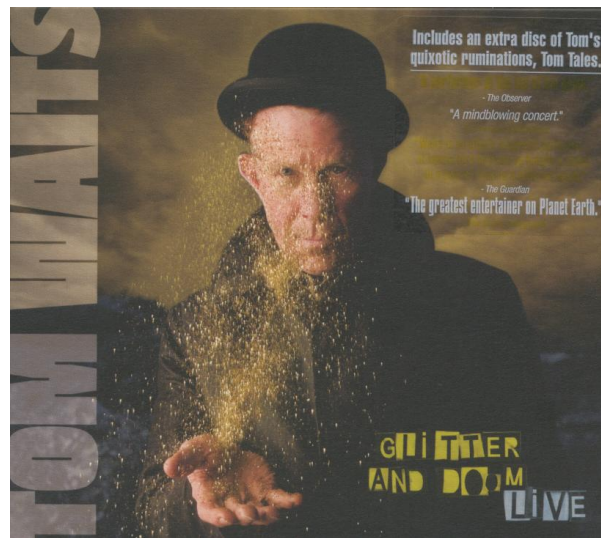
Tom Waits – total artist



He is a classic cult artist, consistently decadent and presenting his image of a drunk disillusioned castaway for years. And of course we must not forget about the piano in some smoky dive and the artist's already legendary excuse: ... *the piano has been drinking, not me*. He is a contemporary incarnation of a poet beatnik, inspired by the Kerouac myth of a traveling artist bewitched with the "black film" of the 1950s. Almost all his records show a group of odd, suspicious characters from the American dregs of society in a sharp light. Waits' characteristic appearance of a tramp and his hoarse, bronchial voice give a wrong impression of his social origin. As he comes from the middle class and has a solid education. When he was young he was fascinated by beatnik writers, such as Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg or William Burroughs. He also adored Raymond Chandler's and Dashiell Hammett's detective prose.

Tom Waits began his adventure with music at the beginning of the 1960s. In 1964 he played shortly with a rhythm and blues band called *The Systems*. Having finished school he wandered around the country. He looked for America he knew from Edward Hopper's paintings. He took up various jobs – his longest work was probably that of a doorman in a Los Angeles nightclub. In the unique songs he began to write at the beginning of the 1960s and record in 1973, he combined the elements of Kurt Weill's songs, folk ballades, blues, jazz and rock. He played the guitar and the piano well, he also signed a valuable contract with manager Herb Cohen who used to work with Tim Buckley and Frank Zappa some time ago. But in-so-far as during that decade in his records he tried to foster the image of a reveler-tramp possessing a great life wisdom, in the 1980s he began to experiment with other, more diversified music types, for example operas and film soundtracks. In any case, simultaneously with his music actions he developed as an actor. He debuted in a minor role in Sylvester Stallone's *Paradise*

Alley in 1978. Later he appeared in *Rumble Fish* and *Cotton Club* by Francis Ford Coppola. But first of all in Jim Jarmusch's film *Down By Law*, in which he played one of the leading characters.



For his 60th birthday Tom Waits gave himself and mainly us listeners, a wonderful present. The Master's newest, concert, two-disc album to a large degree presents the atmosphere of an unusual spectacle edited in a way as if it constituted a record of one show, and not many fragments of the European-American tour. ***Glitter and Doom Live*** (Sonic Records) presents works from the 1990s, strongly over arranged, but performed with the same, unique, ill treated voice of the artist. Waits' dark, although sometimes also witty stories are literally spit out, with torn phrases, bombarding the listener like shot. Vocal screams attack us already at the beginning of the disc with an amazing piece *Lucinda – Ain't Goin' Down*. The next also strike us down: *Such A Scream* and *Goin' Out West*, and of course the massacre like blues *Make It Rain*. I draw attention to the fact how the artist demonstrates the ostentatious ease of establishing contact with the audience. He chats with it during breaks, sometimes tells cruel jokes, showers us with witty sayings. The whole *Tom's Tales* disc added to the *Glitter and Doom Live*, is filled with Waits' tales. Outstanding great time, but also a completion of the image of a total artist.

But in Tom Waits' works we can see sensitive compassion and complete understanding for fellowmen behind the facade of black humor and unbearable coarse vocal. The artist also has an excellent feeling for the melody – his songs were successfully recorded by the biggest pop and rock music stars, for instance: *The Eagles*, Bruce Springsteen, Paul Young or Rod Stewart. Someone wrote somewhere that this guy from California is still, and maybe even more than ever, the biggest American artist. That is highly probable ...



Jeff Beck

Emotion & Commotion (Warner Music)

One of the biggest guitar virtuosos appeared after seven years of silence. No one else sings so beautifully on his instrument, and his new record only confirms his class, intelligently circulating around rock, jazz, blues and classic music. He is accompanied by sensational Joss Stone with a “black” voice and wonderful opera diva Olivia Safe.

Corinne Bailey Rae

The Sea (EMI)

This young British singer gives a real show of soul singing on her second disc. This project includes a great deal of fantastic melodies and emotions. All presented in intimate ballades and dynamic pieces from the borderland of black music and rock.



Massive Attack

Heligoland (EMI)

It seemed that the legend of the “Bristol tone” went down in history for good, meanwhile the group’s fifth album is a production masterpiece filled with both arrangement spiciness, symphonic and film climates, as well as trip-hop, dark electronics and post rock. It is an outstanding, beautiful composition.

