

★ **Silhouettes and Shadows: The Secret History of David Bowie's Scary Monsters (and Super Creeps)**

Adam Steiner

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Who doesn't like a good secret history? In *Silhouettes and Shadows*, Adam Steiner takes a look at a pivotal moment in the musical life of David Bowie, the 1980 album *Scary Monsters (and Super Creeps)*. Coming between Bowie's experimental and oftentimes controversial music in the 1970s and his 1983 release *Let's Dance*, *Scary Monsters* represents Bowie moving past his old personas to become an international superstar.

Steiner scrutinizes each track on the album, looking at what influenced each song. For example, with "Scream Like a Baby," Bowie confronted the idea of people being forced to the fringes of society, both because of homosexuality and because of race and gender issues. In the process of such examinations, Steiner reveals an artist who's "world wise, but jaded"—looking toward the future and in search of his more authentic self. Song by song, Bowie is seen wading further into the deep water than he felt comfortable going, all in order to discover more about himself and the world he lived in.

In addition to the book's extensive endnotes and source materials come epigrams, free-form impressionist musings from Steiner, and photographs from Bowie's life to set the mood. *Silhouettes and Shadows* is essential reading for David Bowie fans and those interested in rock-and-roll history.

ERIC PATTERSON (September / October 2023)

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