

Lou Reed - Greatest Hits (Steel Box Collection) [2008]

Written by bluesever

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1. *Wild child* 2. *Walk on the wild side* 3. *Vicious* 4. *Satellite of love* 5. *Caroline says I* 6. *Sally can't dance* 7. *Temporary thing* 8. *Coney Island baby* 9. *Shooting star* 10. *The gun* 11. *Tell it to your heart* 12. *I love you Suzanne*

Originally released in 2006 as Collections, the budget-priced Greatest Hits [Steel Box] compilation features 12 songs from Lou Reed's late-70s/early-80s output, including obvious hits like "Walk on the Wild Side," "Satellite of Love," and "Vicious," as well as deeper cuts like "Tell It to Your Heart" from 1986's wildly uneven Mistrial and "The Gun" from 1982's over-looked Blue Mask album. It's by no means definitive, nor does it make a lick of sense, but there are enough decent tracks to not turn it into a coaster. ---James Christopher Monger, Rovi

Singer, songwriter and guitarist Lou Reed was born on March 2, 1942, in Brooklyn, New York. In 1965, he co-founded the Velvet Underground, a rock band managed by Andy Warhol. Reed went solo in the 1970s, scoring a hit with the song "Walk on the Wild Side" and releasing more than 16 albums, including Coney Island Baby and Berlin. He died on October 27, 2013, at age 71. Lou Reed was born Lewis Allan Reed at Beth El Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, on March 2, 1942. He spent most of his childhood in Long Island, where he grew up in a Jewish family. Reed took an early interest in music and played guitar in several bands during his high school years. During this period, he underwent electroshock therapy intended to cure him of his bisexuality.

Reed graduated from Syracuse University, where he studied writing and film. After college, he

moved to New York City and began writing songs for Pickwick Records.

In 1964, Reed scored a minor hit with the parody single "The Ostrich." Pickwick hired a band, including future Velvet Underground bandmate John Cale, to back Reed's vocals. The two became friends, collaborators and roommates. Reed and Cale recruited Reed's college acquaintances, guitarist Sterling Morrison and drummer Maureen Tucker, to join a band they called the Velvet Underground. The group soon caught the attention of artist Andy Warhol, who incorporated them into his regular parties and introduced them to the New York art scene. Warhol claimed some ownership of the band, compelling them to take on European model Nico as a singer on their debut album. Despite their resistance, the first Velvet Underground album, called *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, is considered one of the most influential in rock history. Some of Reed's songs, including "Heroin," addressed his growing drug use.

The volatile combination of personalities within the band could not coexist peacefully for long. By the time the band recorded their next album, *White Light/White Heat*, both Nico and Warhol were no longer participants. Cale and Reed clashed, driving Cale from the band. The Velvet Underground released two more albums with more pop-oriented tracks by Reed, including "Sweet Jane." In 1970, Reed left the band, retiring to his parents' home on Long Island. Lou Reed briefly worked at his father's tax accounting firm before signing a solo recording contract with RCA Records. His first album, *Lou Reed*, contained re-recorded versions of unreleased Velvet Underground songs, and was not a commercial or critical success.

In 1972, Reed released *Transformer*. Co-produced by David Bowie, the album contained the hit single "Walk on the Wild Side," which paid tribute to the hustlers and transvestites Reed had met through Andy Warhol, and the song "Perfect Day." The record is widely considered to be the pinnacle of Reed's solo career.

Following *Transformer*, Reed recorded a number of albums with wildly differing styles and cultivated an antagonistic and erratic persona. The 1975 electronic double album *Metal Music Machine*, in particular, was inaccessible to the point of being commercially untenable. Some critics interpreted it as a gesture of contempt toward Reed's record label and even his fans—a charge that Reed denied.

In an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine in 1987, Reed stated, "All through this, I've always thought that if you thought of all of it as a book then you have the Great American Novel, every record as a chapter. They're all in chronological order. You take the whole thing, stack it and

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listen to it in order, there's my Great American Novel."

A Velvet Underground reunion in 1990 was short-lived—a result of quarreling between Cale and Reed. Reed continued to perform and record into his later years, releasing more than 16 albums over the course of his long career. In 2013, Lou Reed became very ill. He canceled several of his scheduled performances, including his appearance at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in March of that year. At the time, he blamed "unavoidable complications" for pulling out of these shows. It was later revealed that he had been suffering from liver failure.

Reed received a liver transplant in May 2013. The operation was done at a hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. News about Reed's transplant broke that June, while the rocker was still on the mend from his major medical procedure. He credited his return to health to his medical treatment. "I am a triumph of modern medicine, physics and chemistry," he wrote on his website. Reed also believed that his healthy lifestyle and tai chi practice had helped his body recover from the illness and surgery.

Reed expressed his desire to record new songs and return to performing, but he didn't get the chance to delve back into his music career for long. He died on October 27, 2013. He was 71 years old. Liver disease was determined to be the cause of his death.

Reed married British designer Sylvia Morales in 1980. The couple eventually divorced. In 2008, Reed married musician and performance artist Laurie Anderson. In addition to shaping rock 'n' roll for nearly 50 years and being an inspiration to rock musicians worldwide, Reed published two books of photographs during his lifetime: *Emotions in Action* and *Lou Reed's New York*.
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