

## My Morning Jacket - Circuital (2011)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Victory Dance* (05:40) 2. *Circuital* (07:19) 3. *The Day Is Coming* (03:17) [play](#) 4. *Wonderful (The Way I Feel)* (04:17) 5. *Outta My System* (03:22)

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6. *Holdin On To Black Metal* (04:19) 7. *First Light* (03:46) 8. *You Wanna Freak Out* (01:41) 9. *Slow Slow Tune* (04:31) 10. *Movin Away* (05:13)

Musicians: Jim James (singer-songwriter, guitarist - also known as Yim Yames), "Two-Tone" Tommy (bassist), Patrick Hallahan (drummer), Carl Broemel (guitarist, pedal steel guitarist, saxophonist, vocalist), Bo Koster (keyboardist, percussionist, vocalist).

"It just felt a lot like it did when we started out," says Jim James of making *Circuital*, My Morning Jacket's sixth studio album – words that will be met with sweet relief by those who found 2008's *Evil Urges* one glitzy-soul-funk genre-meld too far. Here, experimental leanings are cast aside in favour of sizzling jams, massive hooks and a pair of the most beautiful ballads James has ever written. Co-produced by the singer and Tucker Martine (who he met while contributing backing vocals to Laura Veirs' *July Flame*), the emphasis during recording was on catching the sound of a band "feeding off each other" in a room, something captured admirably in these 10 songs.

*Victory Dance* sets the bar very, very high – James' shamanistic ramblings matched to a menacing groove poised to turn in on itself at any second – before the title-track pushes it higher still, a contemplation of cycles, loops, circuits and "spinning out gracefully" only to end up "right in the same place we started out". Bolstered by virtuosic guitar work and carried by James' persuasive croon, almost every aspect of what makes the group such a thrilling prospect is present in its seven minutes, and in this respect it acts as a blueprint for the record as a whole.

Almost every aspect, mind: James' warm tones are purpose-built for the kind of emotion

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presented on Movin' Away, a gorgeous, gentle waltz which closes proceedings. Warm piano chords and slide guitar inform its Nashville-flavoured sound, the second line of each verse finding his voice crack into aching falsetto to quietly magnificent effect.

Between these two poles the band revels in exuberant, glammy pop and driving Southern-fried rock: replete with children's choir, Holdin' On to Black Metal is funny and sweet in all the ways Evil Urges' Highly Suspicious wasn't, while You Wanna Freak Out and The Day Is Coming burrow deep into your consciousness after but one or two listens. Wonderful (The Way I Feel), meanwhile, is a halcyon ode to contentment, furnished by strings that lilt and swerve into pockets of the song you'd least expect.

Not a reinvention or a full-circle, then, My Morning Jacket's sixth is better than either of these things: a reminder both to its players exactly why they got into this music lark to begin with, and to all of us how effortlessly enjoyable they are at their best. ---James Skinner, BBC Review

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