

## Cirkus - Wild Dogs (2018)

Written by bluesever

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CD1 1. *Falling the Tree* (9:27) 2. *Limbo* (9:12) 3. *Johnny Got His Gun* (6:46) 4. *Hang Over* (2:54) 5. *Pastance* (4:51) 6. *The Nightwatch* (6:40) 7. *Dead End* (13:30) 8. *The Redeemer* (11:56) 9. *Broken Promises* (5:00) CD2 10. *Wild Dogs* (7:14) 11. *Growing Seeds* (10:23) 12. *What Remains* (9:13) 13. *Sanctus* (11:15) 14. *Harlequin* (11:15) 15. *Dalhousie's Walk* (19:15)  
C. Lucas Proulx - lead & backing vocals Serge Doucet - guitars Martin Vincent - acoustic 12-string guitar Alain Proulx - bass, keyboards, drums, percussion, lead & backing vocals

This is the original 'Official Bootleg' release version of Wild Dogs, the initial offering from the Canadian trio Cirkus (now a quartet). Since remastered, remixed, re-ordered and pretty much re-everythinged for a second shot, which tells you a lot about this version. The first thing it tells you is that the band have a lot of belief in this collection. Tracks like Hang Over and Pastance having been around since the 1970s. The second thing it tells you is that they know that this is still not right. I can't tell you whether the second version irons out the faults of this one, I haven't listened to it, and the reason I haven't listened to it is that life is too damned short, and I can tell you that there is one problem which will inevitably remain, which is that the whole indigestible lump is far too long. There is an almost incontinent insistence in throwing everything into the pot. Some kind producer needs to show some tough love and persuade the band that something needs to go on the cutting room floor to render the whole a pleasure to listen to rather than a chore. There's nothing wrong with saving a few pieces for the follow up, or even the bonus digipack outtakes version, but you have to have a carefully honed original work to build on. Look at the songs Steven Wilson leaves behind. If he can do it, so can you.

Now I know there are those out there who are mightily impressed by the length of an offering, in a 'Never mind the quality, feel the width,' sort of way, and if you are one of those, then you are going to love listening to this and its follow up version. And good luck to you.

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So what is it all about? The concept is that in each of us there are two dogs, one good one evil, and the one who prevails is the one who gets fed better, however since we feed both, the conflict goes on. Or in this case on and on and on. OK I'll give it a break now, but it's hardly the sort of concept to sustain for 140 minutes worth of what isn't even that great or interesting music. For those who want to take the perseverance test, then I can tell you that if you imagine very early Genesis recording with an amp made out of a biscuit tin, then you'll get an idea of what is on this disc. I hope that the official version does sort out all the many faults of this. Somewhere there's a decent LP's worth of material trying to get out. This isn't it. This is a wild dog's dinner. ---Andrew Cottrell, backgroundmagazine.nl

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