



BOWIE CELLO SYMPHONIC:
BLACKSTAR

MAYA BEISER ★ EVAN ZIPORYN

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BLACKSTAR

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn

'TIS A PITY SHE WAS A WHORE

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn

LAZARUS

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn and Jamshied Sharifi

PRELUDE TO SUE

Maya Beiser/Evan Ziporyn

SUE (OR IN A SEASON OF CRIME)

David Bowie, Maria Schneider, Paul Bateman,
Bob Bhamra/arr. Evan Ziporyn

GIRL LOVES ME

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn

DOLLAR DAYS

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn

I CAN'T GIVE EVERYTHING AWAY

David Bowie/arr. Evan Ziporyn and Jamshied Sharifi

Maya Beiser, cello

Ambient Orchestra conducted by Evan Ziporyn



David Bowie released **Blackstar** on his 69th birthday, January 8, 2016, two days before his death. It was his parting gift to the world, a self-eulogy, hinting at the sacred and reveling in the profane. **Blackstar** is a concept album, but the concept is unnamed, or is the Un-nameable itself: facing death, living in its shadow. There is no clear story line, no single alter ego, no Ziggy Stardust or Aladdin Sane. Instead Bowie inhabits a collection of characters, taking us through aspects of their lives, using a myriad set of images – hospital beds, death masks, possession, trance, acts of passion and violence – that evoke Death and Transfiguration.

We made our **Blackstar** to honor Bowie and his influence, to immerse ourselves in this amazing music, to live inside it and embody it. But also to transform it, in the spirit of Bowie and of the record itself. Even in these instrumental versions, the words and their meaning hover over the music, despite their absence, much like the ‘spirit’ figure in the first song: gone, but with a trace.

David Bowie’s voice was unique and inimitable, his range matched by his stylistic breadth. Over his career, from album to album, but also within a single song, sometimes a single phrase, Bowie would shapeshift while always remaining himself. He could be a brooding rocker one moment and an English music hall star the next; he could start a phrase bel canto and end it like a blues man. He could be a jazz crooner, soul stylist, folk singer, sprech-stimmer, always sounding expressive and authentic. Because his 4-octave vocal range matches the cello almost exactly, I knew immediately that our **Blackstar** would be a cello concerto, with Maya Beiser as soloist. She transforms the instrument with each performance, whether she’s playing Bach, Dvorak, Piazzolla, or Janis Joplin. In **Blackstar** she is vocalist one moment, lead guitarist the next, she evokes Bowie’s spirit while never ceasing to be herself.

~ **Evan Ziporyn**

AMBIENT ORCHESTRA

Evan Ziporyn, director

Christine Southworth, orchestra manager

Sarah Brady – flute & piccolo

Caroline Shaffer – flute & alto flute

Alexis Mitchell – oboe

Leonardo Ziporyn – oboe & english horn

Shannon Leigh – clarinet

David Angelo – clarinet and bass clarinet

Maria D’Ambrosio & Ryan Fossier – horns

Jonah Kappraff & Brian Voelz – trumpets

Justin Coyne – trombone

Stephen Filippone – bass trombone

Kevin Madison – keyboard

Christopher Gunnell, Daniel Reifsteck – percussion

Nicholas Stevens – drum kit

Sasha Callahan (principal), **Alec Norkey**,
Brian Stuligross, Audrey Wozniak – violins

Amelia Hollander Ames (principal), **Emilie Catlett**,
Roselyn Hobbs, Sam Kelder – violas

Leo Eguchi (principal), **Ben Baker, Olivia Harris**,
Brianna Tagliaferro – cellos

Gillian Dana (principal), **Christopher Janson** – double bass

Produced by **Maya Beiser** and **Evan Ziporyn**

Recorded at **Isabella Gardner Museum** and **Area 52 Studios**, Saugerties NY

Engineer: **Dave Cook**

Mixed by **Dave Cook** at **Area 52 Studios**, Saugerties NY

mastered by **Scott Hull** at **Masterdisk**, Peekskill NY

Executive producer: **Maya Beiser**

Label manager: **Emily Duncan**

Art direction: **Denise Burt** elevator-design.dk

Special thanks to **Alex Rigopoulos & Sachi Sato**,
Boston Conservatory at Berklee (Cathy Young, director,
Michael Shinn, dean), **Gabriela Diaz**, **Sarah Brady**,
Ryan Fossier, **MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology**
(CAST), **MIT Music & Theater Arts**, **Ryan Meyer**,
Richard Guerin, **David Middleton**, **Hannah Crideris**,
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
(**Peggy Fogelman**, director; **George Steel**, curator of music)

For more about this album and other upcoming projects,
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UPC/EAN: 860001769272 | IMR004

