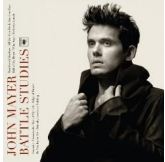


John Mayer – Battle Studies (2009)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 22 October 2014 16:01 - Last Updated Saturday, 13 March 2021 16:18

John Mayer – Battle Studies (2009)



01. *Heartbreak Warfare* 02. *All We Ever Do Is Say Goodbye* 03. *Half Of My Heart* 04. *Who Says* 05. *Perfectly Lonely* 06. *Assassin* 07. *Crossroads* 08. *War Of My Life* 09. *Edge Of Desire* 10. *Do You Know Me* 11. *Friends, Lovers Or Nothing* John Mayer – vocals; guitars; keyboards; sound effects; percussion; production Steve Jordan – drums; percussion; production Pino Palladino – bass + Ian McLagan – Hammond organ; Wurlitzer electric piano; piano; pump organ, celeste Jamie Muhoberac – keyboards Robbie McIntosh – guitar Waddy Wachtel – acoustic guitars Bob Reynolds – saxophone Bryan Lipps – trumpet Taylor Swift – vocals

It's no secret that John Mayer is a 21st Century Fox, wining and dining women all through the tabloid headlines, so it's about time he delivered an album that traded upon his loverman persona -- and *Battle Studies* is that record in spades. Retaining more than a modicum of the slick soul-blues undertones of *Continuum*, Mayer fashions a modern groove album, a record that maintains a smooth seductive vibe so thoroughly it spills into a weird one-man band cover of "Crossroads," turning Clapton's contained Cream masterwork into something about vibe, not virtuosity. Mayer remains a disciple of Slowhand, but he shows an unusual interest in the big AOR stylings of *Journeyman*, along with Stevie Ray Vaughan's *In Step*, creating a coolly clean blend of synths and Strats, one that's as much about texture as it is song -- something perfectly appropriate for a make-out album like this. Sometimes, Mayer dips too heavily toward the texture -- not just in the sound sculptures in the bedding of "Heartbreak Warfare," but even the strum-n-croon of "All We Ever Do Is Say Goodbye" -- and his love-as-war metaphors land with the thud of a dud bomb, but he can't resist a good, tight melody and builds the bulk of *Battle Studies* upon them: the elegant "Half of My Heart," the stoned self-deprecating wit of "Who Says," the softly soulful "Perfectly Lonely." Here, Mayer is effortlessly seductive and somewhat irresistible, and it's easy to see why the ladies love cool John. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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