

Van Morrison – Astral Weeks (1968)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 06 February 2012 12:14 - Last Updated Sunday, 24 March 2019 22:20

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In The Beginning: 01. *Astral Weeks* - 7:00 02. *Beside You* - 5:10 03. *Sweet Thing* - 4:20 [play](#)

04. *Cyprus Avenue* - 6:54

Afterwards:

05. *The Way Young Lovers Do* - 3:10

[play](#)

06. *Madame George* - 9:36 07. *Ballerina* - 6:56 08. *Slim Slow Slider* - 3:17

Personnel: - Van Morrison - vocals, rhythm guitar - Jay Berliner - guitar - Richard Davis - bass - Connie Kay - drums - John Payne - flute, soprano saxophone (08) - Warren Smith, Jr. - percussion, vibraphone - Larry Fallon - harpsichord (04) - Barry Kornfeld - guitar (05) - Lewis Merenstein – producer

It is one of rock's least-likely masterworks. Van Morrison had made a name for himself as the lead singer of the Belfast bar band Them, which achieved immortality with the garage anthem "Gloria." He then signed a solo deal in the US, skimming the Top Ten with the irresistible singalong "Brown-Eyed Girl," but he dismissed the album that came from those sessions. Signing with Warner Bros. Records, Morrison then assembled a bunch of jazz-based players, took them into a New York studio, and emerged two days later with *Astral Weeks*, a languid, impressionistic, utterly gorgeous song cycle that sounded like nothing he had done previously — and really, nothing anyone had done previously. Morrison sings of lost love, death, and nostalgia for childhood in the Celtic soul that would become his signature. *Astral Weeks* didn't reach the charts, but its mystic poetry, spacious grooves, and romantic incantations still resonate in ways no other music can. ---Alan Light, entertainment.time.com

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