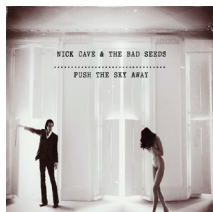


REVIEWS

NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS

*Push the Sky Away*

[Bad Seed]

Though he's demonstrated a penchant for sonic mayhem over the years, Nick Cave is often at his most unsettling when he turns down the volume. In fact, some of the songs are downright menacing on his latest with the Bad Seeds, their first new album since 2008's *Dig, Lazarus, Dig!!!* These nine new tunes simmer darkly, as spacious minor-key arrangements flow around Cave's smooth, foreboding voice. Brittle piano and a deep bassline frame woodwinds on opener "We No Who U R," and there's a threatening rumble in the background of "We Real Cool," as Cave bites off lyrics in a caustic murmur. The tension recedes on "Wide Lovely Eyes," with glimmers of electric piano and ticking guitar framing understated, affectionate vocals, but it's back in full force on "Higgs Boson Blues," a nearly eight-minute drone with apocalyptic lyrics and hypnotic guitar. Although there's plenty of room in these songs, Cave and company give them a claustrophobic air that crowds in and becomes impossible to resist. —Eric R. Danton

'Although there's plenty of room in these songs, Cave and company give them a claustrophobic air that crowds in and becomes impossible to resist.'

