

CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR

MATT BERNINGER'S

SERPENTINE PRISON

"These songs really take their time, they feel very, very finessed and there is this nice, slow simmering quality to them that I think works really well. Just beautiful, this whole record."

"Every generation has that self-lacerating crooner dude who is urbane, emotional, a little bit over the top. The guy who takes us to our dark places, whether it's Leonard Cohen or Nick Cave—my personal favorite was Mark Eitzel from the band American Music Club. I think Matt Berninger has been that for a lot of millennials and on this record he really refines that role and reflects on it. He not only refines it but he kind of critiques it."

npr all songs considered

"...the alluring album boasts a Nick Cave-like swagger; soulful, haunting musicianhip; and razor-sharp lyrics."

Los Angeles
MAGAZINE

"After 20 years of success with The National, he has finally opted to release a solo record, *Serpentine Prison*. As expected, it shines a new light on the artist. Although his devastating baritone has guided the group for two decades, stripping it down for *Serpentine Prison* provides a different kind of decadence that only he—as both a vocalist and songwriter—could seamlessly pull off. The most satisfying part of *Serpentine Prison* is that it's not a continuation of The National's incredible discography. Berninger has always been a skilled lyricist, but on this project he zeroes in on personal relationships with much more intensity."

"*Serpentine Prison* displays infinite promise from an artist who has already given us a catalogue that has made a lasting impact on rock music as we know it."

Paste

"Pure and earthy melodies are allowed to simply exist, primarily over acoustic guitar, with the exception of a few more standout moments in other instrumentation. The album is the perfect counterbalance to Berninger's usual alternative sound."

Overall, this is a beautifully crafted record from top to bottom. *Serpentine Prison* is an album to get lost in, with each track presenting pure and simple songwriting magic. The National fans will certainly be able to sit back and be proud of Berninger's first ever full-length solo venture. He stayed true to his signature sound and vocal style from The National, while still experimenting here and there in ways that shed new light on his craft. What else could one ask of a solo debut?"

mxduwn

"Stark, weirdly comforting, bruised and beautiful, *Serpentine Prison* is like being given access to Berninger's private diary where you're allowed to view his most intimate thoughts and secrets."

NORTHERN TRANSMISSIONS

"*Serpentine Prison* shows us something we already knew: Berninger shines when the focus is on him"

BEATS PER MINUTE

"The National frontman's gorgeous solo debut leans into his band's core sound while emphasizing what makes him unique"

"The result is a set of forlorn ballads that start spare and gather beauty as they grow."

Rolling Stone

"The National lead singer Matt Berninger is not only one of the best songwriters and live frontmen in music today, he is one of the most fascinating."

Forbes

"...it has a timeless flavor that traverses decades of musical influences and singer-songwriter flourishes, ending up somewhere between '70s confessional balladry and smoky barroom poetry, underlined by gently drifting rhythms and aching earnest lyricism."

AV CLUB

"there's little doubt that [the album] captures what Berninger does best in both fresh and familiar ways."

COS
CONSEQUENCE OF SOUND

"It's also nice to hear Matt over these more simple musical backdrops. The National's subtle complexity is one of their biggest draws, but something that's a little more relaxed (instrumentally, at least) suits Matt's distinct songwriting too."

Brooklyn VEGAN

"*Serpentine Prison* features the same heady baritone and moody lyrics that are cornerstones of the National's brand. But without Aaron and Bryce's complementary guitars, Bryan's anchoring drums and Scott's reverberating bass, the mellow sound carrying over is decidedly Berninger's, fine-tuned by longtime producer Booker T. Jones."

The Washington Post

As might be expected from the smoky-voiced lyricist for The National, *Serpentine Prison* features a cast of burnout cases, nomads and spurned lovers set to music that, while not a significant departure from that produced by Berninger's bandmates (the Dessner and Devendorf brothers), is more sedate and nuanced under Jones' direction.

billboard

"*Serpentine Prison* is a maze of thought afloat in the sparks that emanate from the grind between comfort and discomfort. It's sweet and thoughtful in its melancholy ("One More Second"). It's brooding in its delicate joy ("Distant Axis"). It's a walk through a garden when you aren't sure if it's about to rain. But isn't rain good for the garden? Hush; listen. It's a real success."

"*Serpentine Prison* is a breathtakingly beautiful album."

American Songwriter
THE CULT OF MUSIC

"Musically, *Serpentine Prison* is not a drastic departure from the National—Berninger's weary voice and introspective songwriting are constants—but it is a bit earthier and more stripped-down than the band's recent efforts."

Newsweek

"The originals that make up *Serpentine Prison* are true to name: labyrinthine explorations of the psyche, they oscillate between pleading and desire, between dependency and assertion."

GRAMMY.COM

"After two decades fronting the National, [Berninger has] become one of the most beloved singers and lyricists to rise up in the 21st century indie scene."

"Jones has helped Berninger craft a dusty, weathered, and often quite pretty solo endeavor."

"The organic, mellow, roots-tinged aesthetic of the National's self-titled debut or portions of *Sad Songs For Dirty Lovers* might give some kind of hint to the patient and acoustic-driven sound of *Serpentine Prison*. Of course, 20 more years of experience and the influence of Jones make this a different beast entirely. Berninger was going for the feel of old-school albums, and he ends up approximating that feel with the weathered soulfulness of *Serpentine Prison*."

STEREOGUM

"This really seems like a singer's record, where the focal point is [Berninger's] voice."

UPROXX

"It's a sequestered, rainy Sunday type of album with flawed, world-weary vocal performances that are laid bare by such impressionistic accompaniment."

A ALLMUSIC

"*Serpentine Prison* unveils a different side to Matt Berninger in the hands of Booker T Jones, with less layers of instrumentation to hide behind, this collection allows his masterful lyrics and song-craft to shine through unfiltered."

"Matt is of course a major part of The National's chemical constitution meaning that a number of songs here could definitely pass for National material, but something more intimate emerges within the country-fried restraint that the legendary Booker T Jones unfurls at the production helm."

DIY

"It's powerful, intimate stuff, and it feels like a man unburdening his soul in a therapy session, which is what all great music is if you delve deeply enough inside. It's also the sound of serious musicians playing together at their empathic best, brought together by a man, in producer Booker T, who knows exactly how to bring the best out of musicians after more than 60 years of doing exactly that."

LOUDER THAN WAR

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT KRISTA WILLIAMS OR CARLA SACKS
212.741.1000 AT SACKS & CO., KRISTA@SACKSCO.COM OR CARLA@SACKSCO.COM.