



Complicated Shadows: The Life and Music of Elvis Costello

Graeme Thomson

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Elvis Costello is undoubtedly one of the most important and challenging musicians of the last thirty years. *Complicated Shadows* paints a detailed portrait of an intensely private, complex, and creatively restless individual. It draws on a wealth of new research, including exclusive interviews with people from all stages of Costello's life and career: classmates, friends, members of his early bands, former lovers, members of the Attractions, producers, and various collaborators. *Complicated Shadows* reveals the circumstances surrounding his marriages to ex-Pogues bassist Cait O'Riordan and jazz singer Diana Krall, and the bitter breakup of his long-term backing band, the Attractions. Costello's "coiled tight" personality and penchant for outrageous candor set the tone for a frenetic, and aesthetically inventive, independent band. Their independence is epitomized by their infamous 1977 Saturday Night Live appearance (replacing the Sex Pistols, who dropped out) when Costello cut short the scheduled song, "Less Than Zero," then directed the band to play the as-of-yet unreleased "Radio Radio." Costello didn't appear on live U.S. television again until the 1980s. *Complicated Shadows* contains a full examination and analysis of the entirety of Costello's vast and varied musical output, both in the studio and on the stage.

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