



# Atlanta Music Guide

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"if you know what's good for you" ...  
a regular look  
by kevin madigan

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For reasons best known to himself, **Bruce Springsteen** decided to record his latest album in Atlanta, and in so doing raised an eyebrow or two. According to Tyler Pittman of Columbia Records, The Boss liked the laid-back pace of the city and found a house that he and his family could stay in without too much fuss. Fair enough. Local maverick Brendan O'Brien (**Pearl Jam, Stone Temple Pilots**) was recruited as producer and the sessions at Southern Tracks went smoothly and swiftly. Pittman says that the record was not expected until November, but now *The Rising* is set for release on July 30.

So, what about the songs themselves?

Well, it's a mixed bunch. The man is evidently going through a kind of religious epiphany, judging from some of the lyrics. The predominant theme seems to be of alienation and loss, followed by redemption and acceptance. It's almost a 'theme' album. For a man with a seemingly happy family life, Bruce appears to be somewhat tormented. Be that as it may, the music sounds just fine, and the return of the E Street Band is more than welcome. Clarence and the boys make their first appearance on a Springsteen recording since 1984's *Born In The USA*, but with none of that album's painful bombast, thank heavens.

Pittman threw a little bash at The Hard Rock's Velvet Underground room for industry types and provided a taste of *The Rising* prior to street date. The lyrics were displayed on a large screen (the only thing missing was a bouncing ball) and everyone paid close attention, clapping merrily after each of the eight selections. (There are a total of 15 songs on the record). Best received by far was 'Mary's Place' which featured Mr. Clemons at full throttle. "I'm pullin' all the faith that I can see / From that back hole on the horizon" sings Bruce, a trifle desperate perhaps, but effective. The unabashed romantic in him also surfaces, most notably in 'Nothing Man' with a chorus that goes: "Darlin' give me your kiss / Come and take my hand / I am the nothing man." The title track (and first single) is a rousing number that unequivocally states the singer's religious orientation while "Wearing the cross of my calling." Should we expect a gospel album next? Not such a crazy idea, really...

The arrangements are full and the sound is crisp. These are musicians who love what they do. The members of the E Street band have been in limbo for a long time, (with the exception of a world tour a couple of years ago) while Bruce dabbled in other things. They seem hungry to get back to work. Concerts are being lined up and the tour will hit Atlanta on December 2nd.

Until next time...