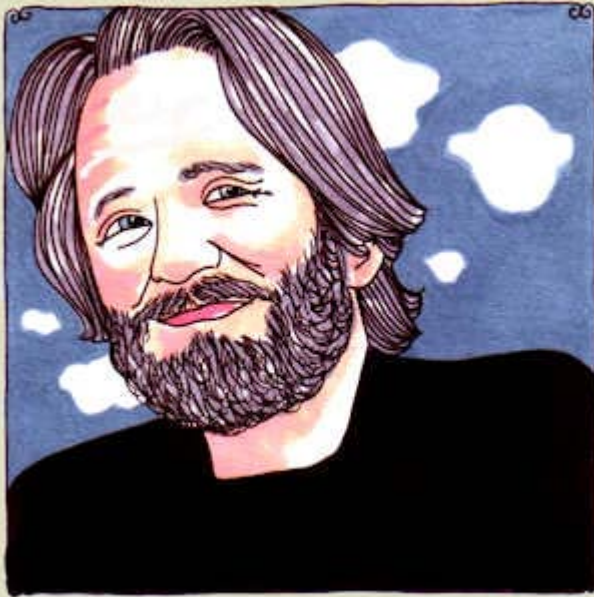


Kris Kristofferson



Sadness Has Nothing To Do With Sanity

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Words by Sean Moeller // Illustration by Johnnie Cluney // Sound engineering by Brett Allen

Kris Kristofferson, for as long as the world's known him, has been reflective, prying open his heart at its stitches and pulling apart the protective casing surrounding the vaporous and mystical soul that's been ever-important to the Texan, and just giving them air, staring into the holes and getting drowsy on what they're each telling him silently. The thumping of that heart has always spoken to him, a handsome man still at the age of 73, and it's always forced him to believe in its neatly focused, but strong powers. It's there for love and for pain and for keeping everything together, firing and pumping without any break, without a chance to reconsider. The soul, to which Kristofferson addresses the majority of his concerns on his excellent new album, "Closer To The Bone," is still something that he will be figuring out, trying to demystify until the very day of his final ache, his final breath and the last fading dream. As one of the finest and most respected songwriters of all-time, it's a true honor that we're able to present a session with him here - recorded just days ago at Swing House in Los Angeles, Calif., in a soundproofed back room that was no bigger than a coffin and drew the timeless comment from Kristofferson, "You gotta leave the room just to change your mind." This new album has Kristofferson reflecting even more, thinking about how time takes days away so greedily, how he smiles on his children's faces look when they sleep, how he communes with the moonlight, how the heavens appear to him these days ("the heavens above me seem empty and gray"), how the barrooms hold more truths in their amber lights than most give them credit for, how people can be saved by those who love them the most and how nothing really makes much goddamn sense, now or then, no matter how hard it's thought about. Things just burn and they burn and they burn, until they just burn out with little fanfare. He's singing songs to his sister Sinead, to his children and one that he wrote as an 11-year-old boy - a song that brings up the idea of singing into a beer and how someone's skin looks like that of a heifer. He sounds solemn and intent on finally reaching some of the answers that he's been seeking out for so many long years. Most of the album revolves around his simple guitar playing and his simple melodies, which never fail to bring the gravity into the picture and to make all of the revelations sound as if they were there all along, but it took an older him to finally see or hear them. He sings on "Sister Sinead," "There's humans entrusted with guarding our gold and humans in charge of saving our souls," and ends it by suggesting that some candles flicker and some candles fade, only to suggest that the light of his sister burns as true as any. "From Here To Forever," with Kristofferson saying at the outset that "here's one I wrote for my kids," is a tender song that could bring any parent to sobbing puddles with its deft way of capturing a parent's unconditional care and love. He

sings, "Fill your heart for the morning tomorrow/You've still got a long way to grow/And the love that you're dreaming will guide you/And live like a song in your soul," and it's obvious that he's worried about many souls, not just his own, and the record is great evidence of his capacity. You almost wonder if he's had any depressing cries lately, for it's all heavy and it's all deeply sentimental, in all of the right ways. He sings, profoundly, "right out of his soul," as does a character in one of his late album tracks, but Kristofferson knows this, "Blood will make you crazy, but your soul will keep you sane." And sadness has nothing to do with sanity.

