



Nick Drake: Dreaming England (Reverb)

Nathan Wiseman-Trouse

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Since his untimely death in 1974 at the age of twenty six, Nick Drake has not only gained a huge international audience, which eluded him during his lifetime, but has also come to represent the epitome of English romanticism. Drake's small but much-loved body of work has evoked comparisons with Blake, Keats, Vaughan Williams and Delius, placing him within a long line of English mystical romanticism. Yet upon closer inspection Drake's work betrays a myriad of international, cosmopolitan influences and approaches that seem to confound his status as archetypal English troubadour.

Nathan Wiseman-Trowse unravels the myths surrounding Nick Drake's music to show how audiences have come to think of his work as representing the very idea of Englishness itself. The music itself provides clues, hinting at a specific English landscape that Drake would have wandered through during his lifetime. Yet Drake's interest in blues, jazz, and eastern mysticism hint at a broader conception of English national identity in the late 1960s, far removed from mere parochial nostalgia. Similarly, the framing of Drake's music after his death has done much to situate him as a particular kind of English artist, integrating American counterculture, the English class system and a nostalgic re-imagining of the hippy era for contemporary audiences.

Nick Drake: Dreaming England explores how ideas of Englishness have come to be so intimately associated with the cult singer songwriter. Essential reading for any fan of Nick Drake, the book will also appeal to those interested in folk music or English national identity.

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