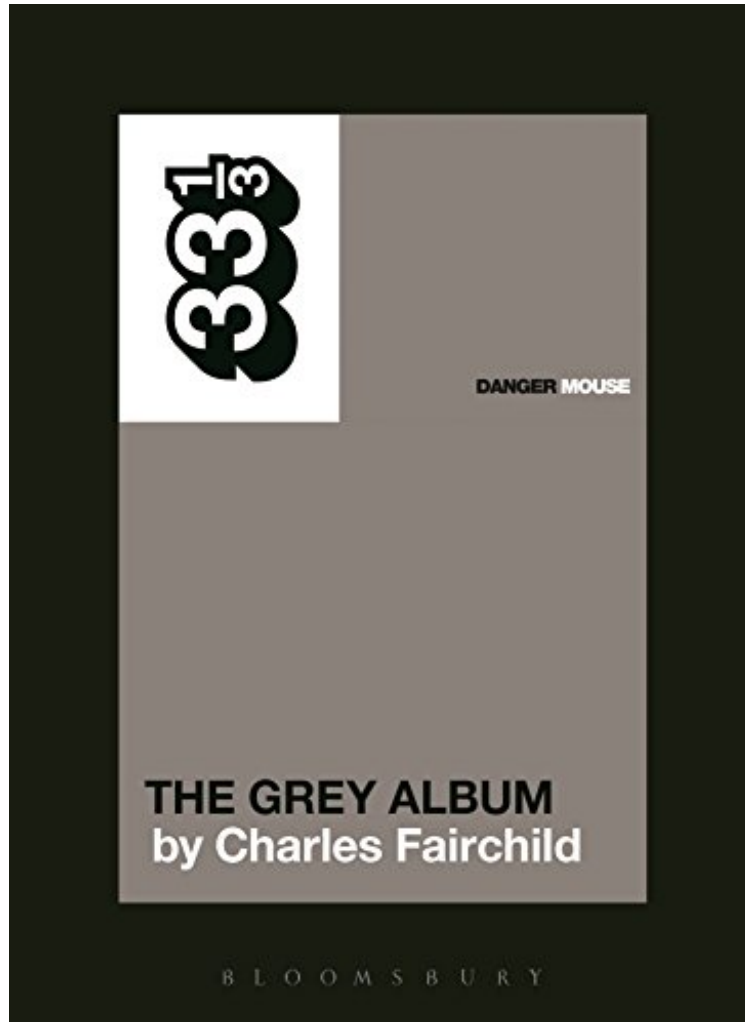


Danger Mouse's The Grey Album (33 1/3)

Charles Fairchild

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Charles Fairchild : Danger Mouse's The Grey Album (33 1/3) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Danger Mouse's The Grey Album (33 1/3):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good Companion to the Grey Album (the only Jay Z album I love [heresy... I know])By ObscuralliI NEVER write these things, and I haven't even finished the book, but this is insightful material - or, at least, a clear articulation of critical information. Fairchild delineates the music industry machinations that led to Grey Tuesday and illuminates my incongruously apolitical experience of the Grey Album. I LOVE that he discusses the album in the economic and political context of both its release and the last 10 years. His blog at <https://charlesfairchild.wordpress.com> is titled "It's so much worse than you think". I agree. Our tastes are manipulated. We are exploited. But if we can still create and enjoy art with critical awareness of the 'situation', there's a slim chance that we - artists and audience - can turn the tide of this culture (slim, so slim, slipping through

fingers...)0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy William T. CollinsGreat, just as expected and fast shipped.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Be Sure to Try Before You BuyBy typicalrecordsI've been on a kick recently of reading entries from this 33 1/3 book series. Obviously the books are going to be somewhere on the hit-or-miss spectrum since each one is written in a different style by a different author. Of the roughly 10 books that I've read, the majority I've enjoyed, a couple I didn't exactly like but they were still easy to read and get through, and then there's this book, which has been an absolute chore to read. For many of the books in this series the author injects their own personality into the text because they are after all writing about one of their favorite records. In this book, there is absolutely no human presence; instead, the text is dry, fact-laden, and verbose. The book essentially reads like an academic study. I would have long ago abandoned reading it, but I'm the type of person that once I start something (like a movie, book, album) I just have to finish it. I'm past the halfway point in this book and the author has yet to even discuss Jay-Z, The Beatles, or 'The Grey Album.' So far he's only written about the history of sample-based music and how it evolved.Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to dissuade anyone from reading this book. Clearly there will be people who will like it. One person has already left a glowing five-star review of this book. And his/her review is actually very indicative of the writing style used in the book. The reviewer states that for him/her the book provides "insightful material - or, at least, a clear articulation of critical information" and that the author "delineates the music industry machinations that led to Grey Tuesday and illuminates my incongruously apolitical experience of the Grey Album." If that type of writing appeals to you and you want your incongruously apolitical experience of the Grey Album to be illuminated, then you will probably love this book. But if you're dubious that you can read an entire book written in that style, then I highly suggest checking out the 25 page sample of this book that provides before committing to purchasing it.

This book marks the tenth anniversary of The Grey Album. The online release and circulation of what Danger Mouse called his 'art project' was an unexpected watershed in the turn-of-the-century brawls over digital creative practice. The album's suppression inspired widespread digital civil disobedience and brought a series of contests and conflicts over creative autonomy in the online world to mainstream awareness. The Grey Album highlighted, by its very form, the profound changes wrought by the new technology and represented the struggle over the tectonic shifts in the production, distribution and consumption of music. But this is not why it matters. The Grey Album matters because it is more than just a clever, if legally ambiguous, amalgam. It is an important and compelling case study about the status of the album as a cultural form in an era when the album appears to be losing its coherence and power. Perhaps most importantly, The Grey Album matters because it changes how we think about the traditions of musical practice of which it is a part. Danger Mouse created a broad, inventive commentary on forms of musical creativity that have defined all kinds of music for centuries: borrowing, appropriation, homage, derivation, allusion and quotation. The struggle over this album wasn't just about who gets to use new technology and how. The battle over The Grey Album struck at the heart of the very legitimacy of a long recognised and valued form of musical expression: the interpretation of the work of one artist by another.

About the AuthorCharles Fairchild is Associate Professor of Popular Music at the University of Sydney, Australia. He is the author of *Music, Radio and the Public Sphere* (2012) and *Pop Idols and Pirates* (2008). He has published in such journals as *Popular Music*, *Television and New Media*, *Media, Culture and Society* and *Popular Music and Society*.