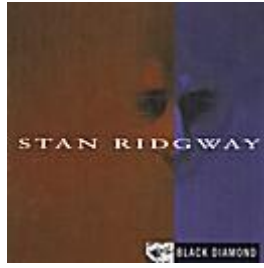


## Mp3 Stan Ridgway - Black Diamond



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1998 release. "BLACK DIAMOND'S fast moving novellas are full of dense musical imagery, peopled with characters from a human highway 61 revisited" - NME 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, ROCK: Acoustic Details: Stan Ridgway's "weird, wounded folkie on the road" masterpiece. The former Wall Of Voodoo singer spins strange and surreal tales, like a series of dreams that keep you up at night. Contains the secret 13th track, "Hear That Bird". ----- Some know him just as the long lost singer with the great Wall Of Voodoo, others as one of the great unsung maverick geniuses of our time. MELODY MAKER For Stan Ridgway life is like an old detective movie, full of furtive con men and tough dames who hide their daily crimes in the gray mist of the city. This is mature music, short on sentimentality, long on imagination and style. PEOPLE MAGAZINE Stan Ridgway has a cast of thousands at his fingertips, and a wealth of tales in his head. A rare and famous talent. Not part of any club or click, just a maverick in his own right. LONDON MIDWEEK Stan Ridgway is one of the most unique and talented songwriters around. RECORD MIRROR Haunted by America's pulp serial past, Stan Ridgway has become his own wireless theater. THE FACE Stan Ridgway is equal parts Raymond Chandler and John Huston, Johnny Cash and Rod Serling. NME Filtered through his sardonically insightful wit, these stories become engaging not only for the details he includes, but the ones he chooses not to expose as well. THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE Stan Ridgway tells stories from the underside of America. It's the dream gone sour; the dream that never even took root. Tales of losers who battle on and play the game their own way, with a glamour-less beauty and a bath of realism...slices of lives that knew the rules have been drawn up 'someplace else'; characters that have to bluff to get by. FOLLOW MUSIC AUSTRALIA An effective blend of Johnny Cash's morbidity, Bob Dylan's absurdist humour and Jim Thomspon"s bleak outlook, Black Diamond ought to earn Ridgway some new fans. OPTION I wrote him

this letter once, but I never sent it to him. He is a very American kind of songwriter, and he writes from the point of view of a detective or a person passing through town. People need to know about him. He is a brilliant writer. SUZANNE VEGA in HEAR MUSIC Fast moving novellas full of dense musical imagery, peopled with characters from a human highway 61 revisited. THE FACE More noises from America's lost frontier. His songs tell stories that unfold gradually and trade in old fashioned narrative devices like character and suspense. It's a move at once conservative and daring - but, best of all, it works. ROLLING STONE Stan Ridgway is the Nathaniel West of rock. LA WEEKLY Ridgway has the talent to hold your attention by telling a tale in the same intense and clear way that rockers like Neil Young and Lou Reed do. A cool Californian commentator with a sense of humor to match his sense of history. Q MAGAZINE Ridgway's tales of the sad, soft underbelly of the American Dream are songs of hope petering into resignation, of idealism soured into cynicism; he's a very adult writer operating in an arena more usually home to the naive and infantile. THE INDEPENDENTS In fact he's an ingenious writer with a grip on low - life imagery that hearkens back to that of Burroughs, Bukowski and Brecht.. If a modern American counterpart to Bertolt Brecht's collaborations with Kurt Weill exists, it's the music of Stan Ridgway. SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE If David Lynch were a musician, he would be Stan Ridgway. Both look at Leave It To Beaver America and see serial killers lurking beneath its porches. Both can infuse a simple everyday object with weirdness and dread, creating a world that's consistently disturbing, fascinating and cool. L.A. WEEKLY Its possible that Ridgway's change of stance reflects a more serious attitude toward his music. Ridgway isn't just a wise guy anymore. L.A. TIMES Black Diamond is Ridgway's best album in years, and it hit extremes of both detachment and passion that make it a career milestone. L.A. READER ----- What Are You Waiting For? Buy This CD And Spread the Word Stan Ridgway is one of those "special" artists -- you know, the ones nobodys quite sure theyve heard of, but people familiar with him just kind of wink, saying: Ive been there. SR is film, hes music, hes literature, hes Johnny Cash and Rod Serling and Ennio Morricone and all sorts of other things all rolled into one. If Harry Dean Stanton wrote tunes, hed be Stan Ridgway. If L.A. Confidential were a person, hed be Stan Ridgway. Every album Stans done is the best album hes ever done. Theyre addictive, theyre good driving music, and some stuff, particularly on this CD and on the Drywall: Work the Dumb Oracle CD, will make you feel just a little uncomfortable to be living in this day and age. Underneath it all, Stan is a stunningly original talent. This is a fantastic CD. Okay? Buy it. Just buy it. If you dont like it, who knows? Maybe

you're not living on the right planet (or maybe you are, and you just don't know it yet).

----- Here's a new review by Joseph Taylor: When Houghton Mifflin reissued a volume of three books by Richard Brautigan a little more than ten years ago, Tom McGuane wrote of his friend's work, "These books are fun to read. . .you can get all the old fictional good things." New West Records has just reissued Stan Ridgway's *Black Diamond*, which appeared briefly on a small label in 1995 and disappeared from print soon after that. I want to state up front that you can get all the old musical good things from it. Ridgway is the kind of unique artist who can tempt critics into deep thoughts, and he probably merits most of them. He's a natural storyteller who writes songs that create a strong mood. He takes risks, and he's hard to peg -- not quite a pop singer, but not so avant-garde as to be inaccessible. While he's uncompromising in his approach, he's fun to listen to. Ridgway's a cult artist who should have a larger following because he likes melody and he creates recordings that are intricate and luxurious. *Black Diamond* is a more open and spacious recording than the three discs that preceded it, but there's plenty of sound for your gear to pull out of it. Sound is important to Ridgway. He uses it to create atmosphere in an almost cinematic way, injecting a keyboard sound or effect to suggest a setting or to underscore a point (it's almost enough to make this two-channel listener consider surround sound). It helps to be attuned to the cultural zeitgeist to truly appreciate what Ridgway is getting at. He frequently makes sly references to movie soundtracks and bits of pop culture kitsch. Ridgway doesn't use these references cynically or as a shortcut to cheap emotion. He uses them to help fill out the story he's telling. In "Big Dumb Town," a heavily-tremoloed guitar helps create the same feeling of physical discomfort one might feel around the confidence man the song describes. "Knife and Fork" uses an odd, distorted keyboard sound to give an ominous edge to the story of a disturbed, overeager seducer. Sometimes Ridgway uses a more straightforward approach. "Luther Played Guitar" pays tribute to Johnny Cash's guitarist, Luther Perkins, by employing the stark, moving simplicity of the Tennessee Two. Since Ridgway creates his stories with humor and a measure of compassion, even unsavory characters are never just stick figures. The narrator of "Knife and Fork" tells the object of his affection that "for your sweet, sweet love I'll even go back on re-hab." The mixture of creepiness and need is both disturbing and oddly moving. As a singer, Ridgway inhabits his characters the way an actor does, and his performances have some of the feel of musical theater -- slightly off-kilter musicals, written by, say, thriller writer Jim Thompson. It would be too easy to create a daunting "serious artist" aura around Ridgway, which is what

I set out to avoid here. There's no getting around the fact that he works hard on his recordings and avoids clichés, both in the melodies he writes and in his lyrics. Ridgway's a serious guy. Don't let that fact keep you from enjoying his music. After I played *Black Diamond* three or four days in a row, my five-year-old son was humming the beautiful, loping piano line that runs through "Knife and Fork." "I like that, Dad," he told me. You'll like it, too. ===== Stan Ridgway's "weird, wounded folkie on the road" masterpiece. The former Wall Of Voodoo singer spins strange and surreal tales, like a series of dreams that keep you up at night. Contains the secret 13th track, "Hear That Bird". Stan talks from the original Press Release for the Record: "Black Diamond, is a little different from anything I've ever written. It's a leaner, more intimate record, kind of old fashioned really, and at the risk of sounding like some wounded folkie, this is probably the most personal record I've made so far. I'd call it a song cycle for dreamers and schemers. The songs took shape during the summer of '95, at a time when I was coming to grips with a lot of conflicting thoughts and feelings: insecurity, loneliness, the need to control, bitterness, success, failure and, of course, the Big Three: anger, love and loss." Stan Ridgway's fourth solo album challenges more than a few of the assumptions that have been made about him as a songwriter. "This is a record where I deliberately forced the songs to stand on their own," Ridgway says of *Black Diamond*'s spare and spacious production. "The music is as simple and unadorned as we could make it. The musicians and I tried to let the songs flow out of our heads and onto the tape without a lot of fussiness and second-guessing in between. My true interest has always been in the surreal, the dream-states we encounter when we're asleep or wide awake with caffeine buzzing in our heads. And in fact," Ridgway says, "I wrote most of this music from dreams I'd had. I've really moved myself into fresh territory with these songs, I think." Indeed, *Black Diamond*'s songs explore music and moods that are both subtler and more far-ranging than anything Ridgway has previously attempted. An example of the singer's fascination with the dream state, "Stranded" melodically melts from one level of reality to the next, encompassing a ghostly, fractured Titanic slipping beneath the waves, an anxious lone hitchhiker and an object in decaying orbit destined for a fiery oblivion. By contrast, the warmly haunting "Luther Played Guitar" finds Ridgway stepping into the shoes of one of his heroes, Johnny Cash, to lament the passing of Luther Perkins, lead guitarist for the great balladeer's original band, The Tennessee Three. "Stan Ridgway is equal parts Raymond Chandler and John Huston, Rod Serling and Johnny Cash. Haunted by America's pulp serial past, Ridgway has become his own wireless theater, with a cast of

thousands at his fingertips and a wealth of tales in his head. A rare and famous talent." - THE FACE

"BLACK DIAMOND'S fast moving novellas are full of dense musical imagery, peopled with characters from a human highway 61 revisited." - NME Reviews: THE TUCSON WEEKLY - Jennifer Murphy BLACK DIAMOND is the most intimate album to date from an artist who is more often compared to literary heavy-hitters like Carver, Chandler, and Ellroy than to other musicians, probably because nobody writes like or sounds even close to Ridgway. On his fourth solo album, Ridgway strips the songs of their trademark spooky electronics and slows the tempo a bit to deliver fewer stories in favor of greater mood and depth. He remains a remarkably keen observer of a world gone mad, of the average guy in extraordinary circumstances. Surreal work from a rare, enigmatic talent. THE COLORADO DAILY - David Kirby \*\*\*\*1/2 (out of five) Stan Ridgway spins grimy tales about D students on collision courses with their tragi-comic destinies. he brings a storyteller's eye for detail and a character actor's gift for method delivery to these anti-fables and manages to imbue them with richness and life without stooping to condescension or moralizing. His Johnny Cash tribute, "Luthor Played Guitar," a simple two-step country ballad, recalls chump change gigs and marquee-lights glory, and his trademark goddess-from-nowhere archetypes songs, "Stranded" and "As I Went Out One Morning" (a Dylan cover), are both classic Ridgway studies in surrender and redemption. Both are typically goofy spun in Ridgway's epic-struggle vividness. This guy is the Harry Dean Stanton of rock, weird and prophetic, seer of visions and teller of tales, and the quiet kid in the corner drawing funny pictures in the margins. Unearthly. OPTION MAGAZINE - Rafer Guzman

Ex-Wall of Voodoo singer Stanard Ridgway had his 15 minutes in 1985 with his first solo album *The Big Heat*, a delightful collection of quirky pulp fiction stories set to moody synth-pop. Most considered his kitschy shtick limited, but Ridgway has been recording ever since, and *Black Diamond* proves him a seriously intelligent songwriter of surprising depth. Like comic artist Daniel Clowes, Ridgway uses a pop-culture framework to sketch humorous yet emotionally painful pictures of losers and wanderers. "Down the Coast Highway" tells the tale of a lonely drifter. "Stranded" is a haunting ode to a femme fatale; "Crystal Palace", the lament of a deluded dreamer, is nothing short of a modest masterpiece. Ridgway has toned down his wise-ass delivery (though the country ballad about O.S.S. founder "Wild Bill Donovan" is classic Ridgway weirdness), allowing for some moments of true pathos. He's also developed a real talent for creating spooky, atmospheric melodies. An effective blend of Johnny Cash's morbidity, Bob Dylan's absurdist humour and Jim Thompson's bleak outlook, *Black*

Diamond ought to earn Ridgway some new fans. THE LOS ANGELES READER - Richard Foss Stan Ridgway is the most distinctive of chameleons - he shifts personas and viewpoints from song to song, then delivers each one in the same immediately recognizable vocal style. Black Diamond is his best album in years, and it hits extremes of both detachment and passion that make it a career milestone. The opener, "Big Dumb Town," is Ridgway the cynic from the first line - "When the city was in flames you were on the phone, sellin' firehoses at a premium loan." This devastating portrait of a doomed opportunist ends and an utterly different tune begins - the meditative, mournful and affecting tribute to Kurt Cobain, "Gone the Distance." Throughout the album, Ridgway breaks barriers and experiments with styles, veering from hard-edged tracks reminiscent of his work with Wall of Voodoo to a credible country blues vocal on a number dedicated to Johnny Cash. Among the fascinating eccentrics, losers, and loners who populate his projects, we're getting a better look at a really interesting character - an intriguing artist named Stan Ridgway. SAN DIEGO UNION TRIBUNE - John Layman VOODOO MAN Flying both solo and with band, Ridgway is soaring to new heights. Stan Ridgway fans, rejoice. After nearly four years without a major release, Ridgway made up for his absence last spring with the release of "Work the Dumb Oracle", the debut album of his new band, Drywall. And last month, the former leader of Wall of Voodoo uncorked his fourth solo album, "Black Diamond." It's been a good 12 months for Stan Ridgway. Ridgway, who will perform at the Belly-Up tavern in Solana Beach tonight, is still best known as the lead singer and founder of the '80s new-wave art-rock band Wall of Voodoo, "Mexican Radio," Voodoo's hit on radio and video, earned Ridgway a sort of alternative immortality. But more than ten years have passed since Ridgway parted company with the band, and in that time, Ridgway has proved to be unique, intriguing and innovative as a soloist as he was with a band. Now he's doing both. "My first idea for Drywall was to make something completely different than what I was doing as a solo artist," Ridgway said in a phone interview from Los Angeles. "Quite frankly, I was burned out on being a solo artist. The whole focus of it had become so solipsistic, I felt I really needed a fresh perspective, and a lot of the things that had been lying there for a while in my head I could do with Drywall." What was lying in his head was not pretty. Ridgway teamed up with keyboardist/vocalist Pietra Wexstun of Hecate's Angels and percussionist Ivan Knight to release its first "document," a bleak, cynical electro-nightmare reminiscent of Wall of Voodoo's first full-length album "Dark Continent," only darker. "There are three people in Drywall," Ridgway explained, "and there are going to be three Drywall records. We'll be attempting to document events worldwide --

psychic, paranormal, reality-based, and otherwise -- as we move to the year 2000." "Each Drywall document will be followed by a 30-minute film and after the film, there will be a soundtrack record of music specifically scored for the Drywall movie." Expect the movie, "The Drywall Incident" and its score "Incidental Soundtrack" to be released later in the year.

THE FACE "Stan Ridgway is equal parts Raymond Chandler and John Huston, Rod Serling and Johnny Cash. Haunted by America's pulp serial past, Ridgway has become his own wireless theater, with a cast of thousands at his fingertips and a wealth of tales in his head. A rare and famous talent." NME, UK "BLACK DIAMOND'S fast moving novellas are full of dense musical imagery, peopled with characters from a human highway 61 revisited."

NEW YORK PRESS - J.R. Taylor "From track to track, Ridgway's BLACK DIAMOND handles pop, country, and folk as gracefully as Bobby Darin but always leaves little bits of himself hanging from the sharp edges. It's melodic, gorgeous, sad and personal and adds up to a triumph..."

REINVENTING ROCKER RIDGWAY - By Fred Schuster, Daily News Music Writer Ex-Wall of Voodoo singer Stan Ridgway, perhaps best known for his sardonic vocals on the old MTV staple "Mexican Radio," doesn't consider himself a musician above all. "I see myself as an inventor, a surrealist at the end of the day," he said. "I'm more interested in miniature models than practically anything else. I have no secret plan for world domination. I'm just building my own little empire of the ants." In years past, Ridgway may not have been on the verge of mainstream adulation, but he was known widely in the rock world. As leader of Wall of Voodoo, a witty and pioneering early-'80s techno-rock band famous for confrontational live shows, Ridgway made the superb "Call of the West" album, containing the aforementioned "Mexican Radio."

After leaving the band in 1983, Ridgway built his own recording studio in Hollywood and began churning out solo albums for I.R.S. and Geffen. Drawing on a Raymond Chandler-inspired netherworld of noir Los Angeles, Ridgway wrote songs about misfits and lowlifes, double-crossing dames and down-at-the-heels cabbies. Just released is Ridgway's fourth solo album, the engaging "Black Diamond" (Birdcage), which he describes as "the most personal record I've made so far, at the risk of sounding like some wounded folkie. I'd call it a song cycle for dreamers and schemers." Among the tracks on "Black Diamond" is "Gone the Distance," a solo acoustic number that deals with the last days of Nirvana's Kurt Cobain. "I wish I could have been the rock'n'roll doctor that walked into the room before he ended his life," Ridgway, 41, said from his home in Venice. "I wish I could have been there to say, 'Fire those people! Quit the business! Any artist who had any amount of success in the music industry could have communicated with

Kurt. The act was senseless and completely unnecessary. Suicide is always the last card you play."

Ridgway's pulp lyrics and sarcastic vocal delivery are much in evidence on the new album, which he said was inspired by "insecurity, loneliness, bitterness, success, failure and of course, the Big Three: Anger, Love and Loss." In the years since Wall of Voodoo, Ridgway has contributed tracks to several high-profile projects. He appeared on Hal Wilner's "Lost in the Stars" tribute to Kurt Weill, and added the standout track "Don't Box Me In" to the "Rumble Fish" soundtrack. "Keep your head down and try not to look at the scoreboard, as Norman Mailer once wrote," said Ridgway, who grew up in the San Gabriel Valley.

"History has a way of rolling over all of us in the end." Recalling the making of the colorful "Mexican Radio" video, which still turns up on MTV, Ridgway tells of trying to convince his then-record label to shell out some money and shoot the thing. "I knew MTV was new and needed videos," he said. "So, I went to the label and they didn't want to give us a dollar to make one. Finally we shot the whole thing in somebody's office. And when MTV got a hold of it, they played it to death." Ridgway, who said he recently rode his bike to El Segundo, where he spent the afternoon watching planes take off from the airport, said he still finds inspiration in LA, even though, he admitted, "I hate it sometimes, like everyone else does."

He continued: "I live part of my time in an imaginary bygone era. And I have to keep reminding myself that things today aren't really the way they were."

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