



## Steely Dan's Aja (33 1/3)

By Don Breithaupt

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Aja was the album that made Steely Dan a commercial force on the order of contemporaries like Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles and Chicago. A double-platinum, Grammy-winning bestseller, it lingered on the Billboard charts for more than a year and spawned three hit singles. Odd, then, that its creators saw it as an "ambitious, extended" work, the apotheosis of their anti-rock, anti-band, anti-glamour aesthetic. Populated by thirty-five mostly jazz session players, Aja served up prewar song forms, mixed meters and extended solos to a generation whose idea of pop daring was Paul letting Linda sing lead once in a while. And, impossibly, it sold. Including an in-depth interview with Donald Fagen, this book paints a detailed picture of the making of a masterpiece.

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## Steely Dan's Aja (33 1/3) By Don Breithaupt Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"Musician and songwriter Breithaupt's book pores over every last note of Josie, Deacon Blues, Peg and the like with the enthusiasm of a teenybopper and the insight of an academic"

(Terry Staunton, Record Collector)

"*Aja* was the album that made Steely Dan a commercial force on the order of contemporaries like Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles, and Chicago. A double-platinum, Grammy-winning bestseller, it lingered on the Billboard charts for more than a year after its 1977 release and spawned three hit singles. Odd, then, that its creators saw it as an `ambitious, extended` work, the apotheosis of their anti-rock, anti-band, anti-glamour aesthetic.

Including an in-depth interview with Dan co-founder Donald Fagen, this book- part of Continuum`s ongoing 33 1/3 series - by Canadian musician and musicjournalist Don Breithaupt paints a detailed picture of the making of a masterpiece." —Upper North Side

"Don Breithaupt has crafted an informative book about Steely Dan's platinum sixth album, *Aja*—part of Continuum Press' 33 1/3 series on acclaimed albums in rock history. The author analyzes Walter Becker and Donald Fagen's cryptic word play and arty rock and West Coast studio contributions to the 1977 release and tried to build a case in support of his fervid-fan claim that *Aja* is 'the best record in the solar system.'"—*Downbeat Magazine*

"*Aja* is the first one [in the series] I've read, but I'll be checking out the others. Highly recommended." *Stereophile, December 2009*

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(Sanford Lakoff)

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#### About the Author

Don Breithaupt is a studio musician and songwriter based in Toronto. He is the co-author of *Precious and Few: Pop Music in the Early '70s* and *Night Moves: Pop Music in the Late '70s*. A Berklee College of Music alumnus and three-time Juno Award nominee, he has written extensively on music and film for the *National Post*.

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