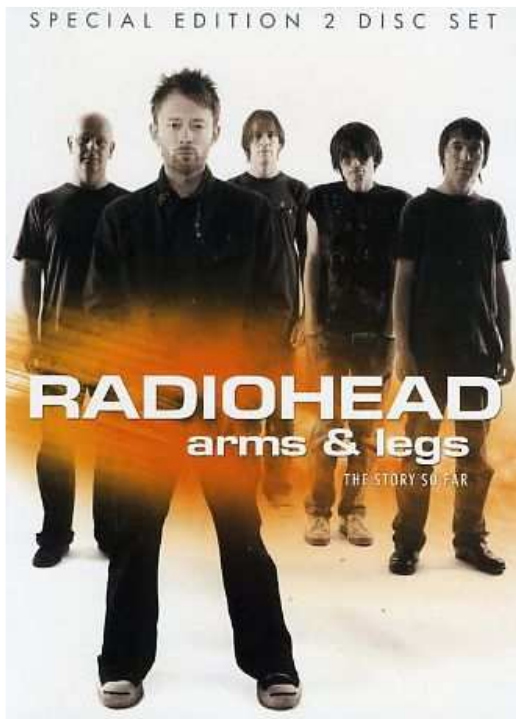


## FAME Review: Radiohead - Arms &amp; Legs: The Story so Far (DVD)



## Arms & Legs: The Story so Far

[Radiohead](#)

Pride - PG2DVD138 (DVD)

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange  
by **Mark S. Tucker**  
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The adage goes that the third time is the charm; for Radiohead, this proved to be ferociously true, wending from a very respectable formative sound to a statement blazing the heavens, resulting in the instantly classic *OK Computer*. The *Arms & Legs* limited edition 2-disc DVD set reviews that CD in depth for nearly two hours on the first go-round, and then the accompanying platter brings out the ensemble's entire history up to that epochal point. Though nearly all the elements were in place from the start, with the debut CD, *Pablo Honey* yielding the international hit *Creep*, it's a pretty sure thing that even the band wasn't quite expecting what would come to put them over the top, an enviable estate they'd learn to sometimes regret.

Achievement and success earn rewards, and so the sophomore effort, *The Bends*, was granted more leeway than anal corporate types usually deign to accede. Dollar signs, after all, dance in capitalist heads and bring ravenous hunger for more, sometimes prompting greed-fisted business types to risk allowances. Thus leadman Thom Yorke pulled in the acreage ceded and built the groundwork up even higher. It was in that moment that the ever-proliferating sentiment of the age moved in, and Radiohead availed themselves of the Marxistic verity, setting not only the terms of the coming smash but also commissioning the building of their own (portable) studio to craft it visionarily. The lads, as one of several critics in the film put it, went and "took control of the means of production". The result was stunning.

*OK Computer* blew past the stars while threshing beneath the tarmac, sounding as though a composite of Pink Floyd, Steve Lillywhite, Brian Eno, Porcupine Tree, rebirthed 60s Nonesuch electronica, Roger Bain, *The Man Who Sold the World*, and God only knows how many landmark albums and personalities. The group had opened a new window on the cosmically terrene anguish of the Industrial/Informatic Age and the accompanying assaults against spirit and being. It did so via Gothic beauty and jagged abstractions fighting one another harmonically. However, as any good criticism should, *Arms & Legs* pays attention to every least detail and thus raises a number of questions and issues too easily scamped elsewhere.

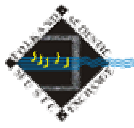
"I think there's a lot to be gained by attending to the artwork" of a release, says one gent, and it's an important point should the consumer want as immersive an experience as possible...something that should be, especially in this shallow age, an unyielding demand. The average buyer has no clue as to what degree cheapshit, tasteless, avaricious suits geld the visual attraction of a release, but *OK Computer's* liner art was a perfect match to the sounds beneath the strange gesso'ed visual collision of futuristic Piranesi architecture decaying back to Romanesque sources, to Giacometti, to surrealist suggestion, and to intrusions of post-museum graffiti. Ghosts echoed, impermanence abounded, and the chiaroscuro tone spoke across genres to myriad eyes in much the same way as the music, everything grist for the mill so long as it maintained timbre.

More than one salient but otherwise such neglected point is similarly addressed, but my space here is limited, and the intent is to tantalize the reader to bring fork and spoon to this feast. Thus, consider the foregoing merely as appetizer, the hors d'oeuvre for a multi-course lavish fete, then sit down and dig in. The group is far from dead, now having gone on to forsake mainstream machinations, forging its own path independently, and this nearly 3-hour archive gives the audience the rest of a picture too often left unsketched.

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