

# THE Sun

## The BIG ALBUM

FORMER hellraiser Steve Earle celebrates his country music roots with new collection *So You Wanna Be An Outlaw*.



### STEVE EARLE

*So You Wanna Be An Outlaw*

IT takes some special kind of hellraising to qualify as a "Country Outlaw".

The exclusive club is reserved for the likes of Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and Merle Haggard.

Though he comes from the next generation, Steve Earle deserves the status hands down ... Prison ... Booze ... Women ... tick. Drugs ... tick.

And though he's been sober for years, this fine, specifically country album, celebrates his roots, harking back to early triumphs *Guitar Town* and *Copperhead Road*. In the vein of those that went before, there's even a song called *If Mama Coulda Seen Me* because every self-respecting outlaw still loves his mama.

★★★★

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# The Observer

SUNDAY 18 JUNE 2017



## COUNTRY

### Steve Earle

So You Wannabe an Outlaw  
(WARNER)

By the time Earle cut his 1986 debut, *Guitar Town*, country's "outlaw" movement was in decline, though its architects (Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson et al) had successfully challenged Nashville's sequined orthodoxy with their rockier sound and rebel spirit. Here, Earle pays homage to the outlaws with a dozen fine originals, from noisy guitar rock-outs like the title track (with a guest spot from Nelson) and the bleak Fixin' to Die, to gentle loser ballads such as You Broke My Heart and This Is How it Ends (a duet with Miranda Lambert), ending with Goodbye Michelangelo, a tender farewell to the late Guy Clark. **Neil Spencer**



# THE SUNDAY TIMES

June 18, 2017

**Steve Earle  
and the Dukes  
So You Wanna  
Be an Outlaw?**  
Warner Bros

**REBEL  
OF THE  
WEEK**



Steve Earle usually mashes up genres, but this is as close to pure country as we're likely to get. He sets his Telecaster to "twang" and channels the spirit of Waylon Jennings, one of the country "outlaws" who back in the 1970s made albums with the artistic freedom (they thought) rock artists had. The outlaw Willie Nelson supplies vocals on the title song, while Goodbye Michelangelo is a tribute to Guy Clark, one of the most prominent singer-songwriters of the scene. *ME*