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The Smiths recorded what was to be their final studio album at The Wool Hall studios in Beckington, Somerset, England (established and then-owned by the band Tears for Fears). Between the album's recording in March and its release in September 1987, Johnny Marr exited the group, ending the band. Strangeways is the only Smiths album to feature Morrissey playing a musical instrument: piano in the song "Death of a Disco Dancer". Marr felt the band was ready to enter a new musical phase, and was determined to avoid formula and move away from their previous "jingle jangle" sound. He started to look for different influences, finding an interest in The Beatles' White Album. The band used synthesised saxophone and string arrangements and drum machine additions.