

= Justified (album) =

Justified is the debut studio album by American singer @-@ songwriter Justin Timberlake . It was released on November 4 , 2002 , by Jive Records . The album was written and recorded in a six @-@ week period , during the hiatus of the singer 's band NSYNC . For the album , Timberlake began to adopt a more mature image as an R & B artist opposed to the previous pop music recorded by the group . Most of the album was produced by The Neptunes (credited as " Williams and Hugo " on the album) , with additional collaborators including Brian McKnight , Scott Storch , Timbaland , The Underdogs , and Carvin & Ivan . The album features guest appearances by Janet Jackson and rap duo Clipse . Primarily an R & B album , Justified also contains influences of dance @-@ pop , funk and soul music .

Justified received generally positive reviews from music critics ; most of them complimented the mature progression of the singer 's material , while some criticized its lyrical content . The album earned Timberlake four Grammy Award nominations , including Album of the Year , and won the award for Best Pop Vocal Album . Justified debuted at number two on the US Billboard 200 chart and sold 439 @,@ 000 copies in its first week . It was certified three @-@ times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) denoting shipments of three million copies in the US . As of 2012 , the album has sold over ten million copies worldwide .

Four singles were released from Justified . The album 's lead single , " Like I Love You " , peaked at number 11 on the US Billboard Hot 100 , while two follow @-@ up singles " Cry Me a River " , and " Rock Your Body " peaked within the top @-@ five on the chart . " Like I Love You " , " Cry Me a River " and " Rock Your Body " peaked at number two in the United Kingdom and in the top ten in Australia (with " Rock Your Body " topping the Australian chart) , Ireland , Netherlands and Belgium . To further promote the album , Timberlake performed on several television shows and embarked on The Justified World Tour and the Justified and Stripped Tour ; on the latter he was accompanied by American singer Christina Aguilera .

= = Background = =

Following the release of boy band NSYNC 's album Celebrity in 2001 , lead singer Justin Timberlake started working on his debut studio album during the hiatus . With the album , he wanted to portray a more mature image as an R & B performer , rather than a boy band pop artist . He revealed minimal information regarding the producers and artists involved with Justified during its early recording stage , with his management and record label also reluctant to share any information . However , MTV News reported that production duo The Neptunes were working on multiple tracks , while rapper P. Diddy and singer Mario Winans contributed to one track . Other known producers involved included Mike City , Raphael Saadiq and Rodney Jerkins , though between June and July , none of the aforementioned producers had attended any studio sessions . Explaining his involvement with the project , Jerkins said at the 2002 BET Awards that he " just got a call about working on the project " and that whenever Timberlake wanted his assistance , it would " be done " .

Brian McKnight 's manager stated that his client had already recorded tracks with the singer , while rapper Nelly explained to the reporters that both him and Timberlake had discussed a collaboration effort . Early in 2002 , Angie Stone revealed that Timberlake " loves the Mahogany Soul album " with him further saying to her " your CD 's in my car right now , you have to work on my solo project " . These assertions were later partially denied by a Jive spokesperson who announced that the material produced from the collaboration would not appear on the finalized record .

= = Recording = =

Justified was written and recorded in a six @-@ week period . According to Timberlake , the " creative spurt " was reminiscent of " that period of time back in the 1960s and ' 70s when musicians got together and just jammed and worked out of inspiration . There was no heavy calculation or

belaboring songs and mixes . Everything flowed pretty easily and naturally . " Recording sessions took place at various studios in the United States , including the Westlake Recording Studios in Los Angeles , Manhattan Center Studios in New York City and Master Sound Recording Studios and Windmark Recording in Virginia Beach .

The Neptunes told MTV News that the duo and Timberlake drove in a car listening to Earth , Wind & Fire albums for inspiration , with the background of the band 's music what the production duo wanted to implement into Justified 's musical content . The production duo commented that despite not being content with sampling music , for inspiration , they also listened to both Off the Wall (1979) and Thriller (1982) , albums by Michael Jackson . Their intentions were to create music that was similar to Jackson 's work without " recycling them " . One of the two members of The Neptunes , Chad Hugo , commented that they just wanted to re @-@ create " that sense of those timeless , classic songs , without any of the ' bling , bling , hit me on my two @-@ way ' style of the new R & B. It has elements of the old and the new . " The producer further went on to say that people wanted Timberlake to be conformed to being part of boy band NSYNC , with the former insisting that the singer is an immaculate vocalist . Hugo acknowledged Timberlake 's break @-@ up with singer Britney Spears , saying that some of the album 's music could be directed towards it .

= = Music and lyrics = =

The opening track on Justified , " Señorita " is a Spanish oriented song that features R & B influences ; in it Timberlake sings about a girl with brown eyes . " Like I Love You " is a funk influenced song consisted of live drums , tiny guitar strum accompanied with the singer 's breathy tenor . According to Ben Ratliff of Rolling Stone , " it 's minimalism influenced by Michael Jackson " . The third track on the album , " (Oh No) What You Got " was described by Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine as a bit racy for the audience who expected a more boy @-@ band @-@ oriented record . Regarding the fourth song , Russell Bailie of New Zealand Herald wrote that although the album " manages to skirt teen @-@ pop sugariness for the most part , though it does offer quality mush on numbers such as ' Take It From Here ' . " " Cry Me a River " is a funk and R & B song with an instrumentation that features beatboxing , synthesizers , Arabian @-@ inspired riffs and Gregorian chants . Lyrically , the song is about a brokenhearted man who moves on from his past .

The sixth track , " Rock Your Body " , incorporates tinny , " keyboard @-@ set @-@ to @-@ emulate @-@ clavichord " synthesizers of The Neptunes ' late 90s productions , overlaid with " keys and a propulsive drum vamp " . The seventh track of the album is " Nothin ' Else " ; which according to David Merryweather of Drowned in Sound is a " slinky " and " smooth " song that is similar to the works of American musician Stevie Wonder . Influenced by Jackson 's musical style and Van McCoy 's 1975 single " The Hustle " , " Last Night " is played with a xylophone . " Still On My Brain " , the ninth track on the album , is a slow jam , similar to the songs performed by Timberlake 's former band ' NSYNC . " (And She Said) Take Me Now " which features singer Janet Jackson , is a disco , ' 80s funk and dub song that contains racy lyrics . Similar to the previous song , the eleventh track of the album has racy lyrics ; on it Timberlake " cockily " sings the line , " I could think of a couple positions for you " . " Let 's Take a Ride " is the twelfth song on the album , on which , according to Uncut magazine , Timberlake " offers to deliver you from your humdrum existence " . The record concludes with " Never Again " , a ballad , on which Timberlake becomes " downright maudlin and snippy " .

= = Singles = =

" Like I Love You " featuring Clipse was released as the album 's lead single . It was released as a CD single on October 14 , 2002 in Germany and the US . The song was written by Justin Timberlake and The Neptunes , who also produced the track . It received positive reviews from critics , who praised its production and use of instrumentals . " Like I Love You " charted at number eleven on the US Billboard Hot 100 , and in the top five in the UK , Denmark , Netherlands and Ireland . The song was nominated for Best Rap / Sung Collaboration at the 45th Grammy Awards .

Justified 's second single is " Cry Me a River " , and was released through contemporary and rhythmic radio on November 24 , 2002 , and as a 12 " vinyl on December 23 in the US . The song was written by Timberlake , Scott Storch and Timbaland and produced by the latter . " Cry Me a River " debuted at number 44 on the Billboard Hot 100 on the issue dated December 21 , 2002 , and eventually peaked at number three . In other countries , the song achieved similar success , reaching number two in Australia and the UK , and the top five in several other territories . " Cry Me a River " has been certified gold in Australia by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) , denoting shipments of 70 @, @ 000 units , and certified silver in France . It won a Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance at the 2004 ceremony , while the accompanying music video won two MTV Video Music Awards : Best Male Video and Best Pop Video . The song is listed on Rolling Stone 's The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time .

" Rock Your Body " was released as the album 's third single , and was released on May 6 , 2003 as a CD single in the US . It was written by Timberlake and The Neptunes , and produced by the latter . The song topped the charts in Australia for one week , became Timberlake 's third single to reach number two in the UK , and reached the top five in Denmark , Ireland , New Zealand and the US . " Rock Your Body " was certified platinum in Australia by the ARIA . It received a gold certification in the US by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , denoting shipments of 500 @, @ 000 units .

" Señorita " is Justified 's fourth single , released through rhythmic radio on July 8 , 2003 . It was written by Timberlake and The Neptunes , while being produced by the latter . The song did not perform as well as Timberlake 's previous three single did on charts , reaching number 27 on the Hot 100 , and achieving its highest peak in Australia and New Zealand , where it reached number six and four , respectively . However the song has become somewhat of a fan favorite , receiving a lot more attention on youtube and spotify than Like I love you , and Senorita still remains on his top 10 most popular songs on Spotify to this day .

= = Promotion = =

Timberlake performed " Cry Me a River " for the first time at the 13th annual Billboard Music Awards , held on December 9 , 2002 , at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas . He was accompanied by a string section and a 20 @-@ member choir . He performed " Cry Me a River " on a promotional concert held at House of Blues in West Hollywood , California on June 17 , 2003 . On February 1 , 2004 , the singer performed " Rock Your Body " at the Super Bowl XXXVIII halftime show with R & B singer Janet Jackson . At the moment Timberlake sang the lyric " Bet I 'll have you naked by the end of this song , " he ripped off part of Jackson 's costume , momentarily exposing her right breast on live television . Timberlake distanced himself from the controversy while Jackson faced much criticism . He later commented that " America 's harsher on women ... [and] unfairly harsh on ethnic people . " He performed " Señorita " live on the sketch comedy show Saturday Night Live in October 2003 , where he served as host and musical guest .

Timberlake did a joint tour in North America with Christina Aguilera entitled the Justified and Stripped Tour , to support both Justified and Aguilera 's 2002 album , Stripped . Timberlake 's and Aguilera 's managers suggested to both singers to go on a conjoint tour . Timberlake agreed with the suggestion , saying that " It would be fun to be on tour with somebody who 's that talented " . Timberlake 's further reasoning for touring with Aguilera was due to both singers wanting to " break the mold of what people look at as teen pop and move into a different direction " . For the tour , Timberlake wanted to transform arenas into clubs , stating that he wants people " to feel like they 're a part of the show and it 's a party " , remarking that anybody caught sitting down would get booted . For the tour , Timberlake performed with eight dancers , a 14 @-@ piece band which included four backup singers , three horn players and a DJ . The tour commenced on June 4 , 2003 in Phoenix , Arizona and concluded on September 2 , 2003 in Saint Paul , Minnesota . The tour grossed approximately \$ 45 million .

On September 2003 , McDonald 's announced Timberlake as a new spokesmen for their " I 'm Lovin ' It " campaign . Timberlake recorded " I 'm Lovin ' It " , to be featured in adverts for the

franchise , later expanded and released as a single in December 2003 . McDonald 's later announced they will sponsor a tour for Timberlake , following his successful North American tour with Christina Aguilera , entitled the Justified World Tour . Timberlake stated " I love what McDonald 's is doing with the new ' i 'm lovin ' it ' campaign and it 's cool to be part of it [...] We share the same crowd -- people who like to have fun -- and that 's what this new partnership and my European concert tour is all about . " The tour began with Timberlake playing intimate gigs at clubs and theatres in the United States and Australia before expanding to arenas in Europe . The tour commenced on May 7 , 2003 in Sheffield , England and concluded on June 19 , 2004 in Brisbane , Australia .

= = Critical reception = =

Justified received generally positive reviews from music critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album has received an average score of 68 , based on 14 reviews . Ben Ratliff of Rolling Stone awarded the album four out of five stars , commending The Neptunes 's production , and noted both " Like I Love You " and " Cry Me a River " as standout tracks . Ratliff also commented that Justin Timberlake has successfully " vaulted over the canyon " to adulthood . Slant Magazine 's Sal Cinquemani gave Justified three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five , writing that Timberlake meshes with The Neptunes " so well he virtually relinquishes his personality to the super @-@ duo ? he could very well be the third member of N.E.R.D. " Cinquemani noted the similarities between Justified 's tracks to the work of musician Michael Jackson , saying that the album should have been Jackson 's tenth and final studio album , *Invincible* (2001) . In a favorable review by BBC Music 's Denise Boyd , similar to previous reviewers , Boyd praises " Like I Love You " , while also commending " Cry Me a River " for its lyrical content and " Rock Your Body " , which he notes contains Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder influences . Entertainment Weekly writer David Browne awarded Justified with a B rating . Similar to Sal Cinquemani , Browne wrote how the album should have been the outcome of Jackson 's tenth studio album , as " the ultramodern R & B @-@ pop hybrid " . Browne described Justified as " cohesive " , favoring the album to NSYNC 's previous two efforts : *Celebrity* (2001) and *No Strings Attached* (2000) .

The Village Voice 's Christopher O 'Connor commended The Neptunes ' production , while praising " Like I Love You " and the Janet Jackson collaboration " (And She Said) Take Me Now " , saying how the songs show that Timberlake " has the balls to pursue the A @-@ plus list . " O 'Connor showed ambivalence towards " Right for Me " and " Cry Me a River " , noting the former as " awkward " and the latter as " a lousy Aaliyah impression . " Tyler Martin of Stylus Magazine gave the album a B + , commending the two opening tracks , " Señorita " and " Like I Love You " , noting the two as standouts . Despite this , Martin goes on to praise " Take It from Here " and " Cry Me a River " , closing the review with saying that the album doesn 't maintain Timberlake 's masculine persona , but still " paints a picture of a complicated young man , growing into adulthood " . NME 's Alex Needham wrote that Timberlake 's lyrics are " soppy platitudes that may or may not be about Britney " . Caroline Sullivan of The Guardian gave Justified two stars out of five , saying that the only noticeable tracks are " Cry Me a River " and " Rock Your Body " , noting the latter as " predictable " , while criticising the album 's lyrics as being " suggestive mumbling " . AllMusic 's Stephen Thomas Erlewine commented that Timberlake " shamelessly borrows from Jacko , from the Thriller @-@ era " , going on to criticize his vocals as to lack substance , with his falsetto lacking character .

= = Accolades = =

Justified earned Justin Timberlake three American Music Award nominations , including Favorite Pop / Rock Album , Favorite Pop / Rock Male Artist and Fan Choice Award . Timberlake won the award for Favorite Pop / Rock Album . At the 45th Grammy Awards , Timberlake had one nomination for Best Rap / Sung Collaboration for " Like I Love You " . The following year , Justified earned Timberlake nominations for Album of the Year and Best Pop Vocal Album , while " Cry Me a

River " was nominated for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance . Timberlake won the latter two awards . Justified won the International Album award at the 2004 Brit Awards . At the 2003 BET Awards , he received two nominations for Best R & B Male Artist and Best New Artist . Justified was listed at number 37 on The A.V. Club 's Best music of the decade list . The album was also included in the book 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die .

= = Commercial performance = =

Justified debuted at number two on the Billboard 200 , selling 439 @, @ 000 copies in its opening week . The album was expected to top the chart , replacing the 8 Mile soundtrack (2002) . Instead the soundtrack sold 507 @, @ 000 copies , due to being propelled by Eminem 's " Lose Yourself " . The following week , Justified sold 188 @, @ 770 copies and fell two positions to number four . In its third week , the album sold 110 @, @ 000 copies and remained within the top ten on the chart . The album appeared on the Billboard 200 chart for seventy @-@ two weeks , and eventually went on to sell 3 @. @ 5 million copies in the US . It has been certified four times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , for shipments of four million copies . Justified debuted and peaked at number two on the US Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart . The album charted on the Billboard 200 and Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums 2003 year @-@ end charts , reaching number eleven and twenty @-@ six , respectively .

Internationally , Justified received a similar response . In the United Kingdom , Justified debuted at number six , and eventually peaked at number one on the week of November 16 , 2002 , remaining atop for seven non @-@ consecutive weeks . The album has appeared on the chart for eighty @-@ four weeks ; it has been certified five times platinum by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) for shipments of 1 @. @ 5 million copies . As of March 2015 , Justified is the 41st best @-@ selling album of the millennium in the United Kingdom . In Canada , the album peaked at number three and has been certified two times platinum by Music Canada . Justified debuted and peaked at number four in Denmark and the Netherlands , remaining on the charts for forty and seventy @-@ two weeks , respectively . The album peaked at number five in New Zealand for one week , appearing on the chart for thirty @-@ six weeks , and receiving a two times platinum certification by the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) for shipping 15 @, @ 000 units . Justified peaked in the top ten in Belgium , Australia and Norway . The album charted within the top thirty and forty in several other countries . As of June 2012 , the album has sold over 10 million copies worldwide .

= = Track listing = =

Notes

^ [a] signifies a co @-@ producer .

" Señorita " contains additional vocals performed by Pharrell Williams .

" (Oh No) What You Got " contains additional vocals performed by Timbaland .

" Rock Your Body " contains additional vocals performed by Vanessa Marquez .

" Right for Me " contains additional vocals performed by Bubba Sparxxx and Timbaland .

= = Personnel = =

Credits for Justified adapted from Allmusic .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =