

= Rockstar 101 =

" Rockstar 101 " is a song by Barbadian recording artist Rihanna from her fourth studio album , Rated R (2009) . The song features the British @-@ American guitarist Slash of the rock group Guns N ' Roses . It was released on May 18 , 2010 , as the fifth single from the album . Rihanna wrote the song in collaboration with the producers The @-@ Dream and Christopher " Tricky " Stewart ; vocal production was carried out by Makeba Riddick . The album version is a hip hop song , while the remix EP 's consist of dance , dubstep and electronic music adaptations , some of which were remixed by Dave Audé and Mark Picchiotti .

Critical response to " Rockstar 101 " was mixed ; some critics praised Rihanna 's " bravado " while others criticized the " aggressive " tone . The song charted at number 64 on the United States ' Billboard Hot 100 chart , and number two on the Hot Dance Club Songs chart . To promote the song , Rihanna performed on American Idol in April 2010 . It has been included on the set lists of her Last Girl on Earth Tour (2010 ? 11) and Diamonds World Tour (2013) . Melina Matsoukas directed the song 's music video , which portrays Rihanna impersonating Slash . She wears custom made jewelry designed by Fannie Schiavoni in some parts of the video , while Blink @-@ 182 drummer Travis Barker makes a cameo appearance .

= = Background and release = =

Rihanna co @-@ wrote " Rockstar 101 " in collaboration with the song 's producers The @-@ Dream and Christopher " Tricky " Stewart . Her vocals and the instrumentation for the song were recorded at Serenity Sound Studios in Los Angeles , California , the Boom Boom Room in Burbank , California and Triangle Sound Studios in Atlanta , Georgia . It was mixed by Jaycen Joshua at Larrabee Studios in Universal City , California ; he was assisted in the process by Giancarlo Lino . Rihanna 's vocals were produced by Makeba Riddick . The song was engineered by Marcus Tovar , Brian " B @-@ LUV " Thomas , Andrew Wuepper and Chris " TEK " O 'Ryan . Additional engineering was done by Pat Thrall . Guitar was provided by Tim Stewart , while Monte Neuble performed additional keys . The song features a guitar performance by Slash , the British @-@ American musician , songwriter and former lead guitarist of the American hard rock band Guns N ' Roses .

" Rockstar 101 " was the fourth single from the album Rated R to be released in the US and the fifth overall . It was sent to contemporary hit and rhythmic radio stations in the US on May 18 , 2010 , and to Australian radio stations on July 19 , 2010 . The song was released as an extended play (EP) in the United States through Masterbeat.com on June 2 , 2010 , to the iTunes Store on July 13 , and in the United Kingdom through Amazon on June 29 , 2010 . These EP 's consist of remixes by various DJs and music producers , including Dave Audé and Mark Picchiotti .

= = Composition = =

" Rockstar 101 " is a hip hop song which lasts for three minutes and fifty @-@ eight seconds . It features an " aggressive " guitar solo from Slash , according to Leah Greenblatt of Entertainment Weekly . Rihanna uses her lower register and " heavy " modulation to perform the most of the song , and she " growls " the lyric " The only thing I 'm missing is a black guitar " . Rihanna " struts her stuff " as she insists that she is a " big shit talker " as she proclaims that " I 'll never play a victim / I 'd rather be a stalker " . Sean Fennessey for Spin thought that when Rihanna sings the line " Got my middle finger up , I don 't give a fuck " , it sounded as though she had never sworn before due to how she preciously mewls the word ' fuck ' .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

" Rockstar 101 " received mixed responses from music critics . Brian Linder for IGN praised the song , writing that it " actually works " despite sounding disjointed at first . Emily Tartanella of PopMatters defined " Rockstar 101 " as a " brilliant bit of bravado " during her review of Rated R , while Ailbhe Malone for NME wrote that Rihanna sings with " swagger " on the track , which was something that she has Hova to thank for . Jon Pareles for The New York Times simply highlighted a line from the song , " I never play the victim " . Neil McCormick for The Daily Telegraph thought that " Rockstar 101 " was one of the few songs on the album to retain the " vaguest leftover hints of her warm Caribbean vocal flavouring " . Ann Powers for the Los Angeles Times was critical of Slash 's inclusion on the song , and she described it as an " afterthought " . Powers wrote " she can definitely get by without that ultimate rock phallic symbol " , a reference to Slash . Pitchfork Media 's Ryan Dombell felt that " Rockstar 101 , alike " Russian Roulette " and " The Last Song " , were " instantly @-@ dated missteps from a bygone era when a Slash feature was cool " . He further wrote that " Rockstar 101 " and " G4L " were " harder to justify considering their mindless boasts and torpid production " . The song was met with a negative review from The Guardian 's Alex Petridis , who wrote " At one extreme , the resemblance of ' Umbrella ' ' s chorus to that of a stadium rock ballad seems to have encouraged Rihanna to cut out the middle @-@ man and just start making stadium rock : cue the awful widdly @-@ woo guitars of ' Rockstar 101 ' and ' Fire Bomb ' " .

= = = Chart performance = = =

" Rockstar 101 " made its first chart appearance on the United States ' Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart , where it peaked at number two ; it stayed on the chart for 14 weeks . The song peaked on the US Hot Digital Songs chart at number 28 , spending seven weeks on the chart . It subsequently peaked at number 64 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart and spent five weeks on the chart . It also peaked at number 10 on the US R & B / Hip @-@ hop Digital Songs chart . " Rockstar 101 " debuted on the Australian Singles Chart at number 50 on August 22 , 2010 ; it peaked at number 24 two weeks later for one week , and remained on the chart for six weeks .

= = Music video = =

= = = Background = = =

The director Melina Matsoukas filmed the music video for " Rockstar 101 " in April 2010 ; she had previously directed the videos for Rihanna 's singles " Hard " and " Rude Boy " . This video was edited by Nabil Mechi from Murex , who previously edit videos for " S.O.S. " and " Umbrella " . On May 19 , 2010 , Rihanna released a 30 @-@ second sneak @-@ peek preview of the video on the internet , whilst the full video premiered on May 25 , 2010 through the high @-@ definition music video website VEVO .

= = = Synopsis = = =

According to Jayson Rodriguez of MTV , the video is " a mix of goth bondage @-@ esque voyeurism , complete with Rihanna 's gyrating moves and a raging band that features Travis Barker on the drums . " Shortly after the video was released , Slash said that he was " flattered " that Rihanna had impersonated him in the video , saying " The video is way better with her being me than with me being me ... all things considered , it brings an element of sexuality to it that I probably wouldn 't have been capable of . I think it 's hot . Everything works out the way it 's supposed to . "

Although Slash is featured on " Rockstar 101 " , he does not appear in the music video . Instead , Rihanna pays homage to him by impersonating him by presenting herself wearing a skull @-@ laden top hat , wig , leather jacket , dark glasses and toothpick : Rihanna can be seen strumming a guitar Slash 's style . Rihanna is seen in eight different scenes and settings , one of which showed

an almost nude Rihanna covered in black body paint wearing only a spiked crown and jewelry chains , which were created by designer Fannie Schiavoni . In other scenes , Rihanna smashes a black electric guitar and can be seen wearing an outfit made from parts of a guitar . Blink @-@ 182 drummer Travis Barker makes a cameo appearance and is featured as one of the drummers in Rihanna 's rock band .

= = Live performances = =

Rihanna first performed " Rockstar 101 " on American Idol on April 7 , 2010 . She wore a black PVC catsuit and was accompanied on stage by guitarist Nuno Bettencourt ; the set design included flame throwers and a video screen which showed guitars , lightning bolts and skulls . At one point , the singer picked and played up a black Gibson Flying V guitar . Larry Carroll for MTV wrote that the extent of Rihanna 's ability to play the guitar was limited to playing it with one finger on one of the strings . However , he complimented Rihanna 's overall performance , writing that her shoulder pads were " nearly as huge as her presence " . He went on to write that she " half @-@ sung , half @-@ spoke " the song . A reviewer for MTV UK agreed with Carroll , writing that " halfway through the performance [Rihanna] donned a ' black flying v guitar ' although we 're not sure you could say she ' played ' it ! " Caryn Ganz of Rolling Stone praised Rihanna 's performance , writing " if the introductory rules of rock stardom are ' teach thyself to pick slide , ' ' tight clothes ' and ' pyro ! ' then Rihanna has been paying attention in her ' Rockstar 101 ' classes after all " .

A reporter for the Daily Mail wrote that Rihanna displayed her competitive side during her performance on American Idol , after " Lady Gaga set such high standards " . Writing for About.com , Bill Lamb was critical of Rihanna 's decision to perform " Rockstar 101 " on American Idol . He commented that previous media reports had indicated that the singer would be debuting a different album track , " Te Amo " , which was later released as the sixth and final single from Rated R. Lamb thought that " Rockstar 101 " was one of the " weaker " songs on the album , and predicted that it would be " destined to end the streak of three consecutive top 10 pop hits from the album " . While he wrote that the " intensely chilly , distant feel of the song works " within the context of Rated R , Lamb was unsure of whether or not it would appeal to the masses on radio . The song was included on the set list of the Last Girl on Earth Tour (2010 ? 11) . Clay Cane for BET wrote that Rihanna " deserves a round of applause for doing something different , straying away from being a standard pop tart " . " Rockstar 101 " is also included on Rihanna 's Diamonds World Tour (2013) .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Recording

Recorded at Serenity Sound Studios , Los Angeles , CA ; The Boom Boom Room , Burbank CA ; Triangle Sound Studios , Atlanta , GA

Mixed at Larrabee Studios , Universal City , CA

Personnel

Credits adapted from the inlay cover of Rated R.

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Radio and release history = =

