

= Riot Act (album) =

Riot Act is the seventh studio album by American rock band Pearl Jam , released on November 12 , 2002 through Epic Records . Following a full @-@ scale tour in support of its previous album , Binaural (2000) , Pearl Jam took a year @-@ long break . The band then reconvened in the beginning of 2002 and commenced work on a new album . The music on the record featured a diverse sound , including songs influenced by folk , art rock , and experimental rock . The lyrics deal with mortality and existentialism , with much influence from both the political climate after the September 11 , 2001 terrorist attacks and the accidental death of nine fans during Pearl Jam 's performance at the 2000 Roskilde Festival .

The band supported the album with a politically charged concert tour in 2003 . Riot Act was the band 's last album of all @-@ new material for Epic . The album received mostly positive reviews , and has been certified gold by the RIAA in the United States .

= = Recording = =

Producer Adam Kasper was brought in to work with the band on its seventh album . Kasper had engineered other Pearl Jam albums , and was brought to produce following a suggestion by drummer Matt Cameron , who worked with Kasper on his previous groups Wellwater Conspiracy and Soundgarden . Riot Act was recorded in two sessions in February 2002 and April 2002 at Studio X in Seattle , Washington . The album was mixed by Brendan O 'Brien at Studio X.

Similar to the process for Yield and Binaural , band members worked on material individually before starting the recording sessions together . According to Cameron , everyone in the band had " four or five " ideas coming into the sessions , and there was " a lot to just kind of weed through and work on . " The band often recorded material intended to be demo recordings , but lead vocalist Eddie Vedder would come along and record his vocals afterwards , stating , " I just sang it , that 's the take . " Regarding the creative process , guitarist Stone Gossard said that while playing alone " the anal @-@ retentive side of you goes , ' I think I could play better . ' " , but when reuniting " the entire band goes ' No , it 's great as it is , ' then you just get in the mood and embrace it . " Gossard stated that " the process of letting go is constant in this band " , adding that bandmembers would arrive with " a clear idea of what a song is going to be " but eschew for other musical ideas while discussing the song with the group . Riot Act was the first Pearl Jam album to feature Kenneth " Boom " Gaspar on Keyboards , most notably on the song " Love Boat Captain " . According to Gaspar , the song initially developed out of a jam session he had with Vedder in Hawaii shortly after the two first met . When they were done , Vedder asked Gaspar if he was " ready to go to Seattle . " According to Gossard , bringing in Gaspar was about being " open to new things , " while Vedder stated Gaspar " was able to find his place " and fit in easily with the band dynamics . Guitarist Mike McCready said that he had always wanted the band to feature keyboards .

McCready described the recording environment as " a pretty positive one " and " very intense and spiritual . " Cameron said that producer Adam Kasper created a " really relaxed " atmosphere and that the band was able to complete lot of material in a short amount of time . Vedder set up his typewriter in a corner of the studio and would write lyrics as the band members played their material . Most of the album was recorded live , with Cameron describing the album as " our anti @-@ Pro Tools record . " Gossard said that the band fed off Cameron 's playing as well as Vedder 's excitement about the recording process .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Riot Act features a diverse sound , including folk @-@ based and experimental songs . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic said " Riot Act is the album that Pearl Jam has been wanting to make since Vitalogy ? a muscular art rock record , one that still hits hard but that 's filled with ragged edges and odd detours . " Gossard said " Riot Act really seems to showcase all of our thing . There 's the simple rock songs we could have written in the earlier era , but it covers all the different times

and dynamics we've had and still holds together . " The musical experiments also lead several songs on the album to use alternate tunings , including " You Are " , " All or None " and " Bu \$ hleaguer " .

The lyrics on Riot Act were more direct than on preceding records , in response to the political climate after the September 11 , 2001 terrorist attacks . Bassist Jeff Ament commented that he felt that love was a major theme of the album , and Vedder tried to convey themes such as love , loss and struggle to make a difference because of the difficulty in leading with events such as the September 11 attacks and the accidental death of nine fans during Pearl Jam 's performance at the 2000 Roskilde Festival - " You start feeling like , ' What do I have to say ? What is my opinion ? ' Then I realized I did have an opinion . Not only did I have one , but I felt like it was formed by processing a lot of information and having good influences . Ament also told that " I think the time 's right to turn our voice up a bit [. . .] And Ed did it in a great way , with humour and a mystical , magical approach . It isn 't just , ' We 're pissed off , and fuck you ! Riot ! Anarchy ! ' Cos I don 't think that 's the method . At least at this point . " Vedder , however , said , " I have to admit this record came out a bit one @-@ sided . But I think we as a country need to understand why we 're involved in the Middle East . This hollow patriotism frightens me . " The singer added that the Riot Act lyrics " represent [ed] my state of mind these days . I 'm optimistic yet disillusioned , hopeful yet frustrated . " Several songs on the album were inspired by Roskilde tragedy , with the album 's first single , " I Am Mine " , being written by Vedder in 2000 in a hotel room before the band 's first show after Roskilde , and " Love Boat Captain " including a brief lyrical reference (" Lost nine friends we 'll never know ... two years ago today ") . Regarding the time period when the lyrics were being written , Vedder said , " There 's been a lot of mortality ... It 's a weird time to be writing . Roskilde changed the shape of us as people , and our filter for seeing the world changed . "

A few songs feature lyrical collaborations between Vedder and other members of the group , including one with Ament (" Ghost ") , one with Cameron (" You Are ") , and two with Gossard (" Bu \$ hleaguer " and " All or None ") . Sole lyrical contributions from band members other than Vedder include Cameron with " Get Right " and Ament with " Help Help " . The album 's lyrics tackle existential matters (" Love Boat Captain " , " Cropduster " , and " I Am Mine ") , as well as social and political concerns (" Green Disease " , " Bu \$ hleaguer " , and " 1 / 2 Full ") . The lyrics of " Save You " represent the anger felt by anyone who watches a close friend waste away his or her life . Regarding " Love Boat Captain " , Vedder said , " Love is one resource that the corporations aren 't going to be able to monopolize . " Vedder said that " Cropduster " is " about man 's giant ego , that he 's the most important thing on the planet . " Regarding " Green Disease " , Vedder stated he was " mystified " at CEO and corporate @-@ management salaries and " how someone can justify taking that much at the cost of other people 's livelihoods . " " Bu \$ hleaguer " is a satirical commentary on President George W. Bush .

= = Packaging = =

The album 's cover art , photographed by Ament , features two skeletons wearing crowns , suggesting the possibility that the two represent a king and a queen . The forged metal figurines were created by blacksmith Kelly Gilliam . According to Ament , the band had trouble coming up with a name for the album . After the artwork had been finalized and the tracks were sequenced , the band spent weeks trying to come up with a title . Vedder suggested Riot Act , and the band members went with it as they were tired with trying to come up with a title . McCready stated that the title has no real significance . He said , " I guess we were trying to come up with a title that reflected some of the music on the record , which we thought was urgent @-@ sounding and kind of loud ... It just seemed to fit . " Ament implied that the title has to do with " getting your act together . "

= = Tour = =

Pearl Jam promoted the album with tours in Australia , Japan , and North America in 2003 . The tours were the band 's first with keyboardist Boom Gaspar . The two legs of the North American tour

focused on the Midwestern United States , the East Coast , and the West Coast , and had more concerts in arenas . The trauma of Roskilde lead the tour to lack performances on festivals and open floor venues .

The band received much publicity for its energetic politically charged performances during the tour . At many shows during the 2003 North American tour , Vedder performed " Bu \$ hleaguer " with a rubber mask of George W. Bush , wearing it at the beginning of the song and then hanging it on a mic stand to allow him to sing . The band made news when it was reported that several fans left after Vedder had " impaled " the Bush mask on his mic stand at the band 's April 1 , 2003 show in Denver , Colorado show at the Pepsi Center . Following a performance of the song at Pearl Jam 's April 30 , 2003 show in Uniondale , New York at the Nassau Coliseum , the band was met with boos from the crowd and chants of " U @-@ S @-@ A. " Vedder responded by defending his right to free speech and the band followed with a performance of The Clash 's " Know Your Rights " . The song " Arc " was performed by Vedder at nine shows during the second North American leg of the tour as a tribute to the victims of the Roskilde disaster . The concerts were documented by a long series of official bootlegs , all of which were available through the band 's official website , and six of which were released in record stores : Perth , Tokyo , State College , Pennsylvania , two shows from Madison Square Garden , and Mansfield , Massachusetts . Two concerts became DVDs , the Seattle one being issued as Live at the Showbox , and the first of two shows at Madison Square Garden was released as the Live at the Garden DVD . Pearl Jam also supported the album 's material at a series of political rallies and benefit concerts while preparing for its eighth studio album .

= = Release and reception = =

= = = Commercial performance = = =

Riot Act reached number five in the U.S. on the Billboard 200 album chart , with 166 @,@ 000 copies sold in its first week of release . The album would end up selling only 508 @,@ 000 copies in the United States according to Nielsen SoundScan , short of the 718 @,@ 000 sold by predecessor Binaural . Riot Act has been certified gold by the RIAA . The international response to Riot Act was more positive . The album topped the charts in Australia , where it went platinum and ended among the best @-@ selling records of the year in both 2002 and 2003 . Riot Act also went to number two in both Italy , and New Zealand , three in Norway , and number four in Canada .

Three singles were released from Riot Act . Lead single " I Am Mine " entered the Billboard Hot 100 at number 43 , and reached number six on the Modern Rock charts . While " Save You " was released as the second single for North America , " Love Boat Captain " was the second single for international markets . " Save You " did not chart on the Hot 100 , but it did place on the Mainstream Rock and Modern Rock charts . Music videos for several songs from the album , including " I Am Mine " , " Save You " , " Love Boat Captain " , " Thumbing My Way " , and " 1 / 2 Full " , were filmed at Seattle 's Chop Suey club in September 2002 .

= = = Critical response = = =

Riot Act received mixed to favorable reviews from music critics according to Metacritic , where it holds a 73 after 20 reviews . NME gave Riot Act an eight out of ten . Reviewer Louis Pattison stated that " Riot Act is the sound of a band entering a powerful middle @-@ age . They still deserve your attention . " AllMusic staff writer Stephen Thomas Erlewine gave the album four out of five stars , saying " given several plays , this does indeed seem like the richest record Pearl Jam has made in a long time . " Spin gave the album seven out of ten stars . The review said , " Pearl Jam 's seventh studio album balances emotive bombast with a taut @-@ sweaty hard @-@ rock attack . " Critic Robert Christgau described Pearl Jam on the album as " masters of their own audio , with soft spots where their emotions can go . " Rolling Stone staff writer Keith Harris gave the album three out of

five stars , saying that " like Neil Young at his most deliberately despondent , Pearl Jam sound purposefully tired . " Chris Willman of Entertainment Weekly gave the album a B , saying that Vedder ' s lyrics " rarely cohere , " and that " too few of the tense rhythmic setups build to the kind of ... catharsis that would be something to Riot home about . " Q gave the album three out of five stars . The review called the album " An adult rock record in which nuance succeeds over bombast . "

Hugo Lindgren of The New York Times stated that the " record sounds as if it were made to slip quietly into the marketplace , connect with the faithful and leave everyone else alone , " and that " there 's no catchy single , and not even the slightest echo of anything else happening in pop music now . " He added that the " band 's grooves still sound taut , emotive and world @-@ class . " Adam Sweeting of The Guardian gave the album two out of five stars . In the review he stated that " Riot Act isn 't one thing or the other : tracks such as " Ghost " or " Get Right " gesture towards hard rock without really putting the hammer down , while a more reflective piece like " All or None " doesn 't exploit its own possibilities . " Sweeting observed , " On full , Pearl Jam sound like Stillwater , Cameron Crowe 's fictional 1970s second @-@ raters from his film Almost Famous . " Kyle Reiter of Pitchfork Media said that the album " meanders from one song to the next with an overwhelming insipidness , " and stated that it " [brings] them ever closer to homogenous bar @-@ band territory . "

= = Track listing = =

All lyrics written by Eddie Vedder , except where noted .

= = = Outtakes = = =

The album 's singles featured three B @-@ sides from the Riot Act recording sessions that weren 't included on the album : " Down , " " Undone " and " Other Side . " " Down " and " Undone " were B @-@ sides on the " I Am Mine " single , and " Other Side " was featured on the " Save You " and " Love Boat Captain " singles . All three songs were included on the 2003 Lost Dogs collection of rarities , although " Undone " appeared in a slightly different form . McCready said that " Down " came out lighter than intended , and was ultimately left off Riot Act because it did not fit with the other songs on the album . Also recorded during the sessions was " 4 / 20 / 02 , " a song honoring Alice in Chains frontman Layne Staley which Vedder wrote the same day that he heard the news of Staley 's death . According to Vedder , " 4 / 20 / 02 " was not included on Riot Act because the band already had too many songs . It was included on Lost Dogs as well , albeit in the form of a hidden track . A recording of " Severed Hand , " a song that later appeared on the band 's next studio album Pearl Jam , was attempted during the recording sessions ; however the band only spent a few hours on the song before it was shelved . " Last Soldier , " which appeared on the band 's 2001 fan club Christmas single as a live version recorded at the 2001 Bridge School Benefit , was written by McCready following September 11 , 2001 . McCready said the band played around with the song , but never seriously considered recording it for Riot Act .

= = Personnel = =