

= To My Surprise (album) =

To My Surprise is the only album by American alternative rock band To My Surprise . Released on October 7 , 2003 by Roadrunner Records , it was the only album that the band released before disbanding in 2006 . The album was intended to be self produced by Shawn Crahan and Brandon Darner , but after producer Rick Rubin was sent demos by Crahan , Rubin invited the band to Los Angeles where he assumed the role of executive producer . Following the release of the album , a music video was released for the song " In The Mood " on December 1 .

The album was generally well received by critics who remarked on its diversity and significantly different musical style to that of drummer Crahan 's other band Slipknot . They noted that it features music inspired by The Beatles , Led Zeppelin , Pink Floyd and Weezer , among others . However the album did not appear on any sales charts .

= = History = =

In June 2002 , band members Shawn Crahan , Brandon Darner and Stevan Robinson began working on an album together . Drummer Crahan told MTV that working on this album " made [him] find [his] voice " and that with his other band Slipknot he had been " hurting for a long time for a musical voice " . In an interview with Launch , he said that writing the track " The World 's Too Small " was his " most magical musical experience " because " [he] was giving more than on just one or two simple ideas . " In 2003 Crahan sent producer Rick Rubin two songs that he and Darner had written , primarily to receive an opinion on the songs . However , Rubin invited the band to Cello Studios in Los Angeles to work on an album . It was there that the album featuring 11 tracks was self @-@ produced by Crahan and Darner , with Rubin as executive producer .

On October 7 , 2003 , To My Surprise was released through Roadrunner Records . An animated music video for the track " In The Mood " was produced by BoingBoing , which was premiered on MTV 's Extreme show on December 1 . Also , the track " Get It To Go " was featured on the soundtrack for the video game MVP Baseball 2004 . To My Surprise did not tour in 2003 to promote the album because Crahan was working with Slipknot on their third album . However , they did perform a limited number shows in North America the following year .

= = Musical style = =

Prior to the release of the album , drummer Crahan touted To My Surprise as " a hybrid of folk , ' 70s rock fuzz and schizophrenic grooves " . Neil Strauss of The New York Times stated that each song has a unique sound , concluding that they sound like " pop songs that have been pushed off balance " . In another article Strauss includes They Might Be Giants , Weezer and Faith No More as bands with similar sounding " elements " . Rowan Shaeffer of Counterculture , commented on the album 's diversity , saying " to say that the [album] is eclectic would be a gross understatement , " citing Pink Floyd and Mr. Bungle as evident influences . The Calgary Sun 's Mike Bell cited " glam , new wave , Beatles pop and country rock " as the sounds the album presents . In his review for Allmusic Robert L. Doerschuk noted that the track " Sunday " makes musical references to the single " Pleasant Valley Sunday " by The Monkees , giving the " happy , strumming guitars and skippy rhythms " as similarities . He also said that they quote " one of the darker verses in the Jim Morrison songbook " .

= = Reception = =

To My Surprise was met with generally favorable critical reviews , but did not appear on any sales charts . One point which was generally drawn upon was the significant difference between their musical style to that of Crahan 's other band Slipknot . Reviewer Neil Strauss opens his review with a reference to the title of the album , saying , " And , truly , it is a surprise " , and then going on to say that the album " is commendable not just because [it is] different but because [it is] good " .

Robert L. Doerschuk of Allmusic declares that the album "aside from the track " Say Goodbye " " maintains a buoyant and unsubtle approach " . He also noted Crahan 's " muscular style " as a notable element to the album saying that " [it] transplants well into this setting , which probably should not have been a surprise after all " . The vocals on the album were praised by the reviewers at babysue , saying " the vocals [are] masculine yet right on key " . When reviewing for Calgary Sun , Mike Bell highlighted their eclectic nature and in conclusion said the album is " fittingly , fun and surprising " . However Rowan Shaeffer of Counterculture said that their diversity was ultimately their strength and weakness ; he suggested that they relied too heavily on their influences by creating songs of other bands , saying that " the only [song] left out was the To My Surprise song " .

= = Track listing = =

" The World 's Too Small " ? 3 : 37
" Get It To Go " ? 3 : 12
" In The Mood " ? 3 : 31
" Blue " ? 3 : 59
" Say Goodbye " ? 3 : 33
" Easy Or Not " ? 2 : 54
" Turn It Back Around " ? 3 : 25
" This Life " ? 5 : 34
" Come With Me " ? 3 : 47
" Sunday " ? 3 : 22
" Who 's To Say " ? 4 : 23

= = Personnel = =