

= Empire State of Mind =

" Empire State of Mind " is a song written by Angela Hunte and Jane " Jnay " Sewell @-@ Ulepic and produced by American rapper Jay @-@ Z , featuring vocals sung by American singer Alicia Keys . It was released as the third single from Jay @-@ Z 's 11th studio album , The Blueprint 3 (2009) , by his Roc Nation label in October 2009 . The song was written as a tribute to both artists ' hometown , New York City , and features a music sample of " Love on a Two @-@ Way Street " (1970) , written by Sylvia Robinson and Bert Keyes and performed by The Moments . The following month they submitted the song to Jay @-@ Z 's Roc Nation , whose reviews were a discouragement . Following an incident that Hunte and Sewell @-@ Ulepic describe as an omen , they took the suggestion of an associate of EMI Music Publishing and resubmitted it to Jay @-@ Z , who kept the " New York " singing part on the hook , changed the verses , and recorded it as a single .

The single was supposed to feature Hunte on the song 's hook , but when Hunte and Sewell @-@ Ulepic were asked if they thought anyone else would be more appropriate for the chorus , Hunte suggested Keys . Mary J. Blige was also considered for the part , but Keys was chosen after Jay @-@ Z heard the song 's piano loop . The song was viewed as being an " orchestral rap ballad " and has pop @-@ rap musical styles . It contains references to various locations in New York and its famous residents , while describing the city 's essence . Profanity is present throughout the song and , although it is usually included during live performances , it was omitted during the performance at Game 2 of the 2009 World Series .

A critical success , the song was included in multiple critics ' top 10 list for the best songs of 2009 ; including Rolling Stone magazine and the New York Times . The song was also nominated for three Grammy Awards , winning Best Rap Song and Best Rap / Sung Collaboration . " Empire State of Mind " achieved commercial success worldwide . The track peaked within the top 10 in countries including the United States , the United Kingdom , Canada , Australia , France , Italy and Sweden . The single was commercially successful in the United States , peaking at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 for five consecutive weeks , becoming Jay @-@ Z 's first number @-@ one single on the chart as a lead artist . It appeared in 2009 year @-@ end charts in Italy , Australia and the US , where the song was also the last number one hit of the 2000s . As of June 2014 , the single has sold over 5 @. @ 5 million copies in the United States .

In the song 's music video , which is primarily in black @-@ and @-@ white , Jay @-@ Z and Keys are shown performing the song in various locations in New York . " Empire State of Mind " has been performed by Jay @-@ Z and Keys multiple times , including during the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards and the 2009 American Music Awards . Usually when the duo performs the song , an overhead screen shows images of places in New York . Keys has recorded a sequel entitled " Empire State of Mind (Part II) Broken Down " , which is featured on her fourth studio album The Element of Freedom (2009) . Her version was positively received by critics and did well commercially , although it was not as successful as its predecessor . It was , however , Top 10 in the UK , the Netherlands and Ireland . She said that she chose to record her own version of " Empire State of Mind " because she wanted to express her own personal feelings about New York .

= = Background and writing = =

" Empire State of Mind " was originally created by singer @-@ songwriter @-@ producer Angela Hunte , a native of Brooklyn , along with writing partner Jane " Jnay " Sewell @-@ Ulepic . Hunte grew up in the same building where rapper and hip hop artist Jay @-@ Z lived ? 560 State Street , an address which is mentioned in the song . The track 's creation was inspired during an overseas trip Hunte and Sewell @-@ Ulepic made to London in February 2009 when they were both feeling homesick . Hunte was ill during that summer , while Sewell @-@ Ulepic 's mother was ill . Hunte recalls , " We said to ourselves , ' we complain so much about New York ? about the busy streets , about the crowds and the pushing , about the subway system ? but I would trade that for anything right now . ' Before we left the hotel that night , we knew we would write a song about our city . " Although they wrote the song as a simple way to voice their feelings for their hometown , they sent it

to the Roc Nation music label the following month in hope that Jay @-@ Z would like it and record it . When they received negative reviews about the track they were convinced it would never be recorded . However , in the summer of the same year , EMI Music Publishing 's (EMI) Jon " Big Jon " Platt heard the track at a barbecue and fell in love with it , believing that " it would be perfect for Jay @-@ Z " .

Hunte and Sewell @-@ Ulepik were hesitant though , as they had sent the track for consideration already and been unsuccessful . According to Hunte , when a Notorious B.I.G. figure she kept by the computer fell over as they played the track for Platt ? a statue that had never moved before regardless of how loud they 've blasted music ? she realized it was an omen . She commented , " We all just looked at each other like , ' if Biggie approves , then , send it to Jay ' " . The next day Platt sent it to Jay @-@ Z and he " loved it and recorded it that night " . Hunte recalls , " We were just so happy he wanted to honor our work and our production . Two female producers / writers , and for him as a rapper to take our song ? that 's not a combination you see a lot . For him to be so open @-@ minded about it , we just couldn 't be any more grateful and thankful . " Originally composed as a song to be sung , Jay @-@ Z ended up rewriting new verses inspired from the original lyrics and leaving Hunte on the song 's hook . However , when Hunte and Sewell @-@ Ulepik were asked if they thought someone else would be more appropriate for the chorus , Hunte suggested R & B and soul artist Alicia Keys . Hunte said , " She 's never done a record with him and she also has my same vocal tone . She made the song sound so close to the original , She just nailed it and brought it home . It was a great choice . " Keys also contributed to writing " Empire State of Mind " 's new bridge .

Jay @-@ Z stated in an interview that after he first heard the track 's piano loops (which are sampled from " Love on a Two @-@ Way Street " by The Moments) , he immediately thought of Keys and wanted her to be featured on the song . Jay @-@ Z said that Mary J. Blige was initially considered for Keys ' part on " Empire State of Mind " and admitted that he was " two seconds away " from asking Blige to appear on the record 's chorus . His second choice for the track 's vocals was Keys and that using Blige on the song would have been a safe move , but said that the combination of Keys ' sound and piano talent had struck a chord with him . In December 2009 Hunte , who would not reveal many details , said the original version of " Empire State of Mind " will one day be released , adding that " The original is so powerful it 's only a matter of time till you hear it down the line " .

= = Composition = =

" Empire State of Mind " features rap verses from Jay @-@ Z and vocals during the song 's chorus from Keys . It is a rap hip hop song with influences of electropop and orchestral pop . The track also has pop @-@ rap musical styles and contains a music sample of the 1970 Billboard R & B chart @-@ topping single " Love on a Two @-@ Way Street " by The Moments , the sample being the piano component that runs throughout the song . The song is played at a moderate tempo of 84 beats per minute and is written in the key of F # major . It has a sequence of F ? ? C ? / B ? B ? F ? as its chord progression , throughout the single Keys ' vocal range changes from the register of A ? 3 to C ? 5 . Pete Cashmore of NME described Keys as having established " crashing piano chords " during her verses in the track . Mariel Concepcion of Billboard magazine noted that the track has a " simple piano pattern " . Stephen Dalton of The Times described the song as an " orchestral rap ballad " .

Lyrically , the single opens with lyrics referencing locations in New York , it name @-@ checks notable neighborhoods and captures the city 's essence ; from attending Knicks basketball games to its famous residents . Drug dealing references , " N @-@ words " , and profanity are also present throughout the song . Raju Mudhar of the Toronto Star commented on the track 's lyrics " I 'm the new Sinatra / And since I made it here / I can make it anywhere / Yeah they love me everywhere " remarking " who can argue ? " noting that he 's " one of those waffling retirees " , but is a living " hip hop legend " .

Jayson Rodriguez of MTV News felt that Keys " croons " on the track 's chorus line , " I 'm from

Neeeeeww Yooooork / These streets will make you feel brand @-@ new / Bright lights will inspire you . " Keys said that while recording the song she wanted to make sure she got the hook right explaining , " I did try it a couple of times , but it was more about capturing the kind of grand feeling of it . With the way I sang it the first time , I was actually kind of sick , and I knew that he needed the record , so I was like , ' Let me get to it . ' " She added , " I came back and revisited it so that it could be what it is now [.] So it actually took a couple of times , but every time , the energy was just so high . " Simon Vozick @-@ Levinson of Entertainment Weekly felt that the singer who sings the song 's hook has a " crucial role " , believing that " Empire State of Mind " is a " smash that concert attendees expect Jay to play , and it just wouldn 't work without a big , clear voice to sing that hook " . In November 2012 , Keys said she had to redo the vocals after Jay @-@ Z said he wasn 't happy with her original take . Keys said she had been battling " nasal congestion " when she did the first take .

= = Critical reception = =

= = = Reviews = = =

" Empire State of Mind " received acclaim from contemporary music critics , with most reviewers praising Keys ' vocal performance . Jon Bush of Allmusic listed the song as being a highlight from The Blueprint 3 . He commented that the song is Jay @-@ Z 's " king of crossovers ... a New York flag @-@ waver with plenty of landmark name @-@ dropping that turns into a great anthem with help on the chorus from Alicia Keys " . Los Angeles Times writer Greg Kot commended Jay @-@ Z for his ability to perform with cameos and called the song " the sound of Jay @-@ Z cruising for pop hits . " Pete Cashmore of NME described Alicia Keys 's cameo as " lusty bellowing " . Martin Andrew of PopMatters called the song " yet another chance " for Jay @-@ Z to show his respect to New York , but commented that it " remains interesting thanks to a fantastic Al Shux beat and celebratory hook from Alicia Keys . "

Writing in Rolling Stone magazine , Jody Rosen called it a " pallid New York shout @-@ out " . USA Today 's Steve Jones perceived a maturity by Jay @-@ Z in the song , writing that " The upper @-@ crust landmarks he now references are a far cry from the grimy Marcy Projects sights that he once detailed , something that perhaps is to be expected from the self @-@ described ' new Sinatra ' . " The Daily Telegraph described the song 's sound as " anthemic club pop " and called Keys 's chorus line a " singalong " . Shannon Barbour of About.com called " Empire State of Mind " the album 's apex , while commending Keys for her " excellent display of some unusually strong vocals " . Slant Magazine writer William McBee described it as a " glittering paean to the Big Apple " with Keys " soaring skyscraper @-@ level on the hook and Jay putting on for his city . "

IGN music reviewer Chris Carle described Keys as having " soaring vocals " in the song . New York Post writer Ryan Brockington called " Empire State of Mind " his favorite song from The Blueprint 3 and Tyler Gray from the same publication said " Empire State of Mind " was the " most soulful " song on the album . Francois Marchand of the Vancouver Sun called the song " shiver @-@ inducing " . The Times writer Stephen Dalton called the track a " heartfelt love letter to New York City , " with Jay @-@ Z playing the " hip @-@ hop Sinatra " over Keys ' " luscious " chorus , and The Guardian 's Alexis Petridis described its chorus as " incredible , breezy pop " . Killan Fox of the same publication felt that the track was a " terrific homage " to New York and listed the song as being one of the " really good tracks " on The Blueprint 3 . Pitchfork Media 's Ian Cohen stated that " the piledriver hooks of " Run This Town " and " Empire State of Mind " are content to annoy their way to ubiquity " .

= = = Rankings and honors = = =

" Empire State of Mind " has been included in multiple music critics list for the best songs of 2009 . The single was ranked the 8th best song of 2009 by MTV , the second @-@ best song of 2009 by

Rolling Stone magazine , and was voted the best single of 2009 by The Village Voice 's 37th annual Pazz & Jop critics ' poll . On the 2010 Pazz & Jop list , the song was , along with a number of other songs , ranked at 226 . Jon Pareles of The New York Times placed " Empire State of Mind " at number three on his list of the top songs of 2009 , and Pitchfork Media also ranked it at number 44 on its The Top 100 Tracks of 2009 list . Entertainment Weekly placed it number one on its list of " The 10 Best Singles of 2009 " . " Empire State of Mind " was placed at number six on NME 's Albums and Tracks of the Year , 2009 list . It was placed at number nine on PopMatters ' list of " The Best Singles of 2009 " and at number twelve on Consequence of Sound 's list of " The Top 50 Songs of 2009 " . The song appears at number one on Rap @-@ Up 's list of the 25 best songs of 2009 . Jay @-@ Z , a long @-@ time fan of the New York Yankees , said that he was elated that his songs , namely " Empire State of Mind " and " Run This Town " , had been played during different Yankee player 's batting at home games in the 2009 World Series , commenting that it was " incredible " and " beyond explanation " to hear his music being played during Yankee games . New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg commented that " Empire State of Mind " had become " one of the newest anthems of the Yankees " . The New York Daily News included it at number ten on its list of " The 10 best songs about New York " .

At the 53rd Grammy Awards ceremony the track won Best Rap / Sung Collaboration and Best Rap Song . It had also been one of the five nominees for Record of the Year . In February 2011 , Billboard placed the song at number 15 on its list of " The 40 Biggest Duets Of All Time " and in September 2011 , the song was placed at number eight by VH1 on its list for the 100 Greatest Songs of the ' 00s . In October 2011 , NME placed it at number 13 on its list " 150 Best Tracks of the Past 15 Years " . Additionally , in Summer 2012 , an advertisement for New York State touting its economic comeback features the piano loop of this song along with Key 's voice singing " New York " . Complex placed the song at number nine on its list of " The 100 Best Jay @-@ Z Songs " and on number four on its list of " The 25 Best Alicia Keys Songs " , noting that the song " has replaced Frank Sinatra 's " New York , New York " as the city 's go @-@ to anthem , and remains one of Keys ' greatest contributions to pop culture " . In July 2013 , PopMatters placed the song at number six on its list of " The Top 20 Jay @-@ Z Songs to Date " , remarking that " Alicia Keys ' voice soars through the city night as Hov offers up his typical wit and , in this case , New York authenticity " , making the song to become " the unofficial anthem of the most celebrated city in the world " . In May 2012 , in a poll published by the Official Charts Company , " Empire State of Mind " ranked as the 76th biggest selling single of the 21st century in the United Kingdom .

" Empire State of Mind " was ranked at number 14 the 2009 Pitchfork Media 's " Song of the Year " Reader 's Poll .

= = Chart performance = =

" Empire State of Mind " achieved commercial success worldwide . In the United States the track peaked at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 for five consecutive weeks , from November 28 to December 26 , replacing " Fireflies " by Owl City for the top position and giving Jay @-@ Z his first number one single on that chart as a lead artist in his fourteen @-@ year career . The song , which was both artists ' fourth number one entry on the chart , became the first Billboard Hot 100 number one single to reference New York in its title . Moreover , it was included in Billboard 's year @-@ end music charts for 2009 at number sixty two and was the last number one single for the 2000s (decade) . According to Billboard magazine , the song was the 15th biggest hit by two recording artists for all time .

The single sold 205 @, @ 000 digital copies in the US in its opening week and its highest week sale was of 360 @, @ 000 in December 2009 . " Empire State of Mind " has also peaked at number one on the Billboard component chart for the sales of legal digital downloads on October 3 , 2009 , as well as topping the Billboard component chart for singles with the most radio airplay throughout the country for eight consecutive weeks from November 28 to January 23 , 2010 . The track also peaked at the top position on the R & B / Hip @-@ Hop songs chart for three consecutive weeks , as well as topping the Billboard Rap Songs chart for nine consecutive weeks . After five months of

release " Empire State of Mind " was certified three times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) for the shipment of over 3 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 units in the US . By August 2012 , the single has reached its 5 millionth sales mark in the US , and as of June 2014 , the song has sold 5 @, @ 513 @, @ 000 copies in the US .

In the United Kingdom the track debuted at number fifteen and , in the two succeeding weeks , the single peaked at number two , having been held from the top position by Taio Cruz 's " Break Your Heart " . " Empire State of Mind " peaked at number three on the Canadian Hot 100 and was listed as being the top digital gainer on December 12 . The song peaked at number four in Australia , and was certified gold by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) for the shipment of 35 @, @ 000 units in the country . " Empire State of Mind " was also included in Australia 's 2009 year @-@ end music chart at number sixty @-@ four . In New Zealand the song peaked at number six . Furthermore , the single was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ) for the shipment of over 7 @, @ 500 units in New Zealand . The single debuted at number eighteen in France , eventually peaking at number eight in the following three weeks . It also peaked at number four in Belgium 's Flemish and French charts . The song also peaked within the top ten positions in the music charts of Denmark , Ireland , Italy , Finland , the Netherlands , and Sweden . In Italy " Empire State of Mind " was certified multi @-@ platinum . " Empire State of Mind " ' s least commercially successful charting territories were Austria , Brazil , and Spain ; peaking at number thirteen , seventeen , and twenty @-@ seven respectively .

= = Music video = =

= = = Original video = = =

The music video for " Empire State of Mind " was directed by Hype Williams . The video , which was filmed on location , features black @-@ and @-@ white images of New York City intercut with full @-@ color shots of Jay @-@ Z and Keys performing in Times Square . " Empire State of Mind " ' s music video began filming on September 29 , in Tribeca and around Ground Zero , and was released on October 30 , 2009 . Keys praised the music video and said that the video has all the key elements of a homage to her hometown .

The music video opens with black and white images of locations in New York being shown in the form of a slideshow . The slideshow is then intercut with a black and white clip of Jay @-@ Z , wearing a Yankees cap and a vest with no sleeves , performing the song on a street in front of apartment buildings . Then the video begins to rotate from images of New York being shown briefly , to clips of Jay @-@ Z singing " Empire State of Mind " in several locations with different outfits . Images shown include a monument to John D. Rockefeller , Jr . , street signs and stairwells leading to subway stations .

Next we see black and white clips of Keys , who is wearing large hoop @-@ earrings with high heels , a black shirt and pants , playing a Yamaha piano that has an image of the Statue of Liberty on it . She is singing her verse of the song in a street at night while cars drive by . Keys ' performance is then intercut with aerial views of skyscrapers and clips of the Yankee Stadium , clips of the New York Police , and NYPD cars and logos . Some people , such as ones who are walking around New York or wearing Yankee emblems , have their faces shown or blurred out . Keys and Jay @-@ Z , both wearing sunglasses at night , are then shown performing the song together as the video continues to be intercut with clips of them performing " Empire State of Mind " individually , as well as images of New York . The video ends with color vision of the duo performing at night on the red glass steps forming the roof of the TKTS pavilion in Times Square . Interspersed are clips of Keys playing piano and views of the New York skyline .

= = = Alternate video = = =

Jay @-@ Z 's Lifestyle blog came out with an alternative video which features supermodels lip

@-@ syncing to the song in various locations in Manhattan . The video was directed by Justin Wu . The New York Observer wrote of the video that " [w] e ? re not sure exactly what this video is promoting " but " the caliber of the cast ? s sheer ubiquity is impressive " . A blogger on Yahoo Music commented that the models " do a better job modeling clothes than miming Jigga " , but concluded , however , that the video is " without a doubt the greatest lip @-@ dub ever committed to video " .

= = Live performances = =

" Empire State of Mind " was first performed at Jay @-@ Z 's " Answer the Call " benefit concert in Madison Square Garden on September 11 , 2009 , where it was the opening song . All ticket proceeds from the show went to the New York Police and Fire Widows and Children 's Fund . The song was then performed live at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards (MTV VMA) on September 13 , 2009 , where it closed the awards show . The VMA performance was the first time Jay @-@ Z and Keys performed the song together . Shaheem Redi of MTV News commented on the performance that , " Their set was elegant and ' hood at the same time , and it was such a powerful moment " . Ryan Brockington of the New York Post wrote " Alicia 's buttery voice and Jay @-@ Z 's impeccable stage presence made for an audio adrenaline overload " and placed the performance third on his list of the " top six performances " from the MTV VMAs . For the performance Jay @-@ Z wore his signature Yankees cap and Keys wore all black while playing the piano . During the MTV VMA performance images of locations in New York , such as the Empire State Building and the Apollo Theatre , were shown on an overhead screen behind Jay @-@ Z and Keys . Towards the end of the performance rapper Lil ' Mama got up onto the stage uninvited and posed with Jay @-@ Z and Keys while they were finishing the final verse of the track . Lil ' Mama said she did not mean to disrespect either performer but the song had her " emotions running high " , adding that " in that moment I came up onstage to celebrate my two icons singing about NY . " Keys responded to the incident saying " We can appreciate her being overwhelmed and inspired , but we would have appreciated it if she would have done it from her seat " , and Jay @-@ Z added , " It was a lot of planning that went into that performance . To disrupt that was outta line . " Leah Greenblatt of Entertainment Weekly said that the duo " brought some genuine street heat to the tongue @-@ twisting torrents " of " Empire State of Mind " . She added that " Keys , on piano and soaring chorus , brought the feminine strength and soul . "

Jay @-@ Z was due to perform " Empire State of Mind " with Keys during the opening game of the baseball 2009 World Series in early October 2009 but , due to an inclement weather , the duo did not perform . They ultimately performed the song live in the Yankee Stadium before Game 2 of the 2009 World Series in mid October . The two musicians performed the song on a custom @-@ made stage adorned with Yankees flags , while images of New York City flashed across several large screens throughout the stadium . Jayson Rodriguez of MTV News wrote of the performance , " If the Yankees were looking to change their tune heading into Game 2 of the World Series , they couldn 't have picked better musical guests . " During most live performances of the track , the lyrics containing profanity are included in the song , but they were omitted for the World Series set . On November 5 , 2009 , Jay @-@ Z and Keys sung " Empire State of Mind " at the MTV Europe Music Awards (EMA) in Berlin , Germany , while performing in front of a New York cityscape . Jocelyn Vena and Eric Ditzian of MTV News noted that Jay @-@ Z " took his hometown pride rather seriously " during the performance . Jay @-@ Z also performed the song at the Yankees ' World Series victory ceremonies in New York City Hall on November 6 , 2009 . Keys was not in attendance for the performance , so singer and Roc Nation recording artist Bridget Kelly filled in . As the last verse of the song was sung , Yankee members got up from their seats to shower Jay @-@ Z with handshakes and hugs .

The single was also performed by Jay @-@ Z and Keys at the American Music Awards (AMA) on November 22 , 2009 . They began their performance of " Empire State of Mind " with a rendition of Frank Sinatra 's " New York , New York " . Keys played on a piano on a stage with blue lights in front of a backdrop that had tall buildings . Also , the words " New York " scrolled across screens on the

stage . Towards the end of the song , Keys sung with Jay @-@ Z at the front of the stage while holding up a " I love you " sign . Todd Martens of the Los Angeles Times felt that the song had " worn out its welcome " , and gave the performance a letter grade " D " . However , Jeremy Blacklow of Access Hollywood had a more positive feeling towards the performance , describing it as being " so great " in his live blog for the award ceremony . " Empire State of Mind " was performed by Jay @-@ Z and Alicia Keys at the 2010 BRIT Awards on February 16 , 2010 . The Guardian wrote that Jay @-@ Z and Alicia Keys " dazzled with their rendition of " Empire State of Mind " " . The Daily Mail commented on the performance that it was " a rare highlight in a show of lowlights " . According to Metro , Jay @-@ Z and Alicia Keys " blew the place away " with their performance and " Jay @-@ Z was given a welcome befitting a cultural hero " while " Keys oozed elegance and soul as her startlingly powerful voice stopped everyone in their tracks ? . The Nation opined that the pair " delivered a powerful rendition " of the song .

In March , Jay @-@ Z joined Keys onstage during one of her Freedom Tours New York concerts to perform " Empire State of Mind " , while images of New York were shown throughout the concert arena . Jay @-@ Z performed " Empire State of Mind " as well as three of his other singles , at California 's Coachella music festival in April 2010 . Jay @-@ Z performed the song live on an episode of Saturday Night Live on May 9 , 2010 . Jay @-@ Z performed the song with a medley of his other singles , including " On to the Next One " . Jay @-@ Z wore a white T @-@ shirt with a black leather vest while performing the song on a stage light by blue lights , with musicians playing instruments in the far back . Caitlyn Millat of San Diego 's NBC felt that Jay @-@ Z " brought the house down " during his performances of the melodies . Rodriguez of MTV News said that Bridget Kelly , who sang Keys ' part , " turned more than a few heads " because the outfit she was wearing was " tighter than her boss ' rhyme " .

= = Sequel = =

Following the release of " Empire State of Mind " in January 2010 , Keys stated that she was planning to release a second version of the song as a single the following month , featuring only her vocals . The track , entitled " Empire State of Mind (Part II) Broken Down " , appeared on Keys ' fourth studio album The Element of Freedom which was released in December 2009 . The original version , entitled " Empire State of Mind Part 2 " , included both Keys ' vocals and a new rap verse from Jay @-@ Z , but the final product did not include Jay @-@ Z. Discussing the record , Keys claimed that it acts as a dichotomy of strength and vulnerability , commenting that " The music is really strong , and the drums are really aggressive , but my voice is vulnerable and delicate " .

" Empire State of Mind (Part II) Broken Down " was generally well received by contemporary music critics in their reviews for The Element of Freedom . Allison Stewart of The Washington Post noted that the track , which is a pop ballad , had replaced " Empire State of Mind " sports team references and ruminations with " even milder and less controversial string of generalities " , highlighting Keys ' version 's lyrics " If I could make it here / I could make it anywhere " . The track was not as commercially successful as " Empire State of Mind " , peaking at number four in the United Kingdom , number forty on the Canadian Hot 100 , and number sixty @-@ nine in Sweden . It also debuted on the Billboard R & B charts at number seventy @-@ seven and peaked at number fifty @-@ five on the Billboard Hot 100 without an official release .

= = Reaction and covers = =

The comedy website CollegeHumor parodied the song in a video titled " Galactic Empire State of Mind " which re @-@ writes the lyrics to follow the events of the first three Star Wars films from the perspective of Darth Vader . The video has been viewed nearly four million times on YouTube .

The music video for " Newport (Ymerodraeth State of Mind) " parodies the song , replacing references to the " Empire State " of New York with of the smaller Welsh city of Newport . In the Welsh language Ymerodraeth means " empire " . " Newport (Ymerodraeth State of Mind) " was directed by British filmmaker M @-@ J Delaney and featured London @-@ based actors Alex

Warren and Terema Wainwright , rapping and singing respectively . Days after its release Delaney said : " I hope Jay @-@ Z and Alicia get to see the video as long as their publishing people don 't force us to take it offline . It 's only tongue in cheek . " Its participants were invited to appear on national television news and their work was reported in national newspapers . Their work was also so well received in Wales that they were invited to the reopening of the Newport Transporter Bridge . It achieved viral video status when it reached nearly a million hits in 3 days and , by August 2010 , nearly 2 @.@ 5 million people had watched it on YouTube . In July both Warren and Wainwright met with Universal Records (the music publishers) to discuss releasing the track as a single , with some of the proceeds going to the mental health charity Newport Mind . But the seven co @-@ writers of " Empire State of Mind " refused to give permission for the Newport single , a situation which led to the video being removed from YouTube on August 10 .

" Empire State of Mind " was covered by the cast of the US television series Glee for the second season premiere episode " Audition " on September 21 , 2010 . In the episode the fictional William McKinley High School glee club , upon learning that Nationals will be held in New York , decide to perform " Empire State of Mind " at the school courtyard , in the hopes it will pique the interest of their schoolmates . MTV 's Kyle Anderson felt that the choreography of " Empire State of Mind " compensated for any awkwardness in its delivery . Aly Semigran , also writing for the same publication , thought the cast 's performance was lacking the gravitas of the original version , but reported that Keys had deemed the Glee cover " amazing " . Lisa de Moraes of The Washington Post found the song 's performance to be " maybe @-@ trying @-@ too @-@ hard " . Music critic Tom Stack , of Entertainment Weekly , had a more positive assessment of Glee 's take on it in the episode , stating that from the wardrobe to the choreography , it was " spectacular " and elating . He gave it a letter grade of " A " . MTV Buzzworthy wrote that " [t] hings get a little dicey when the male cast members make their way through Jay ? s rapped first verse " . Glee 's cover version was released as a single and debuted at number twenty @-@ one on the Billboard Hot 100 , taking the title for biggest jump of that week . It also charted number twenty in Australia .

In 2010 , American alternative dance band LCD Soundsystem played " Empire State of Mind " in concert , performing a verse of the song as a duet between James Murphy and keyboardist Nancy Whang . In May 2011 , at 64th Cannes Film Festival , British singer @-@ songwriter Jamie Cullum performed a piano medley of Frank Sinatra 's " New York , New York " and " Empire State of Mind " in honour of Robert De Niro . In February 2012 , British singer Ed Sheeran did a soulful acoustic rendition of the song at BBC Radio 1 's Live Lounge . Sheeran later sang it as a duet with Jason Mraz at the Jingle Ball Viewing Party in December 2012 . In April 2012 , British glam rock band Sweet released an updated version of the Hello and Ace Frehley hit single " New York Groove " that incorporated the chorus of " Empire State of Mind " into its own chorus .

The song was also parodied in The Simpsons episode " The Food Wife " as " Bloggin ' a Food Blog " , sung by Tim Heidecker , Eric Wareheim and Carmen Carter .

= = Track listings and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Vocals ? Jay @-@ Z , Alicia Keys

Writer (s) ? Janet Sewell , Angela Hunte , Shawn " Jay @-@ Z " Carter , Sylvia Robinson , Burt Keyes , Alicia Keys , Alexander Shuckburgh

Producer (s) ? Alexander Shuckburgh

Keyboards ? Jeff Bhasker , Kevin Randolph

Engineer ? Chris Godbey , Andrew Dawson , Karl Heilbron , Marcos Tovar , Miki Tsutsumi , Ann Mincieli

Arranger ? Hart Gunther ,

Assistant ? Jason Wilkie

Audio Mixing ? Ken Duro Ifill

Assistant Audio Mixing ? Jordan " DJ Swivel " Young

Mastering ? Tony Dawsey

Editor ? Jason Wilkie

Recording ? Gimel " Young Guru " Keaton , Ann Mincieli , Luke Steele

Music samples ? " Love on a Two @-@ Way Street " by The Moments

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =