

= Jerusalem and Dopesmoker =

Jerusalem and Dopesmoker are the final albums by the American heavy metal band Sleep . The albums were released in 1999 and 2003 respectively . The music for these albums was written during a four @-@ year period when the group was working on a single song that was around an hour in length . Sleep had signed with London Records , which financed the album . When recording had finished , London Records was unhappy with the finished product and refused to release it . The album was later released in various forms by different record labels . All versions of the album received very positive reception from music critics , who described it as a high @-@ water mark in both the stoner metal and doom metal genres .

= = Production = =

After positive reviews from the heavy metal press and the release of the album Sleep 's Holy Mountain ( 1993 ) on Earache Records , Sleep 's label announced that they would release their follow @-@ up record . Sleep had been touring in Europe with Cathedral and in the United States with Hawkwind in support of Sleep 's Holy Mountain when the group felt they had to write new material . The new album was going to be an hour @-@ long song . This song was written and practiced at sound checks , motel rooms and in friends ' houses . Matt Pike said the songwriting process was long and that they were " working on [ the song ] for like four years . We also had two other songs that were working on that were really long , too ? like 15 and 20 minutes . But we never recorded them . " Al Cisneros stated that smoking cannabis was important to the song 's creative process : " I was really dependent on the space I got into when I was using it , and some of the lyrics are about that ... The line , ' Drop out of life [ with bong in hand ] , ' was kind of a creed at that point . " The song was originally known and performed live under the title " Dopesmoker " . After their tour , the group began to be interested in a Middle Eastern desert theme which led to Sleep referring to the song as " Jerusalem " during later practice sessions .

Sleep were ready to record the album in 1995 but did not record it until 1996 as the band was still contracted with Earache . Cisneros said that there was " about a year and half of legal wrangling between their managers and lawyers at Earache " and that Earache owner Digby Pearson " waited to make the most prime conditions for himself before he let [ Sleep 's ] contract [ go ] . " Sleep were in talks with both London Records and Elektra Records to release their next album . They chose to sign to London , as they were promised complete artistic freedom and more money , and since the label did not have any metal bands , Sleep felt they would receive special treatment . The members of Sleep were poor , and used the majority of money they received from London Records to cover for the debt they were in at that time .

The song was recorded at Record Two Studio in Comptche , California . While recording the song , it began to develop differently from the original vision . Pike stated that the " song was getting slower and slower and then it got weird . We started tripping out and second guessing ourselves . " Recording the album was difficult . Pike recalled that " there was so much to memorize for that album , and we had to do it in like three different sections because a reel @-@ to @-@ reel only holds 22 minutes . It was really cool , but it was one of the hardest things I 've ever done in in my life . " Sleep were in the studio for one month then went home to rehearse and returned for another month . Pike noted that they ended up with two or three different versions of the song .

= = Release = =

Within a few weeks of signing with London , the A & R member who was negotiating with Sleep had been transferred and replaced . After sending the finished album to London Records , the label told Sleep that they were not going to release the album in its current format . London Records had David Sardy remix the album but the label were still confused as to what to do with the album . Sleep refused to have the album released in any edited form which led to a deadlock between London and the band . The members of Sleep have mixed feelings whether the album should have

been released in general . Cisneros felt it should not have been released while Pike was content with its release , saying " We did all the work so why leave it sitting around ? "

By 2009 , there had been four versions of the album released : a rare London Records promotional disc , a bootleg with cover art by Arik Roper , the Rise Above / Music Cartel Records album , and a release by Tee Pee Records . The Rise Above / Music Cartel release was an unauthorized edited version , released in 1999 under the title Jerusalem . Jerusalem runs at 52 minutes and is a single composition split into six identically named tracks . The version of the album titled Dopesmoker was released on April 22 , 2003 , by Tee Pee Records on compact disc and vinyl with a 63 @-@ minute running time . Cisneros spoke most positively about the 2003 Dopesmoker release , saying " I don 't think the Dopesmoker thing is the exact version that we submitted , but that 's the closest one that 's come out of the four . If I had to pick a favorite , that would be it . " Parts of the song were used in the film Broken Flowers by Jim Jarmusch . Jarmusch stated that he was a fan of Sleep and listed them along with Earth and Sunn O ) ) as an influence for creating the film : " I love these kind of visual landscapes they make , and they really inspired things for me for my film The Limits of Control " .

= = Reissue = =

In March 2012 , Southern Lord Records announced plans for a deluxe reissue of the album , adding of the pending release that " The audio is clearer , louder , and at last brings a true representation of Sleep 's hour @-@ plus Weedian chronicle " . The reissue features new artwork by the band 's artist Arik Roper , a recording mastered from the original studio tapes by From Ashes Rise guitarist Brad Boatright , and a live version of the song " Holy Mountain " , recorded at the I @-@ Beam in San Francisco in 1994 . This version of the album reached number 14 on the Top Heatseekers chart .

= = Reception = =

Both Dopesmoker and early releases of the album received positive reviews from the music press . In the December 2000 issue of Spin the album was referred to as " brilliant " and as a " stoner touchstone " . CMJ New Music Monthly wrote positively about the song , saying that the " monotony rarely becomes tedious , because Al Cisneros and company are unpredictable and sensual in their drug @-@ induced pounding of early Sabbath terrain . " Online music database AllMusic gave the Jerusalem album four stars out of five stating that " Either version is worth investigating for adventurous metal enthusiasts , but Dopesmoker is clearly the final and definitive presentation of this work " . In 2006 , the extreme metal magazine Decibel included the album in their hall of fame of " extreme metal masterpieces " .

The album continued to receive praise after the release of Dopesmoker . Eduardo Rivadavia of online music database AllMusic gave the album four and a half stars out of five stating " Dopesmoker is [ ... ] an instant doom metal classic ? some might even say a masterpiece " . The British music magazine Mojo gave the album a rating of five out of five stars proclaiming that Dopesmoker is " A benchmark by which all that dares call itself stoner rock must surely be judged . " Exclaim ! praised Dopesmoker 's production value and noted that the album was " ultimately better version of 1999 's stoner opus Jerusalem . " Stylus Magazine 's Stewart Voegtlin defined Dopesmoker as " a 60 @-@ minute song about the spliff , a monstrous rock ode to stinky buds " . Voegtlin pointed out that London Records ' refusal to " share Sleep 's affection or vision , [ led the band to ] disbanding in disgust . Matt Pike went on to form High on Fire ; Al Cisneros and Chris Hakius contemplate the universe 's navel with Om . " A New York Times critic wrote : " What seems disorienting and monochromatic at first grows richer and more rewarding upon repeated exposure . It ? s like a Mark Rothko painting hitting you over the head with a bag of hammers . "

The 2012 Southern Lord Records re @-@ issue was also praised . On Metacritic , it has a score of 94 out of 100 , based on 9 reviews . Exclaim ! noted that this issue was " cleaner and more powerful , the guitars sound heavier , with a much larger presence , and the mesmerizing complexity of the track has been reinvigorated . " Pitchfork Media gave the album an 8 @.@ 5 out of 10 and listed it

as one of " the best new reissues " noting that " It 's an hour of adventure and momentum , where the lumber and the repetition somehow always push ahead . " Consequence of Sound gave the album three and a half stars out of five , stating that " It 's not for everybody , certainly ; all but the biggest potheads / metalheads may burn out after so much grinding . It 's no showcase for songwriting , either , but it makes up for that with heady atmosphere . "

= = Track listing = =

All music written and composed by Sleep .

= = Personnel = =

Sleep

Al Cisneros ? vocals , bass

Matt Pike ? guitar

Chris Hakius ? drums