

= The Family Jewels (Marina and the Diamonds album) =

The Family Jewels is the debut studio album recorded by Welsh singer Marina Diamandis , professionally known as Marina and the Diamonds . It was released on 15 February 2010 by 679 Recordings and Atlantic Records . Diamandis collaborated with several producers including Pascal Gabriel , Liam Howe , Greg Kurstin , Richard " Biff " Stannard , and Starsmith during its recording . She identifies the lyrical themes as " the seduction of commercialism , modern social values , family and female sexuality . "

Contemporary music critics gave The Family Jewels fairly positive reviews , with the vocal delivery dividing opinions . The record debuted at number five on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 27 @,@ 618 copies . The album was eventually certified Gold by the British Phonographic Industry and has sold 195 @,@ 358 units in the United Kingdom . The Family Jewels performed moderately on international record charts ; it peaked at number 138 on the Billboard 200 in the United States .

The Family Jewels was supported by five singles , all of which were supplemented by accompanying music videos . " Mowgli 's Road " was released on 13 November 2009 , although " Hollywood " became its first charting track after reaching number 12 on the UK Singles Chart . Follow @-@ up singles " I Am Not a Robot " , " Oh No ! " , and " Shampain " respectively peaked at numbers 26 , 38 , and 141 in the United Kingdom . The record was additionally promoted by Diamandis ' headlining The Family Jewels Tour , which visited Australia , Europe and North America from January 2010 through December 2011 .

= = Background = =

Born and raised in South East Wales , Diamandis moved to London at the age of 18 to study music , despite not having a musical background . After dropping out of four institutions and failing in auditions , she began composing her own music . After the success of her Myspace @-@ released debut EP Mermaid vs. Sailor in 2007 , she was signed by Neon Gold Records the following year and by 679 Artists in October 2008 . In 2009 , after playing at a variety of festivals including Glastonbury in the summer , she ranked in second place in the BBC 's Sound of 2010 and was one of the three nominees for the Critics ' Choice Award at the 2010 BRIT Awards .

In a 2012 interview with Pridesource , Diamandis said that the album 's title came from a slang term for testes , but she had been too coy to admit it before .

= = Composition = =

Diamandis explained that the album is " a body of work largely inspired by the seduction of commercialism , modern social values , family and female sexuality " , intended to be " enjoyed and consumed as a story and theory that encourages people to question themselves " .

In a review for Q , writer Hugh Montgomery noted genres such as disco (" Shampain ") , bubblegum punk (" Girls ") and cabaret (" Hermit The Frog ") . The opening track , " Are You Satisfied ? " , ponders the meaning of a fulfilling life ; a writer for The Line of Best Fit likened it to the thinking of Danish existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard . In a January 2010 interview with The Daily Telegraph , Diamandis admitted that she " cringes " at the lyrics of the song " Girls " , which " could be seen as a bit misogynistic " , including the lines " Girls they never befriend me / ' Cause I fall asleep when they speak / Of all the calories they eat " ; she clarified that the lyrics concerned her own psychological problems with weight . A Neon Gold press release for a limited double A @-@ side of " Obsessions " and " Mowgli 's Road " described the former as a " bold and ambitious ... master work " and the latter as a " a high intensity , left field pop smash " .

Diamandis reportedly made producer Liam Howe take 486 vocal takes for " The Outsider " . " Hollywood " takes inspiration from Diamandis ' previous obsession with American celebrity culture , while in " I Am Not a Robot " , her favourite track from the album , she sings to tell herself to accept imperfection , with lines such as " you 've been acting awful tough lately , smoking a lot of cigarettes

lately ... don 't be so pathetic " ; she expected audiences to be able to relate to the song . " Numb " reflects on the dedication and sacrifice needed during her early years in London ; " Oh No ! " and " Are You Satisfied ? " have similar lyrical themes . " Oh No ! " was a late addition to the track listing , causing some reviews of the album to not include it . The album had initially been scheduled for release in October 2009 , and was delayed by Diamandis ' self @-@ confessed perfectionism .

= = Release and promotion = =

= = = Music videos = = =

In 2008 , Diamandis filmed videos for the tracks " Seventeen " and " Obsessions " . The following year , photographer Rankin directed the accompaniment for " I Am Not a Robot " , which used much body glitter . The video for " Mowgli 's Road " featured Diamandis and two dancers , with puppeteers standing in front of them to give them the impression of having concertina limbs ; it was shot over 17 hours .

Polish artist Kinga Burza shot the " classic pop video " for " Hollywood " , with the aim to " make her audiences fall in love her even more , perhaps crave a little popcorn and feel inspired to dress up for fun " . Burza also filmed the video for " Oh No ! " , with an aesthetic based on " zany neon " MTV graphics and the fame @-@ hungry lyrics . The video to " Shampain " made an homage to Michael Jackson 's Thriller .

Dan Knight made a video for Chilly Gonzales ' " stripped @-@ down " remix of " Hollywood " that was intended to be the opposite of Burza 's official video . In the video , Gonzales and Diamandis perform on a 1980s Estonian music show complete with subtitles .

= = = Singles = = =

" Obsessions " was Diamandis ' first single , released on 14 February 2009 , and " Mowgli 's Road " followed on 13 November 2009 . She chose the song as an " uncommercial " taster due to its oddness , but it received attention after being shared by bloggers including Perez Hilton and Kanye West .

" Hollywood " was released as the album 's second single and Diamandis ' first major release on 1 February 2010 . It reached number 12 on the UK Singles Chart . It was followed on 26 April by " I Am Not a Robot " , which peaked at number 26 on the same listing . " Oh No ! " was released as the album 's fourth single on 2 August only in the UK and Ireland ; it charted at number 38 . " Shampain " was released as the album 's fifth and final single on 11 October , again only in the same region , and reached number 141 in the UK .

" I Am Not a Robot " was nominated for the 2010 Popjustice £ 20 Music Prize for best British single , eventually losing to " Kickstarts " by Example .

= = = Tour = = =

Diamandis went on her first headlining tour to promote the album , performing in Europe , North America and Australia . Dates included the Glastonbury Festival 2010 , South by Southwest and the Falls Festival . In parallel to headlining her own tour in the United States in mid @-@ 2011 , she was an opening act for Katy Perry 's California Dreams Tour , and finished by opening for Coldplay 's Mylo Xyloto Tour at the Manchester Arena that December .

After a performance at Manchester 's Deaf Institute on 21 February 2010 , Contactmusic.com writer Katy Ratican awarded Diamandis a 9 / 10 rating , stating " Next time she plays Manchester , it will be to a sold out Academy 2 audience , with a top @-@ selling album gracing the merchandising stand . Marina won 't be playing to a few hundred people above a trendy bar in the foreseeable future " .

= = Critical reception = =

The Family Jewels received mostly positive reviews . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalised rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received an average score of 68 , based on 21 reviews , which indicates " generally favorable reviews " .

Hugh Montgomery of Q magazine noted that the singer 's " imaginative reach " was " complemented by a winning pop savviness " , while Luke O 'Neil from The Phoenix stated that " [t] he likes of Kate Nash and company have flitted through this piano siren / exuberant dance @-@ diva territory , but never mind , because this gorgeous genre starts now . " Leonie Cooper from NME rated the album nine out of ten stars , finding flaw only in the titles of " Shampain " and " Hermit the Frog " .

More mixed reviews were critical of Diamandis ' vocal delivery . Lou Thomas from BBC Music commented that " [t] he consistently diverting changes in style across the album are fine ? the wonky 80s shoulder @-@ pad pop of ' The Outsider ' is nothing like anything else here , for example . But over 13 songs of Sparks @-@ voice and many similar staccato piano riffs listeners may feel bludgeoned by Marina and her slightly overbearing presence " , concluding that her eccentric vocals would polarise opinions . Sean O 'Neal wrote on The AV Club that after " dozens of squeaky Regina Spektor @-@ ish enunciations " and " Kate Bush trills " , the " overbearing need to prove herself just ends up being exhausting " . Joe Rivers of No Ripcord praised " Are You Satisfied ? " , " Hollywood " and " Oh No ! " but was put off by sudden " howling " in " Hermit the Frog " and a " throaty growl " in " The Outsider " .

A negative review came from The Independent 's Andy Gill who considered " Shampain " and " Hermit the Frog " as " every bit as annoying as their punning titles , with queasy , prancing piano and synth figures " . He found certain vocal techniques in " Mowgli 's Road " and " I Am Not a Robot " to be " infantile " , and evaluated the lyrics of " Girls " and " Hollywood " as shallow . Gill added that the content of " Rootless " , " Obsessions " and " The Outsider " did not match with what would be expected from the titles .

The NME placed the album at number 33 on its list of the Top 75 Albums of 2010 .

= = Commercial performance = =

The Family Jewels debuted at number five on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 27 @,@ 618 copies . It remains Diamandis ' best @-@ selling debut week , after her second studio album Electra Heart entered the chart at number one with first @-@ week sales of 21 @,@ 358 units . The Family Jewels was later certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry , and had sold 195 @,@ 358 copies in the United Kingdom as of April 2015 . The record debuted at number seven in Greece and number nine in Ireland ; it was eventually certified gold by the Irish Recorded Music Association .

The Family Jewels performed moderately on several international record charts . The record reached number 12 on the German Media Control Charts , and entered the Ö3 Austria Top 40 at number 18 . It peaked at number 88 on the Dutch MegaCharts , number 100 on the Swiss Hitparade , and number 132 in France . In Oceania , the album reached number 79 on the Australian ARIA Charts . With first @-@ week sales of 4 @,@ 000 copies in the United States , The Family Jewels entered the Billboard 200 at number 138 ; furthermore , it respectively charted at numbers 2 and 49 on the Billboard Top Heatseekers and Top Rock Albums charts .

In an interview for Australian radio in January 2011 , Diamandis said that her career that far had been " more like a failure than a success " , particularly in the American market . She attributed this to the inaction of Chop Shop Records , her label in the United States , as well as a move in musical tastes to " pumping beats " by artists like Lady Gaga . She cancelled performances in the United States in order to begin work on a new album .

= = Track listing = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes of The Family Jewels .

Notes

^ a signifies an additional producer

^ b signifies an original producer

^ c signifies a remixer

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes of The Family Jewels .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =