

= Bat Out of Hell III : The Monster Is Loose =

Bat Out of Hell III : The Monster is Loose is the tenth studio album by Meat Loaf and the third and final one in the Bat Out of Hell trilogy . It was released in October 2006 , 29 years after Bat Out of Hell ( 1977 ) , and 13 years after Bat Out of Hell II : Back into Hell ( 1993 ) .

Produced by Desmond Child , it is the only Bat album not involving Jim Steinman in its production . The album was subject to a legal dispute between Meat Loaf and Steinman , who had registered the phrase " Bat Out of Hell " as a trademark and attempted to prevent the album using the phrase . In the end , seven songs that Steinman wrote for various other projects were included .

As with its predecessors , the album received mixed reviews . A tour , named " The Seize the Night Tour " , followed the release , concentrating upon songs from the Bat albums .

= = History = =

According to a Reuters report , Meat Loaf and Steinman started working on an album in 2001 . During the concerts in his Hair of the Dog tour , Meat Loaf made a point to mention that he and Steinman were putting out a new album .

The composer suffered some health setbacks around 2004 . Meat Loaf says that " lawyers worked for over a year putting together a contract for Steinman to do Bat Out of Hell III . It was one of the best producer 's contracts in the history of the record business . " Ultimately , according to the singer , Steinman was not well enough to work on such an intense project and made what he calls the " selfish " decision to go ahead without him . In promotional interviews he said that he did not want to wait a year and a half just to find out that Steinman was still unfit . Describing himself as a " really loyal person , " Meat Loaf says that " the decision not to use Steinman has taken its toll on me . "

However , in 2006 , David Sonenberg , Steinman 's manager , said :

Jim 's health is excellent . That 's not the reason he didn 't participate in ( Bat III ) . He had some meaningful health problems about four years ago , but he 's been totally healthy the last couple of years . His health in no way impacted on his involvement in the Bat Out of Hell project .

The development problems and confusion over Steinman 's involvement is a result of a dispute of the trademark " Bat Out of Hell " , which Steinman registered in 1995 . Meat Loaf sued Steinman and his manager , in a complaint filed May 28 , 2006 in federal District Court in Los Angeles , California , for \$ 50 million and to prevent further use by the writer / producer .

Meat Loaf has stated that he contributed lyrics to " Bat Out of Hell " . He had used the phrase extensively for tours , to which Steinman had never objected " until a recent falling out . " Steinman and his representatives approached Meat Loaf 's labels , Universal and Virgin , asserting trademark ownership and threatening litigation to prevent the album 's release . An agreement was reached in Summer 2006 . According to Virgin , " the two came to an amicable agreement that ensured that Jim Steinman 's music would be a continuing part of the ' Bat Out of Hell ' legacy . " In promotional interviews , Meat Loaf has played down the dispute with Steinman , pointing out that it was over in three weeks and was purely for the sake of business .

I consider him to be one of my best friends but the real thing is about managers : I think Steinman 's manager is the devil and Steinman feels the same way about my manager . So , we had to communicate through managers and he refused to sign some papers that would have allowed for the recording of Bat Out of Hell III without a hitch . So , really , I didn 't sue Jim Steinman . I sued his manager .

Despite the fact that Steinman was not involved in the recording or production , the album does include seven of his songs , five of which are covers of previously released songs . The other two were covers of Steinman 's demos intended for musical theater projects , at the time unreleased . The agreement enabled Steinman to work on a musical theatre project based on all of the songs from Bat Out of Hell . Describing the project as " Cirque du Soleil on acid " , in September 2007 , he expected it to open in London in 2010 .

= = Production = =

Meat Loaf had announced that Michael Beinhorn was producing the record , but Desmond Child took the helm . The singer reports that Child would say things that made him think he was sitting next to Steinman . Child began recording sessions by playing Slipknot CDs to get the assembled musicians in the mood . In addition to musicians from his touring band , the Neverland Express , several guest players contributed to the album . Meat Loaf says , " I didn 't just want to bring in rock players ? I wanted to go to extreme rock people " resulting in an album that " has all the touches of the other two Bats , but it 's much more of a rock album . " Child says , that one of the most memorable experiences working on the album was working with Brian May , who played on " Bad for Good " . The album also featured guest performances by John 5 , Steve Vai and John Shanks .

Meat Loaf says that he does not enjoy recording in studios . He compares the process to " going to the dentist and having root canal everyday " . Whereas you really have to be flat for people to notice it in a live show , in a studio , every " nuance is under a microscope ... and I 'm a perfectionist who knows that there 's no such thing as perfection but I try to get as close as I can . "

Todd Rundgren , who produced the first album and arranged all of the background vocals for Bat II , arranged the background vocals for three tracks . In a promotional interview for the album Rundgren has said " continuity is an important thing . " However , in another interview he said that his contribution was considerably less than on some earlier Meat Loaf albums .

And by the time they got it all organized and figured out , there were really only a couple of songs left for me to do anything on . So I came into L.A. for a couple of days and Kasim ... came in , as was the routine , and we did maybe three songs ... just so that I ? d have a few fingerprints on the record . I think someone , maybe Meat Loaf , said that to keep everything covered , I had to be in there somewhere ... but not necessarily running the whole thing . So my involvement was pretty much peripheral .

The album features three duets . Norwegian vocalist Marion Raven duets on " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " . " What About Love ? " features Patti Russo , who has toured with Meat Loaf for over thirteen years . Finally , Jennifer Hudson performs on " The Future Ain 't What It Used to Be " .

= = Compositions = =

The album opens with the title track . " The Monster Is Loose " is highly influenced by the Gothic style of John 5 , who plays the main guitar parts . The song is very heavy and continues Meat Loaf 's association with Major League Baseball established with Phil Rizzuto 's commentary on " Paradise by the Dashboard Light . " " Blind as a Bat " , written by Desmond Child , tells about how one is thankful for the love another has given him , even after he has done deeds to suggest that he does not deserve such love .

According to Steinman , " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " was inspired by Wuthering Heights , and was an attempt to write " the most passionate , romantic song " he could ever create . In interviews , Meat Loaf has said that , in his mind , the song was always meant to be a duet . Norwegian artist Marion Raven , who had been working on her solo album with Child , was chosen because the timbre of her voice starkly contrasts to Meat Loaf 's .

" Bad for Good " was one of the many songs written by Steinman under the inspiration of Peter Pan and lost boys who never grow up . This is reflected in lyrics such as " You know I 'm gonna be like this forever / I 'm never gonna be what I should . " The song was written to appear on the follow @-@ up to Bat Out of Hell , but which Steinman recorded himself . Because of this , Meat Loaf was aware that there is a " core of fans that know that song , " so he " had that under the microscope more than any other on the album . "

" Cry Over Me " is , according to Meat Loaf , a timeless song dealing with relationships of all kinds . In a 2007 interview , he says that it can be about your first or last loves , or dealing with your boss at work . Partially quoting the lyrics , the singer posits that there are times when " you want him to feel exactly like I felt when he said that to me . "

The Guardian says " In the Land of the Pig ( The Butcher Is King ) " is " five Olympian minutes crying out for a full production at Glyndebourne . " Guitarist Steve Vai describes it as " very Gothic ;

almost terrifying . " It is about the intense power over subordinates :

Can 't you hear the choir now ?

Listen to the animals sing .

Can 't you hear the slaughterhouse bells ?

In the land of the pigs the butcher is king .

" Monstro " is a bombastic orchestral piece layered with chorals that lead into the piano introduction to " Alive . " Meat Loaf decided to hire Desmond Child when he revealed that he had written " Alive " especially for the album . The song refers to how the singer has overcome difficult periods in his life .

" What About Love " , a piano @-@ based duet with Patti Russo , is a sexually charged song that echoes " Paradise by the Dashboard Light " from the 1977 album . Here , though , the singers are singing about love throughout , not bitterness . The final verse contains the most explicit lyrics about their first sexual encounter .

[ Boy : ]

I can 't forget the feeling of your sweat upon my skin .

And the tremble of your body on the day you let me in ...

[ Girl : ]

On a summernight 's surrender with nothing to lose .

You were scared and so was I when I gave myself to you ...

" Seize the Night " has a strong orchestral foundation underneath the lead vocals and a choir . A duet with Jennifer Hudson , " The Future Ain 't What It Used to Be " is a pessimistic song based upon the myth that Pandora closed her jar before allowing " hope " to escape ( the song first appeared on the only album performed by female group Pandora 's Box ) . The lyrics reveal the hopelessness of the past ( Were there ever any stars in the sky ? ) and the future ( There 's nothing so sad as a tomorrow gone bad ) .

The final song of the Bat trilogy is a short one written by Steinman . A few lyrics of Cry to Heaven begin rather sweet , but turning rather bitter : ( Cry baby cry / Cry , cry to heaven / If that doesn 't do it for you / Go ahead and cry like hell . ) The two parts are bridged by an instrumental dominated by an Irish flute .

= = Cover and booklet = =

The cover follows the style of the previous two albums called Bat Out of Hell . Julie Bell designed the cover and the artwork that appears alongside the lyrics in the booklet . She also supplied the art for the " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " single . The cover features the biker from the first two covers about to slay the giant bat from the second cover . Like the first two Bat albums , Steinman 's songwriting is credited on the cover , this time shared with Desmond Child .

The booklet contains all of the lyrics to the songs , each page featuring a small illustration . The CD liner contains a dedication " For thirty years of friendship and inspiration , Bat Out of Hell III is dedicated to Jim Steinman . "

= = Reception = =

The album debuted at # 8 on the Billboard 200 and sold about 81 @, @ 000 copies in its opening week , his best since Bat Out of Hell II : Back Into Hell . However , it slipped to # 60 after three weeks . The album also reached # 3 in the UK charts , but quickly fell off .

Q gave the album a positive review , calling it " the second @-@ best album to bear the ' Bat ' name " , and saying that Child did an ' impressive recreation of Steinman 's Andrew Lloyd Webber @-@ on @-@ steroids approach ' , while the album was " overblown , frequently ridiculous and largely devoid of irony . " They were unimpressed with the title track , suggesting that ' whoever decided it would be a good idea for Meat Loaf to tackle nu metal ... should be tarred and feathered . " Q did , however , praise the " operatic " vocals and May 's " fabulously hysterical guitar " on the track " Bad for Good " . The Village Voice named it as ' Album of the Year This Week ' , calling it "

absurdist , righteous majesty " .

Some reviews lamented Steinman 's absence . According to Allmusic , " this Bat is quite obviously a patchwork , pieced together from things borrowed and recreated , never quite gelling the way either of the previous Bats did . " They criticized " The Monster is Loose " as a " disarming , a grindingly metallic riff @-@ rocker that sits very uncomfortably next to Steinman 's " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " , and Child as " a professional who is playing a game without bothering to learn the rules . " On the other hand , the review commended Meat Loaf 's voice : he sings " his heart out as he valiantly tries to make this Bat a worthy successor to the originals . "

= = Singles and music videos = =

" It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " was the first song released as a single . It reached number one in Raven 's native Norway , and the top ten in both the United Kingdom and Germany . " Blind As a Bat " was scheduled to be released in the UK on December 18 , but was then put back to February 26 , as two CDs . In turn , this single was pulled at the last minute , in favor of " Cry Over Me " , which was released on May 7 , 2007 .

P. R. Brown directed the videos for " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " and " Cry over Me . " " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " is an elaborate production , in which Meat Loaf is being haunted by the memory of his dead lover . Told in flashback , Raven 's character crashes her car to avoid a man standing in the road . She sings as an unseen spirit following Meat Loaf . It echoes Steinman 's comments that the song is about the " dark side of love " and the " ability to be resurrected by it . "

The video for " Cry over Me " had the lowest budget since those for the original album . A simple video , Meat Loaf has said that it only took four hours to film . The music video for " The Monster Is Loose " consists of animation . Its storyline is about a biker who rescues a girl from an enormous bat @-@ like creature .

The videos for " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " , " Cry over Me " and " The Monster Is Loose " are included as bonus features on the 3 Bats Live DVD , released in October 2007 .

= = Track listing = =

All of the Jim Steinman songs were written for other projects . Like Bat II , the album contains two songs ( " It 's All Coming Back ... " and " The Future Ain 't What It Used to Be " ) that originally appeared on Original Sin , Steinman 's 1989 concept album with Pandora 's Box . Steinman 's demo of " In the Land of the Pig , the Butcher Is King " was part of the preparations for the unrealized Batman : The Musical project . Steinman 's " Cry to Heaven " demo was intended for the possibility that Steinman would provide songs for a musical based on the film Cry @-@ Baby . Cry @-@ Baby has since been staged , but without any work from Jim Steinman . " Bad for Good " was featured as the title track on Steinman 's 1981 album . Some of the songs on the Bad for Good album were once intended to be a Meat Loaf solo album . " Seize the Night " first appeared as " Carpe Noctem " in the German language musical Tanz der Vampire . It was also performed in English in the 2002 Broadway show called Dance of the Vampires , and demos of the song in English became widely available around that time . " If It Ain 't Broke , Break It " first appeared in the MTV film Wuthering Heights , and a recording of the song was released on the soundtrack CD for the film .

= = Alternative releases = =

A limited edition was released with an accompanying DVD , containing a short " making of " featurette , the animated trailer , and " The Monster is Loose " career montage video . The US version also includes a photo gallery and the " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " video .

Best Buy 's version of the album came with an exclusive bonus track : a live version of " Testify " ( from Couldn 't Have Said It Better ) . This track was originally announced to be on the CD itself , but Best Buy opted to include an insert in the packaging giving customers a code to download the song . Circuit City 's version came with an exclusive downloadable track : a live version of " Life Is a

Lemon and I Want My Money Back " . Target released a " Limited Tour Edition " with a concert ticket pre @-@ sale offer . Wal Mart released the album as part of an exclusive 2 @-@ pack with the Meat Loaf Bat Out of Hell Classic Albums DVD .

The version of the album available from Apple 's iTunes Store includes two bonus tracks , a live version of " I 'd Do Anything for Love " , recorded at a concert in Australia , and " Heads Will Roll " , sung by Marion Raven from her EP of the same name .

= = Tour = =

Meat Loaf embarked on a 112 date world tour to promote the album . He performed a concert performing some songs from all three Bat Out of Hell albums on October 16 at London 's Royal Albert Hall , and performed many of those songs on the rest of his tour as well . He also performed a " Bat on Broadway " performance on November 2 , 2006 at New York 's Palace Theater , as well as shows in Toronto , Atlantic City , Uncasville , and Mexico City .

Marion Raven joined Meat Loaf for the first leg of his 2007 tour , Seize the Night tour . She was the supporting act , promoting her Set Me Free album . Meat Loaf introduced her on stage at the latter stages of the concerts to duet on " It 's All Coming Back to Me Now " .

A DVD of the tour was released in October 2007 , entitled 3 Bats Live . It also contains a bonus disc featuring the promotional videos and animations from Bat III .

Portions of the tour were captured on film in the Theatrical Documentary Meat Loaf : In Search of Paradise , directed by Bruce David Klein , which was released in 2008 .

= = Certifications = =

= = Personnel = =

Lead vocals ? Meat Loaf

Session Musicians

backing vocals ? Becky Baeling ( track 11 ) , Andreas Carlsson ( track 8 ) , Desmond Child , Marti Frederiksen ( track 11 ) , Diana Grasselli ( tracks 2 , 7 , 13 , 14 ) , John Gregory ( tracks 3 , 11 ) , Storm Lee , Richard Madenfort , Jeanette Olsson , Jason Paige , Keely Pressly ( track 3 ) , Camile Saviola ( track 10 ) , Maria Vidal ( track 13 )

programming ? Randy Canto ( track 10 ) , Doug Emery ( track 14 ) , Harry Sommerdahl ( tracks 2 , 7 , 9 , 10 ) , Chris Vrenna ( track 6 )

gospel choir ( tracks 8 , 13 ) ? Barbara Allen , Vernon Allen , Esther Austin , Bonita Brisco , Cheryl Brown , Sonya Byous , Jessica Jones , Joseph Powell , Sandra Stokes , Roshuan Stovall

trumpet ( track 10 ) ? Gary Grant , Steve Madaio

Orchestra

David Campbell ? Conductor and arranger