

= Electra Heart =

Electra Heart is the second studio album by Welsh singer and songwriter Marina Diamandis , professionally known as Marina and the Diamonds . It was released on 27 April 2012 by 679 Artists and Atlantic Records . Diamandis collaborated with producers including Liam Howe , Greg Kurstin , Dr. Luke , Diplo , and StarGate during its recording , and subsequently transitioned from the new wave musical styles seen throughout her debut studio album The Family Jewels (2010) . Their efforts resulted in a concept album inspired by electropop music , a distinct departure from her earlier projects ; its lyrical content is united by the topics of love and identity . Diamandis created the title character " Electra Heart " to represent female stereotypes in popular American culture .

Music critics were divided in their opinions of Electra Heart , expressing ambivalence towards Diamandis ' shift in musical style and its overall production . The record debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 21 @,@ 358 copies . In doing so , it became Diamandis ' first chart @-@ topping record there , although it was then distinguished as the lowest @-@ selling number @-@ one record of the 21st century in the country . The album was eventually certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for exceeding shipments of 100 @,@ 000 units . Electra Heart performed moderately on international record charts , including a peak position at number 31 on the US Billboard 200 , and became Diamandis ' highest @-@ charting project in the United States at the time .

Electra Heart was supported by three singles , all of which were supplemented by music videos . " Primadonna " was released as the lead single from the record on 20 March 2012 , and peaked at number 11 on the UK Singles Chart . Follow @-@ up singles " Power & Control " and " How to Be a Heartbreaker " were respectively released on 20 July and 7 December , and reached numbers 193 and 88 in the United Kingdom . The record was additionally promoted by Diamandis ' headlining The Lonely Hearts Club Tour , which visited Europe and North America from May 2012 through May 2013 .

= = Background and production = =

After returning from the United States after the launch of her debut studio album The Family Jewels (2010) , Diamandis considered creating a character which would become the centerpiece of her follow @-@ up project . She commented that she was inspired by the " Tumblr generation " to photograph herself in several places across the United States , appearing as a different persona in each picture to mimic the anonymity of the " mini @-@ stars of the internet " . The final product became " a cold , ruthless character who wasn 't vulnerable " , which she later named " Electra Heart " and detailed as a tool to represent a combination of elements associated with the American Dream and Greek tragedy , and added that visuals would merge the differing concepts into a cohesive idea .

Diamandis first announced Electra Heart in August 2011 ; it was initially planned to become a three @-@ piece project inspired by American culture in the 1970s , although it eventually evolved into her second studio album . Diamandis originally planned to release the record as a " side project " under an entity separate from Marina and the Diamonds , although her management disapproved . The track " Living Dead " was the first recorded during its production , and approximately 22 songs were recorded for potential inclusion on the album . She later commented that the record was dedicated to " dysfunctional love " , elaborating that " rejection is a universally embarrassing topic and Electra Heart is my response to that . " Diamandis stated that Electra Heart was influenced by Madonna , Marilyn Monroe , and the French queen Marie Antoinette ; she described Madonna as being " fearless " and felt that she showcased a desire to be a successful artist beyond fame and wealth . Diamandis told Glamour that Britney Spears influenced a " double @-@ sided " theme for the record of both " innocence " and " darkness " . She described the final product as being " a bit cringe " and reflective of her personal experiences , although noted that its promotional campaign would be " pink and fluffy " .

= = Composition = =

Heavily inspired by electropop musical styles , Electra Heart has been described as a concept album detailing " female identity " and " a recent breakup " . It represents a musical departure from Diamandis ' debut studio album The Family Jewels (2010) , which incorporated a new wave and indie rock @-@ influenced sonority . She later commented that the album was specifically designed as a pop record to allow her to establish a greater prominence in the contemporary music industry . The title character " Electra Heart " portrays four female archetypes in the album : " Teen Idle " , " Primadonna " , " Homewrecker " , and " Su @-@ Barbie @-@ A " . Their presences on each track are not clearly defined , although Diamandis acknowledged that they are more apparent on the visual aspects of the album .

Alexis Petridis from The Guardian compared the lyrical content used throughout the pop punk @-@ inspired opener " Bubblegum Bitch " to " the self @-@ fulfilling I @-@ will @-@ be @-@ huge prophecy " that was developed in The Fame by Lady Gaga . The following track " Primadonna " is a pop number that contains a " surging beat " and an " anti @-@ chorus structure " , which according to James Christopher Monger from AllMusic blends styles reminiscent of Swedish recording artist Lykke Li and the British band Coldplay . " Lies " takes influence from elements of dubstep music . Michael Cragg from BBC Music felt that it allowed Diamandis to " deal directly with her emotions " , and opined that contributions from producer Diplo gave the song " extra gloom wobble sadness " . Cragg classified " Homewrecker " as a " vampy " track which blends verses centred around spoken @-@ word vocals with a " stompy " refrain where Diamandis declares " I broke a million hearts just for fun " , while Christopher Will from the Pennsylvania State University @-@ sponsored Blue Robot recognised elements of house music . Cragg further opined that " Starring Role " was " heart @-@ rending in its simplicity " , and noticed prominent piano and drum instrumentation throughout the recording .

Monger saw the sixth track " The State of Dreaming " as a solemn offering from the record for its intellectual lyrical content , which he described as one of several tracks that " reveal the lonely rebel , defiantly eating lunch alone , secretly wishing for acceptance . " " Power & Control " was detailed as an electropop track by Emily Mackay from The Quietus , while Laura Snapes from Pitchfork Media commented that Diamandis repeatedly delivers the lyrics " I am weak " with an " increasingly ephemeral voice " as it progresses . Snapes also felt that " Living Dead " was a more " vulnerable moment " from Electra Heart , and compared it to the " snappy [and] taut " works of English duo Soft Cell . Monger recognised inspiration from American recording artist Lana Del Rey in " Teen Idle " and felt that it represented " the feral blood of an army of disenfranchised high @-@ school loners coming into their own " . Bradley Stern from MuuMuse suggested that " The Valley of the Dolls " drew inspiration from the 1967 film of the same name , and described " Hypocrates " as a " sparkling guitar @-@ pop tune " that takes stylistic influences from 1960s pop music and details the power struggle between romantic partners . Electra Heart closes with its 12th track " Fear and Loathing " , which experiments with electronic music styles ; Petridis made particular note of its minimal production , which according to him , places emphasis on Diamandis ' " coolly enunciated and slightly folky " vocals .

= = Release and promotion = =

On 1 March , Diamandis unveiled the album artwork for the standard version of Electra Heart , which depicts a blonde Diamandis wearing several hair rollers . The singer later revealed that because of the dye , her hair started to fall out , so she got a boy 's haircut and wore a wig . Becky Bain from Idolator complimented its " retro film stock look " and opined that it " is just a snapshot from some 1970s exploitation movie " , while Bradley Stern from MuuMuse jokingly referenced the album track " Homewrecker " when stating that she " looks like a proper Suzy Homemaker ! (Or should I say Suzy Homewrecker ?) " The artwork for the deluxe version features the same picture of Diamandis , although it is tinted purple . The track listing for the standard version was confirmed on 1 March , while the track listing for the deluxe version was announced on 5 March . A limited

edition box set of Electra Heart contained the deluxe version of the record , four photo art cards , a ring , perspex , necklace , and pocket mirror .

= = = Music videos = = =

Diamandis released 11 music videos through YouTube during the promotional campaign for Electra Heart . She claimed that their production led her record label into bankruptcy , but stated that they would be released and " finish this era the way I want to . " The first , titled " Part 1 : Fear and Loathing " , was released on 8 August 2011 , and sees Diamandis cutting her long brown hair and singing the track on a balcony during the nighttime . It was followed by " Part 2 : Radioactive " on 22 August , which depicts a blonde @-@ wigged Diamandis travelling across the United States with her romantic interest . The track was released through the iTunes Store on 23 September , and peaked at number 25 on the UK Singles Chart on 15 October . The black @-@ and @-@ white clip " Part 3 : The Archetypes " shows the close @-@ up of a blonde Diamandis while the introduction of " The State of Dreaming " is played ; it introduced the archetypes " housewife " , " beauty queen " , " homewrecker " , and " idle teen " on 15 December . " Part 4 : Primadonna " served as the music video for the lead single from the record on 12 March 2012 .

Uploaded on 18 May , the black @-@ and @-@ white " Part 5 : Su @-@ Barbie @-@ A " is set to the introduction of " Valley of the Dolls " with overlapped commentary mentioning " Quick @-@ Curl Barbie " and " Mod @-@ Hair Ken " ; it depicts Diamandis standing on the porch of a house with her back to the front door . It was followed by " Part 6 : Power & Control " on 30 May , where Diamandis is seen engaging in a series of mind games with her romantic interest . Diamandis alleged that Atlantic Records delayed the premiere of " Part 7 : How to Be a Heartbreaker " because they felt she was " ugly " in the clip ; it was made publicly available on 28 September , and sees Diamandis interacting with several shirtless men in a community shower . " Part 8 : E.V.O.L. " introduced the previously @-@ unreleased track " E.V.O.L. " on 14 February 2013 . The black @-@ and @-@ white visual shows a brown @-@ wigged Diamandis looking about a room with white @-@ tiled walls .

" Part 9 : The State of Dreaming " , premiered on 2 March , presents Diamandis lying on a bed while " alternating between sad eyes and a big smile " . It begins with a black @-@ and @-@ white filter , although transitions into color after the first minute . It was followed by " Part 10 : Lies " on 17 July , and employs a similar black @-@ and @-@ white to color technique . Diamandis is first seen looking into the camera wearing little makeup , and is later shown walking into the woods and sitting at a dinner table in the rain . The final music video " Part 11 : Electra Heart " introduced the previously @-@ unreleased title track ; the clip itself contains footage from the earlier music videos . It symbolically ended the promotional era for Electra Heart , with Diamandis having tweeted " Goodbye , Electra Heart ! " on 8 August , the same day the video was released .

= = = Singles = = =

Inspired by the six @-@ single promotional campaign for Teenage Dream (2010) by Katy Perry , Diamandis planned to release six singles from Electra Heart , however , three tracks were released before she finished promoting the album . " Primadonna " was announced as the lead single from the record on 13 March 2012 , and was released through the iTunes Store in the United States on 20 March . Robert Copsey from Digital Spy spoke favourably of the track , complimenting its overall production and Diamandis ' portrayal of its female archetype . It peaked at number 11 on the UK Singles Chart , becoming Diamandis ' fifth song to enter the top 40 in the United Kingdom . " Power & Control " was released through the iTunes Store in the United Kingdom on 20 July 2012 and served as the second single from Electra Heart . It peaked at number 193 on the UK Singles Chart . In July 2012 , it was announced that " How to Be a Heartbreaker " would be released as the second single in the United States and the third single in the United Kingdom . Diamandis commented that she had written the track while Electra Heart was being pressed in the United Kingdom , and consequently missed the cut @-@ off for initial inclusion on the record ; however , it was featured in

the revised track listing for the American version . The song was released through the iTunes Store on 7 December 2012 , and peaked at number 88 on the UK Singles Chart .

= = = Tour = = =

In February 2012 , Diamandis announced the launch of her headlining The Lonely Hearts Club Tour . It ran alongside the Mylo Xyloto Tour headlined by Coldplay , for which Diamandis served as the supporting act . The Lonely Hearts Club Tour was initially scheduled to begin on 4 May at the Manchester Cathedral in Manchester , although it was delayed after Diamandis sustained a vocal cord injury , and ultimately began on 18 June at The Waterfront in Norwich . The American leg of the tour began on 10 July at The Fonda Theatre in Los Angeles , while the tour itself ended on 29 May 2013 after a performance at the Rumsey Playfield in New York City .

= = Critical reception = =

At Metacritic , which assigns a weighted mean rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , Electra Heart received an average score of 57 , which indicates " mixed or average reviews " , based on 16 reviews . Writing for AllMusic , James Christopher Monger compared the record to the works of American recording artists Kesha and Lady Gaga , and favourably summarised it as " a brooding , sexy , desperate , overwrought , and infectious record that 's both aware and unashamed of its contrivance . " Michael Cragg reviewed the album on behalf of BBC Music ; he felt that the recurring concept of failed romance established " a strange dichotomy " that created a sense of cohesiveness , and elaborated that it " [pulls] you sharply into her world . " He considered the second half of the disc to be mildly disappointing , although concluded that this was excusable because the overall record " [balances] the ironic and the heartfelt , the quirky and the mainstream , the real and the fake with remarkable aplomb . " Tim Stack of Entertainment Weekly complimented Diamandis for her ability to " rival Katy Perry for catchy hooks , command with the swagger of Gwen Stefani , and even come close to the ethereal vocal exhilaration of Florence Welch . " Stack opined that Electra Heart was a healthy combination of up @-@ tempo recordings and genuinely @-@ delivered ballads , and placed additional praise on the female archetypes explored throughout the album .

The Guardian writer Alexis Petridis was confident that " there 's clearly an interesting pop star " emerging from Diamandis , but suggested that her creativity was restricted by the heavy integration of alter egos and an implied determination for commercial success , which he commented failed to reflect Diamandis ' inventiveness . Simon Price from The Independent accepted that the record was " too professional to be truly terrible " , although noted that Diamandis ' revamped public image as a " British Katy Perry " lacked ingenuity . NME columnist Priya Elan summarised the album as an " expensive @-@ sounding failure " that suffered from its lack of decisiveness . Writing for Pitchfork Media , Laura Snapes questioned the decision of creating the " Electra Heart " character for the record , and suggested that it was unnecessary . She elaborated that " duller and more unbearable " tracks were unavoidable , and expressed particular disappointment because she thought that Electra Heart could have become " one of the year 's most acclaimed pop albums . " Representing The Observer , Kitty Empire assumed that Diamandis ' collaborations with Dr. Luke and Greg Kurstin were evidence of " a big label push " . She compared the disc to the works of Perry and Britney Spears , although felt that Lana Del Rey was more successful in embodying the themes of " love , identity , femininity and America " than Diamandis ' generic production values allowed . Emily Mackay from The Quietus criticised the songs ' titles for being lacklustre , which she sarcastically stated caused listeners " physical pain " , and was disappointed that the character " Electra Heart " was a scapegoat for expressing " all the worst parts of Marina Diamandis that she didn 't want to become . " The harshest review came from the magazine Clash , with George Boorman writing , " ' Electra heart ' is an ingloriously languid statement of Marina 's demise , the final stamp of disapproval on her flailing excuse of a musical career . There is actually a song called ' Bubblegum Bitch ' on this album . ' nuff said . "

== Commercial performance ==

Electra Heart debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 21 @,@ 358 copies . It became Diamandis ' first chart @-@ topping album in the United Kingdom , although it was additionally distinguished as the lowest @-@ selling number @-@ one record of the 21st century in the country . It was later surpassed by Write It on Your Skin (2012) by Newton Faulkner , which debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 16 @,@ 647 copies . On 15 April 2016 , Electra Heart was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for exceeding shipments of 100 @,@ 000 units in the United Kingdom . The record additionally reached number one on both the Irish Albums Chart and the Scottish Albums Chart ; it was recognised with a gold certification in the former territory .

Electra Heart performed moderately on additional record charts in Europe . The record peaked at number 11 on the Swiss Hitparade , and reached number 17 on the German Media Control Charts . It charted at number 25 on the Ö3 Austria Top 40 , number 30 on the Norwegian VG @-@ lista , and number 41 on the Swedish Sverigetopplistan . The album reached the lower ends of the Dutch MegaCharts and the Belgian Ultratop in Wallonia , respectively peaking at numbers 92 and 132 in each region . However , it reached number 31 on the Official New Zealand Music Chart and number 32 on the Australian ARIA Charts in Oceania .

Electra Heart debuted at number 31 on the US Billboard 200 , and reached number two on the Billboard Dance / Electronic Albums component chart . It has sold 129 @,@ 000 copies in the US as of March 2015 . Elsewhere in North America , the record peaked at number 50 on the Canadian Albums Chart . In August 2012 , Diamandis commented that she believed consumers in the United Kingdom had misinterpreted her comical effort with a perceived abandonment of her original musical inspiration , thus resulting in a relative underperformance in the country . In contrast , she felt that her American audience was more receptive of Electra Heart and her evolving public image .

== Track listing ==

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Electra Heart .

Notes

^ [a] signifies a co @-@ producer

^ [b] signifies a remixer

== Personnel ==

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Electra Heart .

== Charts ==

== Certifications ==

== Release history ==