

= Bleach ( Nirvana album ) =

Bleach is the debut studio album by American rock band Nirvana , released on June 15 , 1989 by Sub Pop . The main recording sessions took place at Reciprocal Recording in Seattle , Washington between December 1988 and January 1989 .

Bleach was well received by critics , but failed to chart in the U.S. upon its original release . The album was re @-@ released internationally by Geffen Records in 1992 following the success of Nirvana 's second album , Nevermind ( 1991 ) . The re @-@ release debuted at number 89 on the Billboard 200 , and peaked at number 33 on the UK Albums Chart and 34 on the Australian albums chart . In 2009 Sub Pop released a 20th anniversary edition of Bleach featuring a live recording of a Nirvana show in Portland , Oregon from 1990 as extra material . Since its release in 1989 , Bleach has sold more than 1 @.@ 7 million units in the United States alone . It is Sub Pop 's best @-@ selling release to date .

= = Recording = =

After the release of its debut single " Love Buzz " on Sub Pop in November 1988 , Nirvana practiced for two to three weeks in preparation for recording a full @-@ length album , even though Sub Pop had only requested an EP . The main sessions for Bleach took place at Reciprocal Recording Studios in Seattle , with local producer Jack Endino .

Nirvana began recording with a five @-@ hour session on December 24 , 1988 . The band recorded again on December 29 ? 31 , and on January 14 and 24 . Three of the album 's songs ? " Floyd the Barber " , " Paper Cuts " and " Downer " ? were recorded during a previous session at Reciprocal Studios in 1988 , featuring Dale Crover on drums . Despite attempts to re @-@ record them with new drummer Chad Channing , the band ultimately decided to remix the versions recorded with Crover for the final version of Bleach . " Big Long Now " was omitted from the album because vocalist / guitarist Kurt Cobain felt " there was already enough slow heavy stuff on Bleach , and he ' didn 't want that song to go out ' " , according to Endino . The album was edited and sequenced , but Sub Pop head Bruce Pavitt ordered that the album be completely re @-@ sequenced . The record was further delayed for several months until Sub Pop was able to secure sufficient funds to issue it .

Nirvana songwriter Kurt Cobain felt pressured to create music for Bleach that conformed to the grunge music style favored by his record label and the contemporary Seattle music scene . The album is regarded as quite negative and bleak ; Cobain claimed that most of the lyrics were written the night before recording while he was feeling " pissed off " , and that he did not regard them highly .

Endino billed the band thirty hours of recording at \$ 606 @.@ 17 . Jason Everman , a guitarist who was impressed by Nirvana 's demo with Dale Crover , supplied the money . He briefly joined the group as second guitarist . Everman was credited as a guitarist on the album sleeve , and is the other guitarist on the cover of the album , even though he did not perform on the album . Bassist Krist Novoselic explained , " We just wanted to make him feel at home in the band . "

= = Music = =

According to Cobain , the music on Bleach conformed with the grunge genre Sub Pop heavily endorsed . " There was this pressure from Sub Pop and the grunge scene to play ' rock music ' " , Cobain said , and noted that he " [ stripped ] it down and [ made ] it sound like Aerosmith . " Cobain also felt he had to fit the expectations of the grunge sound to build a fanbase , and hence suppressed his arty and pop songwriting traits while crafting the record . Krist Novoselic said in a 2001 interview with Rolling Stone that the band had played a tape in their tour van that had an album by The Smithereens on one side and one by the extreme metal band Celtic Frost on the other , and noted that the combination probably played an influence as well . The songs were described as " deliberately bleak , claustrophobic , and lyrically sparse , with none of the manic derangement

or sense of release of the live performance ". Cobain said that the song structures were " one ? dimensional " , and said that he sought to present a more " polished and urbane side of happy " .

Describing the various songs on Bleach , Christopher Sandford wrote : " ' Paper Cuts ' includes a folk @-@ influence melody and ponderous rhythm of an early Led Zeppelin number ; ' Mr. Moustache ' addressed itself on Nirvana 's male fans ; ' Downer ' showed the same exceptional contempt for the group 's audience " . Sandford felt " School " ? which features only four lines of lyrics ? was memorable for its chorus that " served as the rip " . While " Scoff " is " a parting salvo at [ Cobain 's parents ] " , " Negative Creep " was written by Cobain about himself . According to Sandford , " About a Girl " has a " chiming melody and ironic chorus " . In Sounds magazine , Keith Cameron said the song " was exhilarating and it was exciting because that was the nature of the music , but there was also an almost palpable sense of danger , that this whole thing could fall apart any second . There was never any relaxation from the first note to the last " . In his book Nirvana : The Stories Behind Every Song , Chuck Crisafulli writes that the song " stands out in the Cobain canon as a song with a very specific genesis and a very real subject " .

In one of his first interviews , Cobain told Sounds journalist John Robb , " When I write a song the lyrics are the least important thing . I can go through two or three different subjects in a song and the title can mean absolutely nothing at all . Sometimes I try to make things harder for myself , just to try to make myself a bit more angry . I try out a few subconscious things I suppose , like conflicts with other people . Most of the lyrics on the Bleach album are about my life in Aberdeen . "

In 1993 , Cobain told Spin that on Bleach he " didn 't give a flying fuck what the lyrics were about " and claimed that 80 percent of the lyrics were written the night before recording . He was often still working on the words on the drive to the recording studio . He explained : " It was like I 'm pissed off . Don 't know what about . Let 's just scream negative lyrics , and as long as they 're not sexist and don 't get too embarrassing it 'll be okay . I don 't hold any of those lyrics dear to me . " Nirvana biographer Michael Azerrad noted that , nevertheless , many of the songs on the album reflected Cobain and various incidents in his life . " Mr. Moustache " was inspired by Cobain 's dislike of macho behavior , while " School " was a critique of the Seattle music scene , particularly Sub Pop .

= = Release and promotion = =

The album cover was photographed by Cobain 's then @-@ girlfriend Tracy Marander during a concert at the Reko Muse art gallery in Olympia , Washington . On February 25 , 1989 , Nirvana played at venues on the west coast , including the University of Washington . The group began its first European tour , a double headliner with the band Tad , at the Riverside venue in Newcastle upon Tyne on October 23 , 1989 . On December 3 , they played a " triumphant " set at the London Astoria . Christopher Sandford related : " when the style pundits noted Cobain 's ' patent lumberjack shirts and ugly fifties geometric @-@ patterned jerseys ' , seeing an example of ' low @-@ couture chic ' they missed the point that flannel shirts and sweaters were everyday dress in the marine climate of the Northwest " . Cobain took note and said that he never intended to start a fad or act as a role model .

The album 's working title was Too Many Humans . It was renamed Bleach after Cobain found an AIDS prevention poster while Nirvana was driving through San Francisco . The poster advised heroin addicts to bleach their needles before use , featuring the slogan " Bleach Your Works " . In Australia , Bleach was released on Waterfront Records and re @-@ issued on various colored covers and colored vinyl prior to 1992 .

Due to increasing dissatisfaction with Everman over the course of the Bleach tour , Nirvana canceled the last few dates and drove back to Washington . No one told Everman he was fired at the time , while Everman later claimed that he actually quit the group . Although Sub Pop did not promote Bleach as much as other releases , it was a steady seller . However , Cobain was upset by the label 's lack of promotion and distribution for the album .

In April 1992 , following the success of Nirvana 's second album Nevermind , Sub Pop released a remastered version of Bleach on LP , CD and cassette , adding two extra tracks . Geffen Records handled the international release . The CD version was packaged in a cardboard foldout case that

included a bonus booklet filled with photos of the band from 1987 ? 1990 . For the 20th anniversary of the album , Sub Pop released on November 3 , 2009 a deluxe reissue of Bleach featuring a March 2009 remastering from the original tapes by George Marino and a live recording of a 1990 show at Portland , Oregon 's Pine Street Theatre .

= = Reception = =

Bleach did not sell well but received positive reviews from critics when it was first released . Anthony Carew from the About.com Guide said that the album " define [ d ] the entire decade of the ' 90s " , and awarded it four out of five stars . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic gave the album three and a half out of five stars , noting that " Kurt Cobain illustrated signs of his considerable songcraft , particularly on the minor @-@ key ballad ' About a Girl ' and the dense churn of ' Blew ' " . He also said that " it 's a debut from a band that shows potential but haven 't yet achieved it . " NME 's Edwin Pouncey said that the album was the " biggest , baddest sound that Sub Pop have so far managed to unearth . So primitive that they manage to make label mates Mudhoney sound like Genesis , Nirvana turn up the volume and spit and claw their way to the top of the musical garbage heap " , and gave it an eight out of ten rating . Bleach was considered by Rolling Stone as " a moderate hit on college radio and the underground / DIY circuit . "

Before Nevermind was released , Bleach had sold 40 @,@ 000 units in North America . The 1992 re @-@ release of the album was more successful on the charts , with Bleach eventually reaching number 89 at the Billboard 200 , number 33 on the UK album charts , number 34 on the Australian Recording Industry Association chart , and number 22 on the Finland charts . Kurt Cobain 's death in 1994 also led to a resurgence of popularity , with Bleach entering the Top Pop Catalog chart at number six in the week following his death , and eventually earning the top spot on May 7 . The 2009 deluxe edition entered the Catalog Albums chart at number seven . Bleach was certified Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America in February 1995 , and has sold an estimated 1 @.@ 7 million units in the United States . It has also been certified Gold by the Canadian Recording Industry Association . It is Sub Pop 's best @-@ selling release .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by Kurt Cobain , except where noted .

= = Personnel = =

Kurdt Kobain ? vocals , guitar

Chris Novoselic ? bass

Chad Channing ? drums

Jason Everman - guitar ( in name only )

Additional Personnel

Dale Crover ? drums on " Floyd the Barber " , " Paper Cuts " , and " Downer "

Jack Endino ? producer

Tracy Marander ? photography

Charles Peterson ? photography

Lisa Orth ? design

Jane Higgins ? execution

= = Charts = =

= = = 1992 re @-@ release = = =

= = = 2009 20th Anniversary = = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =