

= Pre @-@ Madonna =

Pre @-@ Madonna is a collection of demos by American singer Madonna . The album was released in 1997 by Stephen Bray , who was the producer of the songs when they were recorded , and was distributed by Souttone . It was released as In the Beginning in European countries . Madonna met up with Bray , her former boyfriend , in 1980 when she was trying to establish her music career . She had left the band Breakfast Club and enlisted Bray 's help to further her career . Together they started writing songs and recorded them at New York 's Music Building studio . The songs recorded at that time ? seven of which were written solely by Madonna ? were released in Pre @-@ Madonna .

Although not authorized by Madonna , Bray decided to release Pre @-@ Madonna by remixing some of the tracks , and keeping the others in their original form . Included were the demo versions of " Everybody " and " Burning Up " which Madonna used for her self @-@ titled debut album . Bray chose to coincide the release of the album with the birth of Madonna 's daughter Lourdes , to cash @-@ in the publicity . The album received mixed reviews , with some critics deeming the release as unnecessary , while others were delighted to hear Madonna 's original recordings .

= = Background = =

In 1979 , Madonna was trying to establish her career in the music industry . She was the drummer of a band called Breakfast Club , which was headed by the Gilroy brothers , Dan and Ed . After their lead female vocalist left , Madonna was given the role of the lead female singer . However , she wanted to be the only female voice of the band , and opposed against the introduction of another female vocalist , Angie Smith . This led to a dispute between Dan and her , which resulted in Madonna leaving the band . She then formed a new band called Madonna and The Sky , but that also faced a major problem within a few weeks when its principal drummer Mike Shenoy , who had a full @-@ time job and a fiancé , decided to leave the band .

Undaunted by Shenoy 's departure , Madonna partnered up with her Michigan boyfriend Stephen Bray . Bray and Madonna had met at the University of Michigan in 1976 , where he was working as a waiter in a club at Ann Arbor . Bray used to take Madonna on the tours of his band ; after their romance ended , they remained good friends . When Madonna telephoned Bray to come and join the band , he immediately accepted and joined as the drummer replacing Shenoy . Madonna 's main focus now was to become a professional singer , and she asked Bray to help her achieve that . Together they started writing songs and recorded them under Gotham Records , in New York 's rehearsal studio called the Music Building . The songs recorded included " Ain 't No Big Deal " , " Laugh to Keep from Crying " , " Crimes of Passion " and " Stay " . Bray was the producer of these recordings , along with some demos that Madonna had recorded , including " Everybody " and " Burning Up " . The latter two songs were accepted for Madonna 's self @-@ titled debut album , in a reworked version ; however the demos were left with Bray .

= = Composition = =

When Bray decided to release the demo tracks in an album , he remixed some of them for a more contemporary appeal . " Ain 't No Big Deal " was re @-@ recorded and released as the B @-@ side to her singles " True Blue " and " Papa Don 't Preach " . The track features Madonna 's typical high @-@ pitched vocal timbre of that time , and talks about a carefree woman proclaiming her love . " Stay " and " Don 't You Know " were combined into one song , " Stay " , which was included on the Like a Virgin album . The songs use triple @-@ rhythms and double @-@ tracked vocals and includes a noise resembling someone slapping a microphone and a spoken sequence which fades away in the end . The 1981 versions of " Everybody " , " Burning Up " and " Ain 't No Big Deal " are the pure demo versions of officially released songs whose titles are tagged with the year in which they were recorded to differentiate them from the officially @-@ released versions .

According to Rikky Rooksby , author of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna , "

Everybody " demo version is more or less same as the single version , without the synth grooves added in it . Similarly , the demo " Burning Up " does not contain the guitar riffs of the single version . Larry Flick from Billboard described " Crimes of Passion " as " disco @-@ spiced " . The song talks about how infidelity can actually set one free from a doomed relationship . Madonna 's voice sounds fuller in the verses and chorus , but takes a higher pitch in the bridge . " Laugh to Keep from Crying " is a rock song , with 12 @-@ string Rickenbacker guitar played by Madonna herself . Madonna 's voice sounds drunk and the drum machine backs her voice in the chorus . AllMusic compared her sound on the song to that of The Pretenders . According to Bray , " [Pre @-@ Madonna] carve the dance sound of a generation and chronicle Madonna 's first musical self @-@ definition phase . "

= = Release and reception = =

At the time the compilation was released , Madonna was riding a wave of publicity as a result of the film *Evita* and her pregnancy with daughter Lourdes . Bray decided to cash @-@ in the publicity for the release , although he knew that Madonna would never approve of the album . He said in an interview with *Extra* that Madonna would receive royalties for the release , and added " There 's nothing in these tapes that would be embarrassing , and just hoping that she would like it as much as we do . " In the European countries , the album was re @-@ titled as *In the Beginning* , featuring different artwork , and a re @-@ arranged tracklist .

Pre @-@ Madonna received mixed reviews from critics . Mark Egan from *Rocky Mountain News* writes that " although the songs have soul in them , it 's the delivery that lacks in Madonna 's voice ; you just feel that something is really missing . " Mark Zug from *Chicago Tribune* commented that " the demos on Pre @-@ Madonna are a delight to listen to . To all the Madonna fans , this is one album worth collecting and replaying . " Jasmine Temple from *Lexington Herald @-@ Leader* calls the album , " a gloriously voyeuristic ? and unauthorized ? glimpse at Madonna 's past , the woman she was then . You can actually sense the development of the icon she is today from the songs . " Robin DeRosa from *USA Today* was disappointed with the release , saying that " it feels forced . This release is as unneeded as the hoopla surrounding Madonna 's new born . Every artist has demo recordings in their early phases of career and they are generally not good . This one is not different . " After Madonna was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2008 , Tony Sclafani from *MSNBC* noted that none of Madonna 's songs were in the rock music genre , " but all use rock as a jumping off point . Audible evidence of Madonna 's rock roots can be found on the collection of early demos Pre @-@ Madonna . "

= = Track listing = =

Tracks 1 , 5 , 6 , 7 , 8 , 9 produced by Stephen Bray .

Tracks 2 , 3 , 4 and 10 are produced by Stephen Bray and Tony Shepperd .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Madonna ? vocals , writer , guitar , drums

Stephen Bray ? writer , producer , guitar , drums , keyboard

Tony Shepperd ? producer , mixing

Nick Matzorkis ? executive producer

Robert Rich ? executive producer

Paul Pesco ? guitar

Jamie Muhoberac ? keyboard

Kevin Gray ? audio mastering

Viveka Davis ? booklet photography

Dr. KEB Rhythm ? drum programming

Credits and personnel adapted from *In the Beginning* liner notes .