

= The World Needs a Hero =

The World Needs a Hero is the ninth studio album by American thrash metal band Megadeth , released in May 2001 by Sanctuary Records . After the critical and commercial failure of the previous album Risk (1999) , The World Needs a Hero represented a change back to a heavier musical direction . Subsequently , the album charted at number 16 on the Billboard 200 upon release .

After parting with former label Capitol Records , the album was the first of two Megadeth studio albums to be released by Sanctuary . It was the last of two studio albums to feature drummer Jimmy DeGrasso and the only one to feature Al Pitrelli on lead guitar . Furthermore , The World Needs a Hero was the last album with original bassist David Ellefson until his return to Megadeth in 2010 . Additionally , mascot Vic Rattlehead appears on the cover of a Megadeth album for the first time since Rust in Peace (1990) .

= = Background and production = =

In 1999 , Megadeth released its eighth studio album , Risk . The album was noteworthy for being a drastic musical departure for the band , and the culmination of the band 's increasing attempts for mainstream success throughout the 1990s , a trend starting with Countdown to Extinction (1992) . The World Needs a Hero marks a stylistic transition towards the band 's thrash metal roots . Furthermore , the album had been touted by the band as an " antidote " to Risk in a press release . However , the album has been noted by several music critics as still retaining some commercial feel from previous albums .

According to frontman Dave Mustaine , the album title refers to stereotypical rock stars . When asked about the matter , and an earlier comment about Axl Rose having killed the traditional rock star image , Mustaine explained that " People want heroes . Most bands look like average Joes , wearing gas @-@ station shirts , have funky hair @-@ dos and I think people wanna be able to go ' they may not be popular , but they 're MY band . ' " Mustaine went on to say that many of contemporary rock music groups looked and sounded the same , and that the music industry needed a hero . He then proceeded to contrast a perceived lack of image of then current music scenes with the image of 1980s metal bands like Iron Maiden and Judas Priest .

In another interview , Mustaine offered a more straightforward interpretation of the album title . Commenting on negative stories in the news , such as wars and natural disasters , Mustaine inferred that the world at that time was in need of a hero to solve various problems around the planet .

The album cover by Hugh Syme shows mascot Vic Rattlehead breaking out of Mustaine .

= = Songs = =

The album 's lead single was " Moto Psycho " , and a video was also made for this song . The song is about people who commute every day to work , spending a lot of time on the road . " Dread and the Fugitive Mind " was released on the Capitol Punishment compilation a year earlier , at the insistence of Megadeth 's former label , Capitol Records . The album 's opener , " Disconnect " , is explained by Mustaine as being about living a double life and " the person I want you to think that I am and the person inside that I really know I am . " " Coming Home " was only available on the Japanese pressing as a bonus track , but has since been released on the Warchest box set . Mustaine has stated that concept for " Promises " is " prejudiced relationships , " such as those between a Catholic and a Protestant in Ireland , interracial and same @-@ sex relationships , " it could be about a guy and a sheep for all I care . It just means that if we can 't be together in this life , maybe we 'll make it in the next . "

When asked if " Recipe for Hate ... Warhorse " was written about any particular person , Mustaine said that there were " a whole bunch of people that 'd probably deserve that song , " but didn 't single out anyone in particular . " Silent Scorn " is an instrumental song which is often played over

the sound system at concerts ; this can be heard on the band 's live album *Rude Awakening* (2002) right after the final song in the set , " *Holy Wars ... The Punishment Due* " . " *Return to Hangar* " is a sequel to " *Hangar 18* " from *Rust in Peace* ; the captive aliens from the first song escape and kill their captors . On the live albums *Rude Awakening* and *That One Night : Live in Buenos Aires* (2007) it is played back @-@ to @-@ back with " *Hangar 18* " . The main riff and structure of " *When* " , the album 's closing number , is reminiscent of " *Am I Evil ?* " by *Diamond Head* , which Mustaine said was intentional .

= = Release and promotion = =

The album was released on May 15 , 2001 in the United States and sold 61 @,@ 000 copies in its first week of release , entering the *Billboard 200* at number 16 . The album sold another 25 @,@ 000 copies in its second week , falling to number 59 . The album also charted in Poland (# 17) , Germany (# 36) , Sweden (# 38) , and Switzerland (# 55) as well . By December 2005 , *The World Needs a Hero* had sold about 219 @,@ 000 copies in the United States . Megadeth commenced a tour to promote the album on June 8 , 2001 at Milton Keynes National Bowl in England , where they were featured alongside acts such as *AC / DC* , *The Offspring* , and *Queens of the Stone Age* . The appearance at the *Dynamo Festival* in the Netherlands was canceled without explanation . A show scheduled for August 2 , 2001 in Kuala Lumpur , Malaysia was banned because the band 's imagery was considered " unsuitable " by the country 's government . Following the breakup of the band in 2002 , six of the album 's songs appeared on *Still Alive ... and Well ?* , a 2002 compilation combining studio tracks from *The World Needs a Hero* , with six live tracks .

= = Critical reception = =

The World Needs a Hero received generally mediocre reviews and was regarded as a " return to roots " by critics . Writing for *AllMusic* , reviewer Steve Huey opined that Mustaine " tries to conjure memories " of *Rust in Peace* and *Countdown to Extinction* , but while comparing " *Dread and the Fugitive Mind* " to " *Sweating Bullets* " (from *Countdown to Extinction*) said that much of the material " feels like rehashed Megadeth " . Huey critiqued the production as still being " radio @-@ friendly " and said because of that , the group " never quite kicks up the fury or flash of past glories " . Neil Arnold of *Metal Forces* wrote that even though the album was " lacking the menace of the band 's earlier work " , it was still a more accomplished effort than the previous record . He concluded that Megadeth were " clearly opting for melody over aggression " , albeit rarely breaking into " thrash mode " .

Meanwhile , reviewer Greg Pratt of *Brave Words & Bloody Knuckles* was more sympathetic towards the album . Pratt , after briefly critiquing the lack of a thrashy sound , positively compared the record to *Youthanasia* (1994) and *Countdown to Extinction* (1992) . Additionally , he commented that even in the absence of longtime members Nick Menza and Marty Friedman , that the band still sounded good . Pratt reacted positively to a number of the album 's songs , but cited " *Recipe for Hate ... Warhorse* " as being the album 's " most intense moment " . Mike Stagno of *Sputnikmusic* had mixed feelings about the music on the record . While Stagno noted that the album was advertised as a return towards the band 's roots , he explained that those who were hoping for an album in the style of the band 's first four records would be disappointed . Stagno ultimately defined the album as " more of an all @-@ out metal record " .

The *Rolling Stone Album Guide* described the album as " sluggish " and " retrograde " and called it a " step back for the band " . *Orlando Weekly* 's John Engels felt that the void left by former guitarist Marty Friedman was successfully filled by Al Pitrelli . However , he noted that the album occasionally sounds repetitive , and criticized a number of songs for their " childish " lyrics . Friedman stated he was " a little disappoint [ed] " by the album . Friedman specifically singled out the album 's cover for criticism , though he also commented that he thought that the music was " very well done " .

= = Track listing = =

All lyrics written by Dave Mustaine , all music composed by Mustaine , except where noted .
The track listing of the Japanese edition features the bonus track , " Coming Home " , as track 3 ; " Moto Psycho " becomes track 4 and all subsequent songs are moved one track back .

= = Personnel = =

Production and performance credits are adapted from the album liner notes , except where otherwise noted .

= = Chart performance = =

= = Release history = =