

= Impossible Princess =

Impossible Princess (retitled Kylie Minogue in the UK and Europe) is the sixth studio album by Australian recording artist Kylie Minogue , released on 22 October 1997 . Because the A & R department of her label , Deconstruction Records , were not present throughout the majority of the album 's production process , song writing and production were primarily handled by Minogue , in collaboration with producers Dave Ball , Ingo Vauk , Brothers in Rhythm , Manic Street Preachers and Rob Dougan .

Minogue started work on the album in October 1995 when she returned from her trips with French photographer and her then @-@ boyfriend Stéphane Sednaoui . A release with a mixture of different musical genres and styles , the album features several songs employing themes of self @-@ reflection , relationships and insecurities . The album cover was photographed by Sednaoui and the album title was derived from the book Poems to Break the Harts of Impossible Princesses (1994) by Billy Childish and from a lyric in the song " Dreams " . The tracks " Some Kind of Bliss " , " Did It Again " , " Breathe " and " Cowboy Style " served as the album 's official singles , while the other songs from the album served as promotional singles in Australia and New Zealand .

Impossible Princess received positive reviews from most critics . Australian and American critics viewed the album positively for its production and experimentation , while the British press criticized Minogue 's indie image and music change from her earlier work . Peaking at number four and ten in Australia and the United Kingdom respectively , it was certified platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) . Minogue promoted the album on her Intimate and Live tour , which was positively received critically and commercially .

= = Background and development = =

Minogue left her label PWL in 1992 due to creative differences , and signed a three album deal with Deconstruction Records the following year . Her self @-@ titled album was released through Deconstruction in September 1994 , where it peaked at number three in Australia and number four in the United Kingdom . The following year , she recorded the song " Where the Wild Roses Grow " , a duet with Australian rock musician Nick Cave . Cave was interested in working with Minogue since hearing her 1990 single " Better the Devil You Know " , saying it contained " one of pop music 's most violent and distressing lyrics " .

In 1995 , Minogue began a relationship with French photographer Stéphane Sednaoui and embarked a series of trips to North America and South East Asia . Minogue was encouraged by Sednaoui to write songs for the album ; she had written lyrics before , but described them as " safe , just neatly rhymed words " . Each morning , Minogue would present lyrics to producer Dave Seaman from the night before . Impossible Princess took nearly two years to record , the longest period of time Minogue had worked on a project since her time acting on the Australian soap opera Neighbours (from 1986 to 1988) . Minogue 's creative director Steve Anderson later explained that its lengthy time was " due to the pure perfectionism of all creatively involved " .

Minogue started recording rough demos in October 1995 with Brothers in Rhythm in Chippenham , where they completed the unreleased track " You 're the One " . Impossible Princess is Minogue 's first album to incorporate live instrumentation ; she had commented " I was joking with James Dean Brafield ' Oh my god , every instrument is a real instrument , I don 't think I 've ever had this before ! ' " Minogue felt it was unusual because she was familiar with the use of synthesizers . Minogue attended all music sessions from start to finish , and often turned up late and asked several questions because she wanted more information on how to produce , compose and " change and distort " songs .

= = Composition = =

Impossible Princess combines several musical genres including trip hop , techno , Britpop , pop music , indie rock and dance music . Orkus writer Marcel Anders felt though the album includes

guitar @-@ driven tracks , " Most tracks are still very dancefloor oriented " . Music critic Michael R. Smith from the DailyVault.com noted the techno elements , while a reviewer from Classic Pop Magazine found influences of 1990s Britpop . Digital Spy critic Nick Levine said the album was " all over the dance @-@ pop shop " . Sednaoui introduced her to the work of Icelandic musician Björk , American ? Scottish band Garbage , Japanese producer Towa Tei and Irish band U2 , all whom influenced the work from Impossible Princess . Minogue cited The Verve , The Prodigy , The Chemical Brothers , The Eels and the " British music scene " as influences to the album .

" Too Far " , Impossible Princess ' opening track and lead promotional single , is a drum and bass track that was noted as one of " the toughest club cuts in Kylie 's career " by Levine . Minogue wrote the track at a local cafe and sings about stress and anger . The second track and fourth single , " Cowboy Style " , is a tribal ? Celtic pop song that mixes both live instrumentation and electronic synths , and talks about the first time she met Sednaoui . " Some Kind of Bliss " , the album 's lead single , is her first track to work strictly with live instrumentation , focusing on instruments such as bass guitar , string arrangements and drums . Her most indie track , the lyrics focus on being happy while away from family and friends . The fourth track and second single , " Did It Again " , also focuses on live instrumentation with elements of dance music , and discusses her self @-@ consciousness and self @-@ hatred . Both " Breathe " , the album 's third single , and " Say Hey " are electronic tracks that have been compared to the music of Icelandic recording artist Björk . " Breathe " deals with calmness , while " Say Hey " talks about verbal communication with Sednaoui .

The seventh track , " Drunk " , is a Techno song which Minogue sings about desiring Sednaoui 's attention and wanting him to be satisfied . " I Don 't Need Anyone " has been recognized as the album 's most straightforward Motown ? indie rock song . Minogue stated that the lyrical narrative was " difficult " to explain . The ninth track , " Jump " , is a slow trip @-@ hop song that has Minogue singing about self @-@ acceptance and the future . " Limbo " is a dance song that deals with being trapped and not visiting anyone . The eleventh track , " Through the Years " , was compared to the work of Björk once again , and deals with past relationships and affairs . The twelfth and final track on the album is " Dreams " , a track about pushing boundaries over an orchestral and string arrangement .

= = Release and packaging = =

Deconstruction aimed to release the album in January 1997 , but the release was postponed until May 1997 . Deconstruction then decided to release the album in September 1997 , but the release was postponed once again . Because of constant delays , Deconstruction , BMG and Mushroom released selected album tracks on various formats throughout Australia , New Zealand and the United Kingdom . BMG released Impossible Princess on 22 October 1997 in Japan and Taiwan , followed by a 12 January 1998 release in Australia through Mushroom and 23 March 1998 in the UK . On 26 May 2003 , Deconstruction and Mushroom re @-@ released the album with a new disc with bonus tracks and remixes . Minogue told Billboard that she and Deconstruction had plans to release the album in North America , but dismissed these plans after they failed to find an American label to promote it .

The album cover , photographed by Sednaoui , is a frontal @-@ view shot of Minogue , sitting down inside of a multi @-@ coloured cut cone . The shoot was inspired by Japanese and French pop culture , and Sednaoui identified Japanese photographer Nobuyoshi Araki as an inspiration . For the limited 3D cover , it required multiple static cameras to shoot Minogue and she grew tired of posing for long periods of time . Minogue was dressed in a blue Véronique Leroy mini dress . Minogue recalled " The shoot was so very difficult but we knew that once we got it right it would be amazing . " The album title references Poems to Break the Harts of Impossible Princesses (1994) by Billy Childish . A copy of the book was given to Minogue as a gift by Cave ; she said its poems summarized where she was at that time in her life . Minogue recalled " The first time I saw the name Impossible Princess , It had me written all over it . " Due to the death of Diana , Princess of Wales in August 1997 , the album title was changed to Kylie Minogue for the UK and the rest of Europe .

= = Promotion = =

Minogue embarked a promotional tour in the Oceanic region in October 1997 . Minogue performed in Singapore and then followed with Australian state capitals Melbourne , Brisbane , Sydney and Adelaide . Next was Auckland and she finished off in Hong Kong . After the album 's European release , Minogue went on to promote the album with concert gigs in Norway , Denmark and the Netherlands . Minogue embarked Intimate and Live , an Australian and European tour , which spanned from 2 June 1998 to 8 July 1998 . Minogue started rehearsing for the tour after performing at the 1998 Sydney Mardi Gras in January . Unlike her previous tours , Intimate and Live 's production was handled with a low budget .

Minogue and Baker sketched plans and stage props for the tour . The " K " symbol and the multi @-@ coloured cone from the album 's photoshoot had been featured as props for the tour . The show was accompanied by only two dancers (David Scotchford and Ashley Wallen) and a backing group ? mainly John Farnham 's band members ? with added backing vocalists . Despite initial plans not to take the show outside of Australia , Minogue decided to extend it into Europe due to high demand . From the supporting album , Minogue performed " Too Far " , " Some Kind of Bliss " , " Breathe " , " Cowboy Style " , " Say Hey " , " Drunk " , " Did It Again " , and " Limbo " . The live album was released on 30 November 1998 in Australia and the DVD was released in July 2002 .

= = Critical reception = =

Impossible Princess received positive reviews from most music critics . Billboard 's Larry Flick described the album as " stunning " , concluding that " it 's a golden commercial opportunity for a major record company with vision and energy to release it in the United States ... " Herald Sun writer C. Adams said " Impossible Princess is her best yet , the classey , personal pop album she has always threatened . " Chris True of Allmusic called it " a pretty damn good record " and opined , " Unlike Minogue 's early work , this album sounds stronger and has a more natural feel . Her songwriting abilities have come a long way , and Impossible Princess actually flows together as an album . " Sal Cinquemani from Slant Magazine was impressed with the album 's " starkly personal and unified cord " , saying Impossible Princess " is the work of an artist willing to take risks , not a pop queen concerned with preserving her reign . "

While reviewing her tenth album X (November 2007) , Evan Sawdey from PopMatters commented " For those who still have a copy of her Manic Street Preachers @-@ assisted Impossible Princess , then you have one of the most crazed , damn @-@ near perfect dance @-@ pop albums ever created . " Michael R. Smith from The Daily Vault called it her " biggest step forward " . Ben Willmott of NME criticized Impossible Princess ' musical direction , branding Minogue a " total fraud " for introducing several different genres . Specifically , he lambasted her collaborations with Bradfield . A reviewer from the publication Music Week was less than impressed , writing that " Kylie 's vocals take on a stropmy edge ... but not strong enough to do much " . A reviewer from Samesame.com.au said " Impossible Princess remains Kylie watershed moment creatively ... The resulting LP remains Kylie at her most pure . "

The album was nominated for Album of the Year at the 1998 ARIA Music Awards , her first nomination in that category , but lost to Unit by Regurgitator respectively . Sarah Smith from FasterLouder rated the album at number five on their The Most Underrated Albums of All Time , saying " Why Madonna 's Ray Of Light was acclaimed for pushing these boundaries at the very same moment Impossible Princess was maligned for it , is confusing , but perhaps best explained by the music media 's ongoing narrative of these two singers : Madonna is meant to challenge , Kylie , to smile , pout and spin round . " Slant Magazine included the album on their Vital Pop : 50 Essential Pop Albums list in June 2003 .

= = Commercial performance = =

The album debuted and peaked at number four on the ARIA Albums Chart and number one on the

Australian Music Report chart in January 1998 . It became the highest debuting album on the top 50 chart for the week . It dropped to eight , unable to reach a higher position and descended out of the chart on the week end 26 April 1998 after fourteen weeks . It stayed in for thirty @-@ five weeks , Minogue 's longest @-@ charting album at that point . It became the thirty @-@ first best @-@ selling album of 1998 and was certified Platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) for shipments of 70 @, @ 000 copies .

In the UK , it entered the UK Albums Chart at number ten on 4 April 1998 . Despite being higher than her previous album Let 's Get To It , which reached number fifteen , it descended its way out and stayed in the chart for four weeks . Impossible Princess is Minogue 's worst selling studio album in the UK . Publications in the United Kingdom pointed out that the lack of devoted promotion with a tour was possible cause of low sales , along with Minogue 's image change . After a year of its release , UK Virgin Radio mocked the sales of the album along with Minogue 's concepts , stating : " We 've done something to improve Kylie 's records : we 've banned them . "

= = Impact = =

Impossible Princess is considered to be an example of Minogue 's constant " reinventions " and is recognized as her most personal and experimental album to date . Critics feel Impossible Princess is Minogue 's biggest leap forwards in terms of lyrics , vocals and music , with True commenting " She recruits Manic Street Preachers ' James Dean Bradfield , Sean Moore , and Nicky Wire , starts writing unaided , and completely changes musical direction . Enter Kylie Minogue 's Impossible Princess . From the trippy cover art to the abundance of guitars and experimental vocal tracks , this was her " great leap forward . " UK editor Tom Parker , who wrote the liner notes for the re @-@ released edition , labelled it her " greatest triumph " . Alan McGee from The Observer labelled her " Self @-@ realized Kylie " , but commented " Impossible Princess bombed . She was written off again " . Michael Paoletta from Billboard said that it is her most misunderstood album in her career .

Impossible Princess received huge backlash and mockery for her " Indie Kylie " image and low sales . It was viewed as an inferior attempt of Ray of Light by American singer Madonna , despite Madonna 's album being released months later . In retrospect , Tim Jonze from The Guardian felt her pop and disco @-@ influenced album Light Years (2000) saved her career from Impossible Princess ' backlash .

Minogue said that while Impossible Princess was strong , " I 've gotten stronger and more focused since that album " . As a result of the low success , Minogue left Deconstruction and BMG . Minogue told NME in 2008 that if she ever wrote another album solely by her " it 'd be seen as ' Impossible Princess 2 ' " . She did admit that she does not intend to do this because she may fear it " it would be equally critiqued . " In October 2012 , Minogue revealed that her most disappointing career moment was in fact the low sales of the album by commenting " look at Impossible Princess - it didn 't exactly sell truckloads of album ! " Minogue confirmed that she would never release an " Impossible Princess 2 " in the future .

= = Track listing = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Impossible Princess . All lyrics by Kylie Minogue except " I Don 't Need Anyone " (Kylie Minogue / Nick Jones)

= = Release formats = =

CD ? containing the 12 @-@ track album .

CD Japanese Edition ? 13 @-@ track album including the bonus track " Tears " .

CD Limited Edition ? 12 @-@ track album including lenticular cover art .

CD Promo ? 12 @-@ track album released exclusively in the United Kingdom .

UK Cassette Promo ? 6 @-@ track cassette released exclusively in the United Kingdom . Contains the songs " Cowboy Style " , " Through the Years " , " Breathe " , " Jump " , " Drunk " and " I Don 't

Need Anyone " .

CD Australian / New Zealand Sampler ? 6 @-@ track CD released exclusively in Australia and New Zealand .

Cassette ? containing the 12 @-@ tracks .

2003 Re @-@ issue ? containing original 12 @-@ track album and bonus disc with 12 previously unreleased songs / mixes .

Other releases

Other Sides (1998 ; an extended play , featuring three unreleased Impossible Princess tracks , that was accompanied with the purchase of Impossible Princess at Australian HMV stores .)

Live and Other Sides (1998 ; an extended play , featuring three unreleased Impossible Princess tracks and three live tracks , that was accompanied with the purchase of Impossible Princess at Australian HMV stores . This copy was later removed and re @-@ shelved with Other Sides)

Mixes (1998 ; a remix album that included remixes of the Impossible Princess singles .)

Impossible Remixes (1998 ; a remix album that included remixes of the Impossible Princess singles .)

Confide in Me (2002 ; a compilation album that featured the Impossible Princess singles and other album tracks .)

Kylie Minogue : Artist Collection (2004 ; a compilation album that featured the Impossible Princess singles and other album tracks .)

Confide in Me : The Irresistible Kylie (2007 ; a compilation album that featured the Impossible Princess singles and other album tracks .)

= = Personnel = =

Credits for Impossible Princess adapted from liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =