

= Just Be Free =

Just Be Free is a demo album released by Warlock Records featuring music recorded by American recording artist Christina Aguilera . After finishing her run on The New Mickey Mouse Club , a then fifteen @-@ year @-@ old Aguilera began recording the album with New Jersey @-@ based producers Roberts Alleca and Michael Brown . The pair gave Aguilera the opportunity to use a recording studio and presented her with demo music with the understanding that they could use the material for their own purpose , but also claiming they would not commercially release the recordings . Musically , the album consisted of dance style tracks as well as ballads , and saw Aguilera performing in Spanish language songs . The record was conceived to showcase Aguilera 's vocals in an effort to reach out to record labels , a venture which actually backfired after the recordings were not very well received among critics . Six years after the completion of the album and Aguilera had achieved mainstream success , Brown and Allecca released the record and Just Be Free has sold over 128 @,@ 000 copies in the United States .

= = Background = =

After news that The New Mickey Mouse Club would be filming its final season , Aguilera sought out a record deal . She spent time in Philadelphia to record demo tracks with various producers , hoping to have an album released by the time she had finished high school . While taping the final season of the show , she began working with New Jersey based producers Roberts Alleca and Michael Brown . The pair eventually built a relationship with Aguilera and her family , offering her studio time . They told her that the demo recordings she would produce would be their property , but also that they would never commercially release the material . She recorded eleven " rough and unfinished " tracks which then went on to become the Just Be Free studio sessions .

= = = Musical style = = =

The early tapes were conceived as a way of introducing Aguilera to the music industry , described as a " foot in the door " attempt to build interest in her musical abilities . During the recording sessions , Aguilera experimented with different languages , recording songs such as the title track " Just Be Free " in Spanish . Although the rightful writers of the content have been disputed , the recording sessions have been described as influential on future recordings from Aguilera . Musically the album generally consisted of ballad material which was created in an effort to showcase Aguilera 's vocal talents although in addition to the ballads recorded in these sessions , dance music became a prominent theme throughout the eleven tracks she recorded during this time .

= = Lawsuit and release = =

After discovery that Alleca and Brown would be releasing the album , Aguilera started developments to sue the pair in an effort to stop the release . Aguilera filed a suit against Warlock Records and the affiliates Platinum Recordings and JFB Music for " improper use of her name and license on the upcoming album Just Be Free " . Carla Christofferson , her lawyer at the time , explained that " We 're trying to stop them from releasing these early recordings which is not the quality she is associated with right now . " However , Warlock Records president Adam Levy felt that despite Aguilera disliking the material , he found it to be a look into her life at the time of recording . He stated " It 's a great look at what she was doing , We 're pleased [ to be putting the record out ] . I 'm more pleased for the album 's producers who wanted to get it out . I hope the fans can appreciate it . " Christofferson responded by alleging that Warlock Records tried to " boot strap " on Aguilera 's success . In response to the lawsuit , Warlock Records filed their own lawsuit in an attempt to ensure the release of the record . During the proceedings , Aguilera agreed to let Warlock Records release Just Be Free after reaching a settlement with the company and its affiliates . She allowed the release under the condition that the label would have to include a letter written by Aguilera in

each album released . Since November 13 , 2015 , the album is available to stream on Spotify and Deezer .

### = = Reception = =

The album received generally negative reviews from critics . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of Allmusic understood why Aguilera was dissatisfied with the release of the material , calling the songs " pre @-@ professional " and " generic early- ' 90s dance @-@ pop " . He noted that Just Be Free did not match the quality of her self @-@ titled debut album due to its " bland " production . David Browne of Entertainment Weekly gave the album a D @-@ rating , citing the album 's production and describing the content as " teen @-@ jailbait " due to lyrics such as " Why don 't you stay with me tonight " .

Pier Dominguez , author of A Star is Made , commented that the sessions demonstrated " Christina 's raw vocal agility " despite calling the content " dull " , adding " Christina 's hunger for success actually comes through in these songs , as she sings her heart out with strained emotion , trying to sound as if she 's letting all her inhibitions run free . If she did in fact co @-@ write the songs then they were also a demonstration of Christina 's songwriting dexterity , because the album 's lyrics could be called unoriginal and perhaps even cheesy , it could not be said that they were not catchy " . Similarly , Stephanie McGrath from JAM ! Music also saw why Aguilera would not want the album released . Although she recognized Aguilera 's potential as a vocalist , she wrote " The songs themselves are terrible , dated club tracks , overwhelmed by poor effects and mundane beats . " Despite the negative critical reception , the album has sold over 128 @, @ 000 copies in the United States and peaked at number 71 on the Billboard 200 .

### = = Track listing = =

" Just Be Free " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 3 : 43  
" By Your Side " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 4 : 07  
" Move It " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 3 : 44  
" Our Day Will Come " ( Mort Garson ; Bob Hilliard ) ? 4 : 05  
" Believe Me " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 4 : 17  
" Make Me Happy " ( LaForest Cope ; Michael Brown ) ? 3 : 54  
" Dream a Dream " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 4 : 51  
" The Way You Talk to Me " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 3 : 37  
" Running out of Time " ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 4 : 05  
" Move It " ( Dance Mix ) ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 3 : 55  
" Believe Me " ( Dance Remix ) ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 4 : 36  
" Se Libre " ( Just Be Free Spanish Version ) ( Bob Allecca ; Michael Brown ; Christina Aguilera ) ? 3 : 41

### = = Personnel = =

Christina Aguilera ? vocals , background vocals

Bob Alecca ? Executive Producer

Michael Brown ? Executive Producer

Bryan N. Calhoun ? A & R Supervision

Amy Knong ? Art Direction & Design

Eliud " Liu " Ortiz ? Mixing Engineer

Greg Smith ? Assistant Mix Engineer

Chris Gehringer ? Mastering Engineer