

= Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) =

Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) is the fourth studio album by American rock band Marilyn Manson , released in November 2000 by Nothing and Interscope Records . The album marked a return to the industrial and alternative metal styles of the band 's earlier efforts , after the modernized glam rock of Mechanical Animals . As their first release following the Columbine High School massacre of April 20 , 1999 , Holy Wood was Marilyn Manson 's rebuttal to accusations leveled against them in the wake of the shootings . The band 's frontman , Marilyn Manson , described the record as " a declaration of war " .

A rock opera concept album , it is the final installment in a trilogy which includes Antichrist Superstar and Mechanical Animals . After its release , Manson said that the overarching story within the trilogy is presented in reverse chronological order ; Holy Wood , therefore , begins the narrative . It was written in the singer 's former home in the Hollywood Hills and recorded in several undisclosed locations , including Death Valley and Laurel Canyon .

At its release , Holy Wood received mixed @-@ to @-@ positive reviews ; many critics noted that while ambitious , it fell short in execution . The album was not at first as commercially successful as the group 's two previous releases , and took three years to receive a gold certification from the RIAA . Nevertheless , with worldwide sales of over nine million copies as of 2011 , it has become one of the most successful of their career . It spawned three singles and an abandoned film project which was modified into the as @-@ yet @-@ unreleased Holy Wood novel . Marilyn Manson supported the album with the controversial Guns , God and Government Tour .

On November 10 , 2010 , British rock magazine Kerrang ! published a 10th @-@ anniversary commemorative piece in which they called the album " Manson 's finest hour ... A decade on , there has still not been as eloquent and savage a musical attack on the media and mainstream culture ... [It is] still scathingly relevant [and] a credit to a man who refused to sit and take it , but instead come out swinging . "

= = Background and development = =

In the late 1990s Marilyn Manson and his eponymous band established themselves as a household name as one of the most controversial rock acts in music history through the commercial success of their albums , Antichrist Superstar (1996) and Mechanical Animals (1998) . By the time of their Rock Is Dead Tour in 1999 , the band 's outspoken frontman had become a culture war iconoclast and a rallying icon for alienated youth .

As their popularity increased the transgressive , confrontational nature of the group 's music and imagery angered social conservatives . Politicians across the political spectrum lobbied to have their performances banned , citing rumors that the shows contained animal sacrifices , bestiality and rape . Their concerts were routinely picketed by religious advocates and parent groups , who asserted that their music had a corrupting influence on youth culture by inciting " rape , murder , blasphemy and suicide " .

On April 20 , 1999 , Columbine High School students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold shot 12 students and a teacher to death , wounding 21 others before committing suicide . In the aftermath of the fourth @-@ deadliest school shooting in United States history , the band became a scapegoat . Early media reports alleged that the shooters were fans of the band and wore the group 's t @-@ shirts during the massacre . Speculation in national media and among the public blamed Manson 's music and imagery for inciting Harris and Klebold . Later reports revealed that the two considered the band " a joke " . Despite this , the group (and other bands and popular entertainment , such as movies and video games) were widely criticized by religious , political and entertainment @-@ industry figures .

Under mounting pressure in the days after Columbine , the group postponed their last five North American tour dates out of respect for the victims and their families . On April 29 ten US senators (led by Sam Brownback of Kansas) sent a letter to Edgar Bronfman Jr . , president of Seagrams (which owned Interscope Records) , requesting a voluntary halt to his company 's distribution to

children of " music that glorifies violence " . The letter named Marilyn Manson (and other bands) for producing songs which " eerily reflect " the actions of Harris and Klebold . Later that day , the band canceled their remaining North American shows . On May 1 Manson published a Rolling Stone op @-@ ed response to the accusations , " Columbine : Whose Fault Is It ? " In it , he wrote :

I chose not to jump into the media frenzy and defend myself , though I was begged to be on every single TV show in existence . I didn 't want to contribute to these fame @-@ seeking journalists and opportunists looking to fill their churches or to get elected [during the US general election of 2000] because of their self @-@ righteous finger @-@ pointing . They want to blame entertainment ? Isn 't religion the first real entertainment ? People dress up in costumes , sing songs and dedicate themselves to eternal fandom ... I 'd like [the] media commentators to ask themselves , because their coverage of [Columbine] was some of the most gruesome entertainment any of us have seen .

On May 4 , a hearing on the marketing and distribution of violent content to minors by the television , music , film and video @-@ game industries was held by the United States Senate Committee on Commerce , Science and Transportation . The committee heard testimony from " cultural observers " (such as William Bennett and the Archbishop of Denver , Charles J. Chaput) , professors and mental @-@ health professionals . Speakers criticized the band , its label @-@ mate Nine Inch Nails and the 1999 film The Matrix for their alleged contribution to a cultural environment enabling violence such as the Columbine shootings . The committee requested that the Federal Trade Commission and the United States Department of Justice investigate the entertainment industry 's marketing practices to minors .

Concluding the European and Japanese legs of their tour on August 8 , 1999 , the band withdrew from public view . The album 's early development coincided with Manson 's three @-@ month seclusion at his home in the Hollywood Hills , during which he considered how to respond to the accusations . Manson said the maelstrom made him reevaluate his career : " [t] here was a bit of trepidation , [in] deciding , ' Is it worth it ? Are people understanding what I 'm trying to say ? Am I even gonna be allowed to say it ? ' Because I definitely had every single door shut in my face ... there were not a lot of people who stood behind me . " He told Alternative Press he felt his safety was threatened to the point that he " could be shot Mark David Chapman @-@ style " . Manson concluded that it was unwise for a controversial artist to allow his detractors to scapegoat his work (and popular entertainment in general) , beginning work on the album as a counterattack .

= = Recording and production = =

Manson began writing for the album in 1995 , before the release of Antichrist Superstar ; the material initially consisted of scattered ideas . Isolating himself in his attic , he worked the early material into a usable shape . At the end of Manson 's three @-@ month retreat , the band embarked on a year of writing and developing the material . Band members maintained a low profile , and Manson said the band 's website would " be my only contact with humanity " .

The album is the group 's most collaborative effort to date , with all members contributing to the songwriting process (resulting in a more @-@ unified sound) . Most of the work was shouldered by Twiggy Ramirez , John 5 and Marilyn Manson ; keyboardist Madonna Wayne Gacy provided input on " President Dead " and " Cruci @-@ Fiction in Space " , and Ginger Fish did the drum work . Manson said that his songwriting sessions with John 5 were very focused ; most of the songs were complete before being brought to the band for consideration , and were enthusiastically received . In contrast , his sessions with Ramirez were less demanding as they experimented with absinthe . The band wrote 100 musical fragments ; between 25 and 30 became songs , and 19 were selected for the album .

The album was recorded at several locations , including Death Valley and Rick Rubin 's Mansion Studio in Laurel Canyon . Locations were chosen for the atmosphere they were intended to impart to the music . Mixing engineer Dave Sardy co @-@ produced the album with Manson ; Bon Harris , of electronic body music group Nitzer Ebb , did the programming and pre @-@ production editing . Manson announced on December 16 , 1999 that the album was progressing under a working title of

" In the Shadow of the Valley of Death " , with its logo the alchemical symbol for mercury .

The band visited Death Valley a number of times to " imprint the feeling of the desert into [their] minds " and avoid composing artificial @-@ sounding songs . Experimental recordings and acoustic songs were recorded with live instrumentation . Manson later explained that the acoustic songs were " acoustic " in that they were not produced electrically ; the album 's sonic landscape is intrinsically electronic . Harris ' programming skills proved invaluable as the band recorded unique , natural sounds , which he molded into aural elements .

The band spent considerable time at the Mansion Studio , with its cavernous rooms suitable for recording drums . Inspired by the space , the band found they could accomplish more there than in the limited environment of Manson 's home studio . Ramirez later had a fuzzy memory of the sessions , explaining that there were " a lot of different emotions racing around [us] " ; the house , which once belonged to Harry Houdini , is said to be haunted . Gacy said that he spent most of his time working on a computer and synthesizer , " mess [ing] around with prime @-@ number loops where they only intersect every three days and I 'd check up on what kind of music they 'd be making . You never know what 's going to happen " . Fish worked constantly , and the bulk of his contributions to the recording process were made at the Mansion .

On February 23 , 2000 Manson delivered a 20 @-@ minute lecture via satellite to a current @-@ events convention , " DisinfoCon 2000 " , aimed at exposing (and dispelling) disinformation . Six days later , their album was entitled Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) . By April 12 the band was in their final stages of recording , and Manson posted footage of the recording studio . In pre @-@ release interviews , he noted that the record would be " a very sharp pencil " which would appeal to Marilyn Manson fans .

= = = Novel and film = = =

Manson 's ambitions for the project initially included an eponymous film exploring the album 's backstory . In July 1999 , he had reportedly begun negotiating with New Line Cinema to produce and distribute the film and its soundtrack . At the 1999 MTV Europe Music Awards in Dublin (where the band performed on November 11) , he disclosed the film 's title and his production plans . Manson met Chilean avant @-@ garde filmmaker Alejandro Jodorowsky at the event to discuss work on the film , although no final decision was made . By February 29 , 2000 the deal fell through when Manson had reservations that New Line Cinema would take the film in a direction which would not have " retained his artistic vision " .

Abandoning his attempt to bring Holy Wood to the screen , Manson announced plans to publish two books accompanying the album . The first was a " graphic and phantasmagoric " novelization , intended for release shortly after the album by ReganBooks (a division of HarperCollins) . The novel 's style was inspired by William S. Burroughs , Kurt Vonnegut , Aldous Huxley and Philip K. Dick , and it would be followed by a coffee table book of images created for the project .

In a December 2000 interview with Manson , novelist Chuck Palahniuk mentioned the Holy Wood novel (due for release in spring 2001) and complimented its style . Neither book has yet been released , reportedly due to a publishing dispute .

= = Concept = =

The album 's plot is a " parable " in a thinly @-@ veiled satire of modern America called " Holy Wood " , which Manson has described as a city @-@ sized , Disneyesque amusement park where the main attractions are violence and sex . Its literary foil is " Death Valley " , " a metaphor for the outcast and the imperfect of the world . "

The central character is the ill @-@ fated protagonist " Adam Kadmon " , a name borrowed from the Kabbalah which means " primal man " . In the similarly @-@ mystical Sufi and Alevi philosophies , he is an archetypical " perfect " or " complete man " . Adam Kadmon travels from Death Valley to Holy Wood ; idealistic and naïve , he attempts a revolution through music .

Disenchanted when his revolution is consumed by Holy Wood 's ideology of " guns , God and

government " , he is absorbed by its culture of death and fame in which celebrity worship , violence and scapegoating are the moral values of a religion rooted in martyrdom . In this religion dead celebrities are revered as saints , and John F. Kennedy is idolized as a modern Christ .

Known as " celebritarianism " , Holy Wood 's religion parallels Christianity . It critiques the dead @-@ celebrity phenomenon in American culture , with the crucifixion of Jesus as its blueprint . This concept extended to the world Guns , God and Government Tour supporting the album ; the tour 's logo was a rifle , with handguns arranged to resemble the Christian cross .

Manson told Rolling Stone that the plot is semi @-@ autobiographical . While it can be viewed on several levels , he said that the simplest interpretation is to see it as a story of an angry youth whose revolution is commercialized , leading him to " destroy the thing he has created , which is himself . "

= = = Themes = = =

Violence is the central theme of the album , which takes a critical look at America 's obsession with firearms , death and fame and their ramifications in the Columbine tragedy . Manson sees the root causes of Columbine as the gun culture , conservative American Christianity and traditional family values . The album illustrates the harmful roles they play in the glorification (and acceptance) of violence in " mainstream " culture , illustrated by the slogan " Guns , God and Government " . Drawing similarities between the Cold War period of 1960s America and the 1990s , Manson uses allegories from the former decade and other events and figures in cultural history . Music journalist Charlotte Robinson said that it is difficult to assess the " narrative 's effectiveness " without the book and film : " the album doesn 't tell much of a story , instead presenting variations on the same themes " .

Manson was drawn to The Beatles ' White Album because of its role in the Charles Manson " Family " murders and the parallels he saw between that crime and Columbine : " [It] had a lot of very subversive messages on it . Ones they intended and ones that may 've [sic] been misinterpreted by [convicted mass murder conspirator] Charles Manson " . Manson believes it was the first piece of music blamed for inciting violence : " When you 've got ' Helter Skelter ' [taken from a Beatles song of the same name] written in blood on someone 's wall , it 's a little more damning than anything I 've been blamed for " . Manson appreciates the record 's power , which inspired his album 's concept . Holy Wood , he said , " is a tribute to what that record did in history . "

Critics also noted similarities between anti @-@ hero Adam Kadmon and Charles Manson . Manson echoed this assessment , describing Holy Wood as a declaration of war on the entertainment industry : " their self @-@ congratulatory attitude , their beliefs that they can never do wrong , ... that they 're the center of the universe ... [i] n one way it 's defending Hollywood , and in another way it 's attacking it for not being brave enough " .

A substantial portion of the album analyzes the cultural role of Jesus Christ and the iconography of his crucifixion as the origin of celebrity , appraising " our relationship with Christ , and how we outgrew that " . Manson says that while in the past he critiqued religion , with this album he accepts the story and looks for things to which he can relate . He discovered that Christ was a revolutionary figure ? a person who was killed for having dangerous opinions , and was later exploited and merchandised by Christianity . Manson notes the irony of " religious people who indict entertainment as being violent " ; the crucifixion is an icon of violence which made Jesus " the first rock star " . He feels that the exploitation of Christ as " the first celebrity " made religion the root of all entertainment .

Christ 's death is compared to Abraham Zapruder 's film of the assassination of John F. Kennedy , which Manson called " the only thing that 's happened in modern times to equal the crucifixion " . He sarcastically described the historic home movie as a " good clip of mankind 's generosity to share his violence with the world in such a cinematic way " . Manson stresses the film 's cultural importance , noting the irony of showing such violence on the news while complaining about violence in the entertainment industry . He watched the clip many times as a child , saying it was the most violent thing he had ever seen and juxtaposing Christ and Kennedy :

Christ was the blueprint for celebrity . He was the first celebrity , or rock star if you want to look at it

that way , and [dying on the cross] he became this image of sexuality and suffering . He ? s literally marketed ? A crucifix is no different than a concert T @-@ shirt in some ways . I think for America , in my lifetime , John F. Kennedy kind of took the place of that [as a modern @-@ day Christ] in some ways . [After being murdered on TV] , he became lifted up as this icon and this Christ figure [by America] .

Manson also cites John Lennon as an assassinated icon , criticizing the media 's veneration of media martyrs and its conversion of death into spectacle to cater to the American public 's appetite for violence , tragedy and celebrity . He denies claims that Marilyn Manson 's music was responsible for Columbine , speculating how the media would have covered the Crucifixion and linking these observations to Columbine during an interview on the O 'Reilly Factor . Bill O 'Reilly argued that " disturbed kids " without direction from responsible parents could misinterpret the message of his music as endorsing the belief that " when I 'm dead [then] everybody 's going to know me " . Manson responded :

Well , I think that 's a very valid point and I think that it 's a reflection of , not necessarily this programme but of television in general , that if you die and enough people are watching you become a martyr , you become a hero , you become well known . So when you have these things like Columbine , and you have these kids who are angry and they have something to say and no one 's listening , the media sends a message that says if you do something loud enough and it gets our attention then you will be famous for it . Those kids ended up on the cover of Time magazine [twice] , the media gave them exactly what they wanted . That 's why I never did any interviews around that time when I was being blamed for it because I didn 't want to contribute to something that I found to be reprehensible .

Despite references to (and fascination with) the iconic men , Manson was reluctant to draw comparisons between them and himself (saying it would have been pretentious) : " [w] hat I did find was parallels in their stories and my story , and I tried to maybe learn from their mistakes and what they tried to do ... You realise you can 't change the world and you can only change yourself , and I think that 's what [they] found out " . He added , " [f] or me it was about learning from that and trying to break the evolution of man [since] it 's man 's nature to be violent " .

= = Composition = =

In pre @-@ release interviews , Manson said that Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) was intended to be the " industrial White Album ... in the sense that it 's very experimental . I play a lot of keyboards , we switched things around , wrote in the desert ... it 's experimental and when I think of experimental I think of The White Album " . The 1969 Rolling Stones album Let It Bleed (another source of inspiration) was written in the same house where Manson wrote Holy Wood .

Sonically , Manson said the record was " arrogant in an art rock sense " and the " heaviest " record the band has done . " It needs to be to complete the trilogy " , he said . Most of the songs have three or four parts (similar to art rock) , because of the way the story is told . The band took great care to avoid being " self @-@ indulgent " . Manson considers the record entertaining : " Art rock is only self indulgent if it bores you " . CMJ New Music Monthly called the songs " angry and complex " . Rolling Stone noted that " on such songs as ' Target Audience ' , ' Disposable Teens ' and ' Cruci @-@ Fiction in Space ' , [the band] dismantles the slick , glam @-@ tinged sound of [Mechanical] Animals in favor of the more brutal industrial @-@ goth grind of his first [two] albums " .

Like Antichrist Superstar Holy Wood uses a song cycle structure , dividing the album into four movements ? A : In the Shadow , D : The Androgyne , A : Of Red Earth and M : The Fallen ? to frame Kadmon 's story . The storyline unfolds in a multi @-@ tiered series of metaphors and allusions ; for example , the album 's title refers not only to the " Hollywood sign " but also to " the tree of knowledge that Adam took the first fruit from when he fell out of paradise , the wood that Christ was crucified on , the wood that [Lee Harvey] Oswald 's rifle is made from and the wood that so many coffins are made of " .

" GodEatGod " follows Adam as he meditates in the desert . " The Love Song " is an anthem to

Holy Wood 's religion , Celebritarianism . Manson said the idea for the song came from his observation that " Love Song " is one of the most common titles in music , and he wove in a metaphor about guns : " I was suggesting with the lyrics that the father is the hand , the mother is the gun , and the children are the bullets . Where you shoot them is your responsibility as parents " . The chorus is a rhetorical take on an American bumper sticker , which asks " Do you love your God , gun , government ? "

The UK music magazine Kerrang ! described " The Fight Song " as a " playground punk anthem " . Manson noted that the song 's theme is Adam 's desire to be a part of Holy Wood , and the track is autobiographical . Speaking broadly , it is about " a person who 's grown up all his life thinking that the grass is greener on the other side , but when he finally [gets there] , he realises that it 's worse than where he came from and that it 's truly exploitative " . The line " The death of one is a tragedy , the death of millions is just a statistic " relates to overlooking the deaths of ordinary people , ignored by the media , compared to the media frenzy when someone dies dramatically .

" Disposable Teens " is a " signature Marilyn Manson song " , with a bouncing guitar riff and Teutonic , staccato rhythm rooted in glam rocker Gary Glitter 's song " Rock and Roll , Pt.2 " . Its lyrical themes tackle the disenfranchisement of contemporary youth , " particularly those that have been [brought up] to feel like accidents " , with the revolutionary idealism of their parents ' generation . The Beatles ' influence is evident in this song , whose chorus echoes the disillusionment of their White Album song " Revolution 1 " . Here , the sentiment is a rallying cry for " disposable teens " against " this so @-@ called generation of revolutionaries " indicted in the song : " You said you wanted evolution , the ape was a great big hit . You say want a revolution , man , and I say that you 're full of shit " . Manson singles out " Target Audience (Narcissus Narcosis) " as his favorite song on the album ; to him , it describes every person 's desire for self @-@ actualization .

Borrowing a riff from English alternative rock band Radiohead , " President Dead " is a guitar @-@ driven song showcasing John 5 's technical skill . It opens with a sample of Don Gardiner 's ABC News Radio broadcast announcing the death of John F. Kennedy . The song is 3 : 13 long ? a deliberate numerological reference to frame 313 of the Zapruder film , the frame with Kennedy 's fatal head shot and the point at which JFK became an American media martyr " because the production value of his murder was so grand ; the cinematography was so well done " . " In the Shadow of the Valley of Death " is an introspective song with Adam at his most emotionally vulnerable , nearly despairing . " Cruci @-@ Fiction in Space " further explores the Kennedy assassination , concluding that human beings have evolved from monkeys to men to guns . " A Place in the Dirt " is another personal song , characterized by Adam 's self @-@ analysis of his place in Holy Wood .

" The Nobodies " is a mournful , elegiac dirge with a harpsichord and synthesized @-@ drum introduction . The verse " today I 'm dirty and I want to be pretty , tomorrow I know I 'm just dirt " has an Iggy Pop @-@ style vocal delivery building to the adrenaline @-@ fuelled chorus : " we are the nobodies , we wanna be somebodies , when we 're dead they 'll know just who we are . Some children died the other day , we fed machines and then we prayed , puked up and down in morbid faith , you should have seen the ratings that day " . CMJ noted that the song would be interpreted by some as a tribute to the Columbine shooters , but its point was not to glorify violence ; rather , it was to depict a society drenched in its children 's blood . " The Death Song " is the turning point for Adam ; he no longer cares . Manson described it as sarcastic and nihilistic : " it 's like ' We have no future and we don 't give a fuck ' " . Kerrang ! described it as one of the album 's " heaviest " songs .

In " Lamb of God " Manson uses the examples of the assassinations of Jesus Christ , JFK and John Lennon to criticize his accusers , illuminating their hunger for venerating dead people as martyrs and superstars and for turning tragedy into televised spectacle . The bridge paraphrases the chorus of " Across the Universe " . Manson notes that although John Lennon sang " nothing 's going to change my world " , " [Lennon 's killer] Mark David Chapman came along and proved him very wrong . That was always something , growing up , that was very sad and tragic to me ? a song that I always identified with " . " Burning Flag " is a heavy @-@ metal song reminiscent of American industrial @-@ metal band Ministry . Lennon 's " Working Class Hero " was covered between the band 's August 30 , 2000 appearance at the Kerrang ! Awards and the November 14 launch of the album .

Describing Lennon 's idealism and influence , Manson said " some of Lennon 's Communist sentiments in his music later in his life were very dangerous . I think he died because of it . I don 't think his death was any sort of accident . Aside from that , I think he 's one of my favorite songwriters of all time " .

= = Promotion = =

Promotion began on June 9 , 1999 , with a web update that Manson was composing for a new album in tandem with a screenplay . On December 16 he posted a four @-@ minute video clip and written statement , elaborating on the upcoming album 's themes and featuring excerpts of the band performing two new songs . The first cut was a rock song which later became " Disposable Teens " , and the second was a rough demo cover of the ballad " Little Child " known as " Mommy Dear " . Manson described the album as " the most violent yet beautiful creation we have accomplished . This is a soundtrack for a world that is being sold to kids and then being destroyed by them . But maybe that 's exactly what it deserves " . An acoustic version of " Sick City " , from Charles Manson 's 1970 album Lie : The Love and Terror Cult , later appeared on February 14 , 2000 ; however , this song was not intended to be included in the upcoming album or the Holy Wood feature film .

On April 12 , 2000 Manson wrote that they were completing the final stages of recording and posted a downloadable , silent movie documenting the process . This was followed on August 9 with a posting of the Holy Wood novel cover and a sound clip of " The Love Song " the following day . On August 25 he released three tracks (" Burning Flag " , " Cruci @-@ Fiction in Space " and " The Love Song ") for digital download on their website . Manson traveled to the UK to perform " Disposable Teens " on the October 12 , 2000 episode of BBC One 's Top of the Pops . On October 27 , the band launched their worldwide Guns , God and Government Tour . Video footage and photographs from shows at the Minneapolis Orpheum Theatre and the Milwaukee Eagles Ballroom (showing them performing " Disposable Teens " and " The Fight Song ") were posted on the band 's website November 2 .

From November 1 to November 13 , the UK division of Nothing / Interscope Records held a contest to promote the album and launch the UK version of the band 's website . The contest invited fans to log onto the site daily to pick up a series of coded clues which led to a message linked to the album . Fans who solved the riddle received an exclusive download , and were entered into a drawing for a one @-@ week trip for two to meet Manson in Hollywood , California .

In mid @-@ 2001 , Universal Music Group was criticized for airing commercials promoting the album on MTV 's Total Request Live . Manson suspected that Senator and former Democratic vice @-@ presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman played a role in the criticism . Lieberman had recently introduced the Media Marketing Accountability Act (banning the marketing of violent and sexually @-@ explicit media to minors) in Congress . The proposed legislation stemmed from a Federal Trade Commission investigation he and Senators Sam Brownback and Orrin Hatch requested from US President Bill Clinton at the May 4 , 1999 Senate Committee on Commerce , Science and Transportation hearing on entertainment @-@ industry marketing practices to minors .

= = Release = =

On February 29 , 2000 , Manson confirmed that the album was on track for a fall 2000 release . On August 2 , the singer announced a new release date of October 24 and posted a draft of the track listing . Manson then began posting weekly updates on the website , giving fans free access to previews of new songs and artwork . On August 25 , the track listing was released .

On September 18 , Manson announced that the album 's US release was postponed to November 14 (to fine @-@ tune the final mix) and its first single would be " Disposable Teens " . The album was released on November 13 , 2000 in the UK and on December 5 in Japan by Nothing and Interscope Records .

On the evening of November 14 , 2000 , Manson , Ramirez , and John 5 took a break from the tour to celebrate the album with a brief invitation @-@ only acoustic set at the Saci nightclub in New

York City . Tickets were given out in radio contests , on the band 's website and to the first 100 album buyers at Tower Records on Broadway in New York . The set consisted of four songs , including a cover of John Lennon 's " Working Class Hero " and " Suicide Is Painless " , theme of the film (and TV series) M * A * S * H. Manson noted that the latter song " [was] far more depressing than anything I could have ever written " . The following day , he appeared on Total Request Live in a segment entitled " Mothers Against Marilyn Manson " . The band performed " Disposable Teens " on MTV 's New Year 's Eve celebration (with a cover of Cheap Trick 's " Surrender ") and on January 8 , 2001 at the American Music Awards .

= = = Singles = = =

Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) spawned three singles , the first two of which were released in three versions . The first , " Disposable Teens " , debuted as a music video (directed by Samuel Bayer) on Total Request Live October 25 , 2000 . During the following weeks , it was released as two standalone single EPs . The first version , " Disposable Teens Pt.1 " , was released on November 6 in the UK and features Manson 's cover of " Working Class Hero " . It was rereleased as a maxi single in the UK on August 21 , 2002 . The second version , " Disposable Teens Pt.2 " , followed on November 14 , 2000 and features a cover of " Five to One " by The Doors . This version was released in the UK as a maxi single on October 31 , 2000 and a 12 " picture disc vinyl EP on November 6 .

The second single , " The Fight Song " , was also released in three versions . The first , " The Fight Song Pt.1 " , was released on January 29 , 2001 in the US and February 19 in the UK ; the latter was a 12 " picture disc vinyl EP . Both feature a remix by Joey Jordison of the heavy metal band Slipknot . The second version , " The Fight Song Pt.2 " , was released on February 2 , 2001 in the US and March 6 in the UK . The music video was directed by W.I.Z. , and sparked controversy for its violent depiction of a football game between jocks and goths (which some thought exploited the Columbine tragedy) . Manson dismissed the claims as hype : " Flak is my job " .

On February 10 , 2001 Manson indicated that the " The Nobodies " would be the album 's third single . The music video , directed by Paul Fedor , premiered on MTV in June . Manson originally wanted to film the video in Russia " because the atmosphere , the desolation , the coldness and the architecture would really suit the song " . Another early plan was to incorporate the MTV stunt series Jackass , because the song was included in the show 's soundtrack ; however , the idea was abandoned when the show drew the ire of Senator Joseph Lieberman . The third single was released on September 3 , 2001 in the UK and October 6 , 2001 in the US . A remixed version of the song later appeared in the 2001 Johnny Depp film From Hell .

= = = Cover and packaging = = =

The album 's artwork was designed by P. R. Brown and Marilyn Manson . Manson began conceptualizing it as he wrote the songs , and Brown and Manson worked in tandem to realize the imagery after deciding to do the work themselves . It features elements from alchemy and the tarot .

The symbol for the planet Mercury (common in alchemy) is a logo . Expanding on its relationship to the album 's concept , Manson said " It represents both the androgyne and the prima materia , which has been associated with Adam , the first man " .

The singer commissioned a redesigned set of fourteen Major Arcana tarot cards , based on the Rider @-@ Waite deck . He explained that his interest in tarot was grounded in an attraction to its symbolism , not divination . The cards depict each member of the band in a surrealistic tableau . Each card was reinterpreted , reflecting the iconography of the album ; the Emperor , with prosthetic legs , is sitting in a wheelchair clutching a rifle in front of an American flag ; the Fool is stepping off a cliff , with grainy images of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and a JFK campaign poster in the background , and Justice weighs the Bible against the brain on his balance scale . The album 's inner sleeve has nine of these cards : the Magician , the Devil , the Emperor , the Hermit , the Fool , Justice , the High Priestess , Death and The Hierophant . The remaining cards are the Star , the

World , the Tower and the Hanged Man .

The cover art , which portrays Manson as a crucified Christ with his jawbone torn off , is intended as a criticism of censorship and America 's obsession with media martyrs . It is a cropped version of the reinterpreted Hanged Man card . Under it is an obscured copy of the coroner 's report for John F. Kennedy with the words " clinical record " and " autopsy " . The Marilyn Manson typeface uses the same font as the Disney World logo of the 1960s . Manson explained the cover : " I think it 's more offensive to Christians for me to say , ' I believe in the story of Christ and I enjoy the images that you present , but for different reasons than you ' . I 've taken my own interpretation , that 's more offensive than Antichrist Superstar , and just completely disvaluing it . I 'm going to turn a bunch of kids onto Christianity in my own sick , twisted way " .

The cover was controversial ; some copies were issued with a cardboard sleeve featuring an alternative cover , since some retailers refused to stock the album with the original artwork . A pastor in Memphis , Tennessee threatened to go on a hunger strike unless the album was pulled from shelves . Manson described these actions as attempts at censorship : " the irony is that my point of the photo on the album was to show people that the crucifixion of Christ is , indeed , a violent image . My jaw is missing as a symbol of this very kind of censorship . This doesn 't piss me off as much as it pleases me , because those offended by my album cover have successfully proven my point " . Gigwise ranked the cover 16th on its list of " The 50 Most Controversial Album Covers Of All Time ! "

= = = Formats = = =

Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) was released in three formats . The standard jewel @-@ case CD release has an enhanced CD , a gatefold booklet and a card @-@ stock outer slipcase . The UK limited @-@ edition CD features a bonus acoustic version of " The Nobodies " , while the Japanese limited @-@ edition CD has the UK bonus track and a live version of " Mechanical Animals " . Universal Music Japan released a remastered version of the album in Super @-@ High @-@ Material CD (SHM @-@ CD) on December 3 , 2008 and a limited @-@ edition 10th @-@ anniversary commemorative reissue in 2010 . The vinyl LP release was pressed on two black discs and contained in a gatefold paperboard slipcase . The cassette release contained a single cassette tape , a gatefold booklet and a card @-@ stock outer slipcase . Amazon.com has offered a digital MP3 version since November 14 , 2000 .

= = Reception = =

= = = From critics = = =

Holy Wood received positive reviews from most critics . At Metacritic (which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics) the album received an average score of 72 based on 14 reviews , indicating " generally favorable reviews " . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic praised it as " the definitive Marilyn Manson album , since it 's tuneful and abrasive " . He complimented the band for " figur [ing] out [how] to meld the hooks and subtle sonic shading of Mechanical Animals with the ugly , neo @-@ industrial metallicisms of Antichrist [Superstar] " , and said that " much of its charm lies in Manson trying so hard , perfecting details ... there 's so much effort , Holy Wood winds up a stronger and more consistent album than any of his other work . If there 's any problem , it 's that Manson 's shock rock seems a little quaint in 2000 ... [However ,] it 's to Warner 's [frontman Marilyn Manson] credit as , yes , an artist that Holy Wood works anyway " .

Barry Walters of Rolling Stone said , " The band truly rocks : Its malevolent groove fleshes out its leader 's usual complaints with an exhilarating swagger that 's the essence of rock and roll " . LA Weekly was similarly impressed , pointing out that " almost all [the songs] contain a double @-@ take chord change or a textural overdose or a mind @-@ blowing bridge , and they 'll be terroristic in

concert " . Revolver magazine editor Christopher Scapelliti was impressed by the record 's earnestness : " For all Holy Wood 's well @-@ tempered melodies and drunken pandemonium , what comes across loudest on the album is not the music but the sense of injury expressed in Manson 's lyrics . Like Plastic Ono Band , John Lennon 's bare @-@ boned solo debut , Holy Wood screams with a primal fury that 's evident even in its quietest moments " . According to Billboard magazine , the album proved that Manson is " one of the most skilled lyricists in rock today " .

Other critics were less impressed . Drowned in Sound (which assigns a normalized rating out of 10) gave the album a score of 10 ; however , they noted " There [are] a number of criticisms that could come Marilyn Manson 's way : too much more of the same , too much philosophical posing , too much sloganeering . Regardless , all this needs to attain perfection is a few minutes shaved off of the overall running time ... [and] lyrically it actually says something intelligent for once and musically it has a lot more variation and scope than the Limp Bizkits of the world " . PopMatters agreed : " The central flaw of Holy Wood is that the power of its message , an important and provocative one , is watered down by its artistic pretensions . While Holy Wood is often affecting , it would be a better album if it was shorter and dealt with its subject matter directly , instead of through the veil of the ' concept album ' . " Robert Hilburn of the Los Angeles Times was also disappointed that Holy Wood did not live up to " the promise of Mechanical Animals " . In contrast to Erlewine of Allmusic , he viewed the musical cross @-@ pollination of Antichrist Superstar and Mechanical Animals as confusion on the band 's part about " where to turn [musically] , as if uncertain which is the right move commercially in a rock world taken over by Limp Bizkit and Eminem " . He concluded that " [t] his is music that sounds reasonable on the radio but crumbles under scrutiny " . Joshua Klein of The A.V. Club was also unconvinced , remarking that " [this] sort of agitprop is thoroughly predictable , and the only thing that could prove shocking about Manson 's antics would be if the singer actually evinced any power over his followers . Here , he seems entranced by his own power , which may be why his dark worldview sounds baseless even as he offers sharp hooks others would kill for " .

= = = Sales = = =

Since early critical appraisal of Holy Wood was far less favorable than the band 's previous effort , Mechanical Animals , many critics and retailers wondered if the band still had commercial appeal on the early @-@ 2000s music scene . Best Buy 's 2000 sales projections estimated its first @-@ week sales at about 150 @,@ 000 units nationally , significantly less than the 223 @,@ 000 units sold by Mechanical Animals during its first week . In the US the album debuted (and peaked) at No. 13 on the Billboard 200 with first @-@ week sales of 117 @,@ 000 , an initial commercial disappointment .

The album spent 13 consecutive weeks on the charts before dropping off on March 3 , 2001 , making it the shortest @-@ charting full @-@ length LP by the band until The High End of Low (2009) . It was overshadowed by Antichrist Superstar and Mechanical Animals (which spent 52 and 33 weeks on the charts , respectively) . The album 's sales figures were dismal , and it took three years to attain a gold certification from the RIAA (in March 2003) for shipments of over 500 @,@ 000 units . However , in four other countries (Australia , Austria , Italy and Sweden) the album peaked in the top 10 ; in the UK , it peaked at No. 23 . As of 2011 the album has sold over nine million copies worldwide , making it one of the most successful in the band 's catalogue .

Seventeen months after Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death) ' s release , Manson commented on the album 's lackluster US sales . He attributed the lack of commercial appeal to the musical climate of the time , but argued that it stood up comparatively well to contemporary rock albums . Manson noted that the band 's US sales figures are usually one or two million records , and did not find the sales figures disappointing .

= = = Accolades = = =

In 2001 Kerrang ! named Holy Wood the year 's best album at their annual Kerrang ! Awards .

Manson sardonically remarked , " [there is] nothing like a good school shooting to inspire a record " when he collected the award .

Kerrang ! ranked Holy Wood ninth on their 2000 list of albums of the year . The British magazine NME ranked the album 34th in their critic 's picks for the 50 best albums of 2000 in their " Decade In Music " series , calling it " a series of heroic rallying cries for the disenfranchised , while also baiting the American Far Right for all it 's worth " . The album ranked 30th in the Critics Top 50 and 9th in the popular poll of the German magazine Musik Express / Sounds in their 2000 Albums of the Year . The French edition of the British magazine Rock Sound ranked Holy Wood 15th in Le choix de la rédaction (the editor 's choice) and 5th in Le choix des lecteurs (readers ' choice) of their Choix des critiques (critics ' choice) of 2000 Albums of the Year . The British magazine Record Collector also ranked the album on their Best of 2000 list .

= = = Legacy = = =

In their November 10 , 2010 issue Kerrang ! published a 10th @-@ anniversary commemorative article on the album , " Screaming For Vengeance " , calling it " Manson 's finest hour " . " Set against the backdrop of what the rest of the rock and metal world were attempting at the turn of the century ? Limp Bizkit were parading their jockishness with Chocolate Starfish And The Hot Dog Flavored Water and Disturbed were unveiling their contrived anger with The Sickness , for example ? it put the singer into a league of his own ... [and] a decade on , there has still not been as eloquent and savage a musical attack on the media and mainstream culture as Manson achieved with Holy Wood ... [It is] still scathingly relevant today ... perhaps that 's where Holy Wood achieved its greatest success . In deflecting the attention that was targeted at him back onto the media , they reacted exactly as he knew they would : by blustering and further exposing their own inadequacies ... The shame of it all , though , is that so little has changed . That the album is still so relevant today suggests it failed in its task of changing attitudes . That it exists at all , though , is a credit to a man who refused to sit and take it , but instead come out swinging . "

= = Guns , God and Government Tour = =

To promote the album , the band began a worldwide stadium tour (the Guns , God and Government Tour) three days after its scheduled release date and seventeen days before its actual launch . From October 27 , 2000 to September 2 , 2001 , the tour had six legs spanning Eurasia , Japan and North America with 107 shows (out of 109 planned) . Typical of the band , the concerts were theatrical and lasted an average of one hour and forty minutes . Sets were designed with communist , religious and " Celebritarian " imagery . Manson had a number of costume changes during each show : a bishop 's dalmatic and mitre (often confused with papal regalia) ; a costume made from animals (including epaulettes made from a horse 's tail and a shirt made from skinned goat heads and ostrich spines) ; his signature black leather corset , g @-@ string and garter stockings ; an elaborate Roman legionary @-@ style imperial galea ; an Allgemeine SS @-@ style peaked police cap ; a black @-@ and @-@ white fur coat , and a large conical skirt which lifted him 12 metres (39 ft) in the air .

The Ozzfest leg marked the band 's first performance in Denver , Colorado (on June 22 , 2001 at Mile High Stadium) after the Columbine High School massacre in Littleton . After initially canceling due to a scheduling conflict , the band changed their plans to play the Denver date . The group 's decision met resistance from conservative groups ; Manson received death threats and demands to skip the date . A group of church leaders and families related to Columbine formed an organization opposing the show , Citizens for Peace and Respect , which was supported by Colorado governor Bill Owens and representative Tom Tancredo . On their website , the ad hoc group claimed that the band " promotes hate , violence , death , suicide , drug use , and the attitudes and actions of the Columbine killers " . In response , Manson issued a statement :

I am truly amazed that after all this time , religious groups still need to attack entertainment and use these tragedies as a pitiful excuse for their own self @-@ serving publicity . In response to their

protests , I will provide a show where I balance my songs with a wholesome Bible reading . This way , fans will not only hear my so @-@ called , ' violent ' point of view , but we can also examine the virtues of wonderful ' Christian ' stories of disease , murder , adultery , suicide and child sacrifice . Now that seems like ' entertainment ' to me .

Two films of the concert tour were made . The Guns , God and Government DVD , released by Eagle Rock Entertainment on October 29 , 2002 , featured live concert footage from performances in Los Angeles , Europe and Japan . It also included a 30 @-@ minute behind @-@ the @-@ scenes featurette , The Death Parade , with guest appearances by Ozzy Osbourne and Eminem . Seven years later , it was followed by Guns , God and Government ? Live in L.A. Released on Blu @-@ ray by Eagle Rock Entertainment (a division of Eagle Records) on November 17 , 2009 , it depicts the entire sixteen @-@ song set of the final show of the tour ? the Los Angeles performance .

= = Track listing = =

All lyrics written by Manson .

Notes

The disc contains a data track leading to a video no longer hosted by Interscope 's website , but later included as a secret track on the companion DVD of Lest We Forget .

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = = Singles = = =

= = Credits and personnel = =