

## = Commit This to Memory =

Commit This to Memory is the second studio album by American rock band Motion City Soundtrack . Produced by Mark Hoppus , the album was released on June 7 , 2005 , in the United States by Epitaph Records . Motion City Soundtrack , formed in 1997 , had first found success with their debut album , I Am the Movie ( 2002 ) . The band toured in the interim years , creating positive word @-@ of @-@ mouth . In 2004 , the band joined Blink @-@ 182 on the road for a string of shows , which led to their bassist , Mark Hoppus , joining the band in the studio for his first producing effort .

Recorded over six weeks in late 2004 , Commit This to Memory was created largely at Seedy Underbelly Studios , a suburban home converted into a studio in Los Angeles ' Valley Village region . The album was written partially in their hometown of Minneapolis and partially in Los Angeles , during a period in which frontman Justin Pierre was seeking treatment for alcohol abuse . He hoped for his lyricism to better emphasize storytelling , inspired by the lyrics of Tom Waits , Ben Folds and John K. Samson . Hoppus mainly worked with the band on completing song arrangements .

The album became the band 's breakthrough , with lead single " Everything Is Alright " becoming the band 's signature song . The album peaked at number two on Billboard 's Independent Albums chart . The singles ' music videos achieved rotation on cable channel MTV2 while the band toured alongside Fall Out Boy and Panic ! at the Disco on the Nintendo Fusion Tour , later also joining the Warped Tour for a stint . In 2014 , The A.V. Club referred to the album as a classic of pop punk , " full of hook @-@ laden , keyboard @-@ assisted songs whose bright melodies don ' t mask the despair and self @-@ loathing lurking beneath them . "

## = = Background = =

Motion City Soundtrack formed in 1997 in Minneapolis , Minnesota . The band signed to Epitaph Records in 2003 after recording I Am the Movie , their debut , independently and selling copies of it out of the back of their tour van for a year . Motion City became part of a slew of Epitaph signings , including Matchbook Romance , Scatter the Ashes and From First To Last , amid concerns the Southern California label had strayed too far from its roots , and seemed " a little too emo . " By the time the band began production on their sophomore record , I Am the Movie had sold nearly 62 @,@ 000 copies . The group had accumulated significant buzz , and were regarded as a " must @-@ see " act on the Warped Tour 2004 .

Mark Hoppus ' involvement stems from when an Atticus Clothing employee played him I Am the Movie . He was so taken with it that he raved about the band in Rolling Stone , inviting them to open for his group , Blink @-@ 182 on their 2004 European tour . On the trek , he became good friends with the musicians . He told them that he had purchased an abundance of recording gear and amplifiers for the previous Blink @-@ 182 album and told the band of his interest in recording music from a production standpoint . At the final show of the tour , guitarist Joshua Cain went to Hoppus ' dressing room and asked him to produce their next record . Although Hoppus had never produced anything before , he was excited to be a part of the album and accepted the offer .

## = = Recording and production = =

The band first began writing songs at their rehearsal space in their hometown of Minneapolis , which they nicknamed the " Dungeon " , due to its ability to " suck the life and energy out of the band . " For Pierre , the album came at the brink of a transitional period for him , in which he began to seek treatment for alcohol abuse . He left the band during the writing stages for Los Angeles where he moved in with Epitaph founder Brett Gurewitz and began attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings . Afterwards , the band rejoined Pierre in Los Angeles to begin recording demos for a month ; the change of scenery brought about new energy for the group , according to Pierre . Commit This to Memory would be the first album by the band to feature material crafted by each musician in the group , as previous releases had featured songs written in the years prior to each member joining . In addition , the band had more time and funds to spend time working on the

album . " It was also the first time we had a lot more time and money to go in and feel like we were making a real record this time , whereas I Am the Movie was recorded in little segments here and there and eventually pieced together , " said drummer Tony Thaxton .

Recording sessions for Commit This to Memory , which were booked by Hoppus , were scheduled over six weeks at Seedy Underbelly Studios in Valley Village , a district of Los Angeles , California , which was actually a rented house that had once belonged to Jeff Porcaro , the drummer for Toto . The band had , according to Hoppus , " a million ideas and a lot of energy and enthusiasm to make a great record " . Pierre strove for the record to have a sound that resembled the bands Braid , Superchunk , Jawbox and the Pixies . Living in a suburb , the neighbors had called police to the band and Hoppus several times for being too loud at night time , especially when Hoppus brought a Roland TR @-@ 808 drum machine outside to work on a song late at night . According to Pierre , Hoppus was not interested in putting his own stamp on the music , but rather bringing out the best in what he saw in the group . Hoppus generally modeled his production after Jerry Finn ( a longtime producer of Blink @-@ 182 ) , and therefore it involved much watching and listening . " Mark kept telling us , ' Your name is going to be a lot bigger on the front than mine is on the back ' , " recalled Justin Pierre , " So he would throw suggestions out there but always say , ' Feel free to turn these down . ' And we would ! " .

Pierre characterized Hoppus as both " very involved and not involved , " with his job as producer mainly giving notes on the sound of the instruments and offering suggestions to improve songs . Hoppus mostly worked with the band on arrangements , believing the songs were too packed and " needed to breathe " . Hoppus mentioned that label politics had hindered the creativity of Blink 's Take Off Your Pants and Jacket ( 2001 ) , and did not want to see the same fate befall the band . He was " meticulous " in his approach , partially due to the fact that it was his first production job . Hoppus was the one who advised the band to merge two previously unrelated songs ? a slower , softer song and a pulsating drum track ? into one , which became " Time Turned Fragile " . The frontman of Fall Out Boy , Patrick Stump , contributed guest vocals to " Everything Is Alright " , and Hoppus to " Hangman " . With production completed , Hoppus was very excited for the band that he felt was on the cusp of " great things " , recalling , " After six weeks of these guys living all together in two rooms of this house with a studio attached they created this amazingly beautiful and honest album . Justin 's lyrics are so brutally truthful . " The group completed recording in November 2004 , and judged final mixes over the interim months . Pierre later called Commit This to Memory his personal favorite album by the band .

= = Music = =

In a 2015 interview , Pierre notes that fans have told him that they find Commit This to Memory a " winter album , " to which he agrees , noting the unintentional mention of the new year in several songs . His lyricism on Commit This to Memory centralizes around change and , in his words , " being a complete fuckup , yet , at the same time , being somewhat successful " . On the record , he " addresses the themes of substance abuse , psychological disorders and failing relationships . " Pierre penned " Everything Is Alright " as a summary of his OCD ( Obsessive ? compulsive disorder ) tendencies . He intended to utilize his social anxiety and fears in the song 's form , which he has since employed in numerous other compositions . " I don ? t think the [ phrase ] " tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek " is correct , but it ? s something where the verses are one thing and then the chorus is another , but it 's sort of like giving yourself a pep talk , " said Pierre . The song 's lyrics include hating such mundane things as " theme parks , flying , strangers , [ and ] waiting in line , " things that Pierre genuinely disliked at the time of the song 's writing . For the record , he intended to simplify his lyrics to enhance storytelling and he drew inspiration from Tom Waits , Ben Folds and John K. Samson 's writing styles . Keeping in the Waits / Folds inspiration , Pierre strove to write from another person 's point of view ; in the case of " Time Turned Fragile " , it is sung from the perspective of his father .

Pierre has in retrospect labeled half of the album 's writing as being completed while inebriated and the other half while getting sober . For example , he penned the lyrics to " Attractive Today " and "

Time Turned Fragile " while drunk in his apartment , in a " sad and lonely place . " In this approach , words mostly " just came out , " and were not substantially revised . In addition , he was listening to the 2003 album Reconstruction Site by the Weakerthans , and found himself inspired by the songwriting of frontman John K. Samson . Pierre would often take lyrics from other bands songs for song titles ; " Time Turned Fragile " is lifted from a lyric in Limbeck 's " Julia " , while " Together We 'll Ring in the New Year " was pulled from the Tom Waits song " Please Wake Me Up " . " L.G. FUAD " grew out of a night on Motion City Soundtrack 's 2003 UK tour with The All @-@ American Rejects , in which the latter band 's merchandise manager was severely inebriated . He stood on the merchandise stand and shouted the song 's central thesis ? " Let 's Get Fucked Up and Die " . All involved found great humor in the " mantra " , which went on to be printed on business cards as a joke . " Hold Me Down " was inspired by a former roommate of Pierre 's . After she had moved out , Pierre found a portion of her math homework in a couch cushion , leading to him imagining a scenario of finding a letter from a departed lover .

The album has been called definitive of pop punk . Joshua Cain dismissed this label , remarking , " I definitely wouldn 't consider us a pop @-@ punk band . Our influences are more based on ' 90s bands like Superchunk and early Weezer . "

= = Reception = =

Upon its release , Commit This to Memory received general acclaim from music critics . Scott Heisel of Alternative Press wrote that " Memory is an inspired , mature sophomore disc chock full of catchy , intelligent pop @-@ rock . " Allmusic 's Johnny Loftus considered the band more intelligent and sophisticated than their Warped Tour peers : " Motion City Soundtrack [ ' s ] wistful memories , tales of breaking up , and frantic searches for answers [ are ] realer than the next pop @-@ punk combo on the quadruple summertime bill . " Jennifer Maerz of Entertainment Weekly ended her review with the note that " MCS ' slick , soaring anthems ultimately unite the spirits of those who see themselves , like Pierre , as ' lifeless corners of this empty frame . ' " Mark Griffiths of Kerrang ! wrote , " It 's a bright and invigorating affair [ ... ] and is , in short , fantastic . " The Washington Post 's Marianne Meyer opined that the record " nimbly moves from skittish rhythms to genuinely tender sentiment . " Jessica Grose of Spin favorably compared it to Blink @-@ 182 's Enema of the State ( 1999 ) . Tony McMenamin of Blender deemed it the publication 's album of the month , calling it " a charged mix of instantly catchy pop @-@ punk lashings and somber acoustic wailings . "

The album was leaked to file sharing websites within a day of the final mastering and months before its official release . It debuted on the Billboard 200 in the issue dated June 25 , 2005 at position 72 , selling 16 @,@ 000 copies in its opening week . It charted better on the magazine 's Independent Albums chart , where it peaked at number two . The last official estimate placed it at 285 @,@ 000 albums sold in the U.S. , but Pierre said in 2015 interview that the number is closer to 500 @,@ 000 . The band 's music videos found regular rotation on networks such as MTV2 , and the band also performed on Late Night with Conan O'Brien . Rolling Stone 's Lauren Gilton considered the album a sleeper hit . Nevertheless , the band 's breakthrough brought naysayers , and the group became targets for critics of pop punk : " [ the band was ] frequently characterized as the sort of ultra @-@ commercial punk poseurs who water down the genre to the point of drowning it . "

Subsequent reviews of the album have continued to be positive . In 2014 , The A.V. Club referred to the album as a classic of pop punk , " full of hook @-@ laden , keyboard @-@ assisted songs whose bright melodies don 't mask the despair and self @-@ loathing lurking beneath them . " Reyan Ali of Cincinnati CityBeat wrote that Commit This to Memory " absolutely bleeds charm , " commenting , " Even with all the dire thematic matter Pierre 's lyrics covered , [ ... ] the band framed the words with music that sparkled , owing to spunky , inspired hooks , full @-@ sounding record production and ample doses of Moog . " Alternative Press 's Tyler Sharp deemed the record a " classic , " while Taylor Morgan of OC Weekly called it " the soundtrack of millennial youth , reminiscent of breakups , making out , goofing off , and growing up . " BuzzFeed included the album at number 21 on their " 36 Pop Punk Albums You Need To Hear Before You F ? ? ing Die " list . NME listed the album as one of " 20 Pop Punk Albums Which Will Make You Nostalgic " .

## == Touring ==

During the recording of the album , the band embarked on their first headlining tour , The Sub @-@ Par Punk Who Cares Tour 2004 . After recording , the band set out on the inaugural Epitaph Tour , alongside Matchbook Romance and From First to Last , with appearances by the Matches and Scatter the Ashes on select dates . The tour visited every major US city , and ran from February 2 to March 19 , 2005 . The band played to larger crowds on the tours supporting the album , including over 9000 fans on a Chicago date in 2005 . The group " toured incessantly , " including dates on the Warped Tour 2005 . Afterwards , the band joined the Nintendo Fusion Tour with Fall Out Boy , Panic ! at the Disco , and The Starting Line , which was their largest nationwide tour to that point . The group had been friends with Fall Out Boy for many years prior , having both played side @-@ by @-@ side before either group found their respective success .

The band embarked on a tour celebrating the tenth anniversary of the album between January and February 2015 , playing the album in its entirety . " It doesn 't feel like ten years ago , but then it also feels like a lifetime ago , " said Pierre . The group later extended this anniversary tour , and further toured the album between June and August 2015 .

## == Track listing ==

All songs written and composed by Motion City Soundtrack .

## == Personnel ==

Credits adapted from the album 's liner notes .

## == Charts ==