

= Weezer (1994 album) =

Weezer (also known as The Blue Album) is the debut studio album by the American rock band Weezer , released on May 10 , 1994 , through DGC Records . The album was produced by Cars frontman Ric Ocasek and recorded in Electric Lady Studios in New York City . The Blue Album was produced by three singles : " Undone ? The Sweater Song " , " Buddy Holly " and " Say It Ain 't So " , which brought Weezer mainstream success , helped by music videos directed by Spike Jonze .

As of August 2009 , the album had sold over 3 @, @ 300 @, @ 000 copies in the United States . The album debuted at number 16 on the Billboard 200 and became a certified triple @-@ platinum in the United States and became a certified double @-@ platinum in Canada .

= = Background = =

Weezer was formed on February 14 , 1992 , in Los Angeles by Rivers Cuomo , Patrick Wilson , Matt Sharp , and Jason Cropper . At the time , they would play at clubs and other small venues around L.A .. However , it took a long time for the band to gain popularity . Cuomo explained :

... I remember just being totally shocked at how little people responded to us , because I thought we were so good . I mean , we were playing the same songs that eventually became big hits , like ' The Sweater Song ' and ' Say It Ain 't So , ' and we 'd play ' em out in the L.A. clubs would just be like , ' Go away . We want a grunge band.'

Weezer recorded The Kitchen Tapes as an attempt to create a buzz around L.A. The band eventually attracted attention from major @-@ label A & R reps looking for alternative rock bands while performing on the same bill as the band That Dog . They were then signed to DGC Records on June 26 , 1993 , by Todd Sullivan , an A & R rep from Geffen Records .

= = Recording = =

While prepping for the forthcoming studio sessions , the band focused on their vocal interplay by practicing barbershop quartet @-@ styled songs , which helped both Cuomo and Sharp achieve a newfound collaborative comfort during rehearsals . Sharp , who never sang before joining Weezer , developed his falsetto backing vocal : " I had to sing an octave higher than Rivers . After a lot of practice , I started to get it down . " Fifteen songs were rehearsed for the album pre @-@ production sessions in New York in preparation for the Electric Lady Studios recording sessions . Four songs from this rehearsal would not be attempted for the album : " Lullaby for Wayne " , " I Swear It 's True " , " Getting Up and Leaving " , and a reprise version of " In The Garage " . The other song , an ode to two women who ran the Weezer fanclub called " Mykel & Carli " , was attempted during the Electric Lady sessions , but was also abandoned (this recording would later be released as a digital bonus track on the 2010 Death to False Metal album) . A later re @-@ recording of " Mykel & Carli " would be featured as a B @-@ side on the " Undone - The Sweater Song " single .

The band briefly considered self @-@ producing , but were pressured by Geffen to choose a producer . They ultimately decided on Ric Ocasek ; Cuomo explained his choice : " I 'd always admired The Cars and Ric Ocasek 's songwriting and production skills . " During production , Ocasek convinced the band to change their guitar pickup from the neck pick @-@ up to the bridge pick @-@ up , resulting in a brighter sound . During these sessions , founding guitarist Jason Cropper left the band and was replaced by current guitarist Brian Bell , leading to some speculation about how much Bell contributed to the album . While Bell 's vocals are clearly audible on some tracks , Cuomo re @-@ recorded all of Cropper 's guitar parts . According to Ocasek , all ten tracks were laid down by Cuomo in one day , each in one take . However , Bell is still credited for playing guitar in the album liner notes . Cropper 's writing credit on " My Name Is Jonas " is earned by his coming up with the intro to the song .

= = Writing and composition = =

Most of the album was written by Rivers Cuomo . Exceptions are " My Name Is Jonas " , which was co -@-@ written with Jason Cropper and Patrick Wilson , and " Surf Wax America " and " The World Has Turned and Left Me Here " , which were composed and written by Cuomo and Wilson . Weezer touches upon various life experiences of Cuomo , including subjects such as his brother 's car accident , heartbreak , jealousy , alcohol , and former girlfriends . Weezer incorporates the genres alternative rock and power pop .

Many songs from the album are inspired by Cuomo 's past personal experiences . " My Name is Jonas " , deals with Cuomo 's brother Leaves who had been seriously injured in a car accident while a student at Oberlin College and was having problem with his insurance . Jason Cropper earned co @-@ writing credit for coming up with the intro to the song . Both " No One Else " and " The World Has Turned and Left Me Here " are lyrically connected , with Cuomo describing the narrator of " No One Else " as " the jealous @-@ obsessive asshole in me freaking out on my girlfriend " and claiming that " ' The World has Turned and Left Me Here ' is the same asshole wondering why she 's gone . " The second single from The Blue Album was " Buddy Holly " , whose music video was also directed by Spike Jonze . It portrayed the band performing at the original Arnold 's Drive @-@ In diner from the popular 1970s television show , Happy Days . The video combined contemporary footage of the band with clips from the show . Happy Days cast member Al Molinaro made a cameo appearance in the video . The video was met with great popularity and heavy rotation on MTV . The music video was also featured as an extra in the Microsoft Windows 95 Upgrade CD , along with Edie Brickell 's " Good Times " music video and the movie trailer for Rob Roy . The video won four awards at the 1995 MTV Video Music Awards , including prizes for Breakthrough Video and Best Alternative Video .

The single " Undone - The Sweater Song " was described by Cuomo as " the feeling you get when the train stops and the little guy comes knockin ' on your door . It was supposed to be a sad song , but everyone thinks it 's hilarious . " The video marks one of the early directorial efforts of Spike Jonze , whose pitch was simply " A blue stage , a steadicam , a pack of wild dogs . " The video became an instant hit on MTV . The final single , " Say it Ain 't So " , was again inspired by Cuomo believing his parents split up when he was four because he thought his dad was an alcoholic . The music video , which was directed by Sophie Muller , was less successful than the previous Spike Jonze @-@ directed video . It featured the band performing in the garage of their former house , and the bandmates playing hacky sack in the backyard .

= = Artwork = =

The album artwork , photographed by American glamour photographer Peter Gowland , features Patrick Wilson , Rivers Cuomo , Matt Sharp , and Brian Bell standing left to right in front of a plain , blue background . The simple image would be used prominently in the advertising of the album . The cover received many comparisons to the Feelies ' album Crazy Rhythms .

In an interview with Adobe , for the Adobe Imagination Challenge , Cuomo revealed that Adobe Photoshop was used to digitally alter the cover . Cuomo stated that , while the band liked the chosen band photo for the cover , Matt Sharp was not happy with the way his head looked . The Geffen Art Director used Photoshop to swap out the head with one from another shot .

On some vinyl pressings of the album , the cover does not crop off their feet . On the Deluxe Edition case the feet are presented on the back cover , and the band sold an official T @-@ shirt with a shot of the band 's feet after the deluxe edition release .

Inside the album booklet , Rivers Cuomo pays tribute to his past metal influences with a photo taken in the group 's garage on Amherst (this same garage would be featured in the " Say It Ain 't So " music video) . A poster of Judas Priest 's album British Steel is featured on the left side of the photo , while on the right a Quiet Riot concert poster is displayed . The Deluxe Edition features additional photographs of the band and hand @-@ written lyrics for each song .

= = Release = =

The Blue Album was released on May 10 , 1994 . It was certified gold just under seven months later on December 1 , 1994 , and certified platinum on January 1 , 1995 ; since then it has gone three times multi @-@ platinum in the United States . The album peaked at No. 16 on the Billboard 200 . As a single , " Undone ? The Sweater Song " peaked at No. 35 on the UK Top 40 , and " Buddy Holly " and " Say It Ain 't So " peaked at No. 12 and No. 37 on the UK Top 40 respectively . In the U.S. , " Buddy Holly " peaked at No. 17 on the Billboard Hot 100 Airplay chart .

A " deluxe edition " of the album was released on March 23 , 2004 , including the original album and a second disc , Dusty Gems and Raw Nuggets , containing B @-@ sides and rarities . As of December 2007 , the " deluxe edition " had sold 86 @,@ 000 copies .

= = Reception = =

= = Initial = =

The album was well received by critics . Rolling Stone praised the album in their year @-@ end review , saying " Weezer 's Rivers Cuomo is great at sketching vignettes (the Dungeons and Dragons games and Kiss posters that inspire the hapless daydreamer of ' In the Garage ') , and with sweet inspiration like the waltz tempo of ' My Name Is Jonas ' and the self @-@ deprecating humor of lines like " I look just like Buddy Holly / And you 're Mary Tyler Moore " , his songs easily ingratiate . " Robert Christgau of The Village Voice was less complimentary and awarded the album a " neither " rating .

= = Retrospect = =

In the years since its release , The Blue Album has risen in stature to become one of the most highly regarded albums of the 1990s , appearing on many " Best @-@ of " lists . In 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked the album number 297 on their list of the 500 Greatest Albums of All Time . In 2002 , the readers of Rolling Stone ranked the album the 21st greatest of all time . Blender named The Blue Album among the " 500 CDs You Must Own " , calling the album " Absolute geek @-@ rock , out and proud . " Non @-@ U.S. publications have acclaimed the album as well : New Zealand 's The Movement placed it at number 39 on a list of " The 101 Best Albums of the 90s " , and Visions of Germany ranked it number 32 on a list of " The Most Important Albums of the 90s . " In November 2011 , The Blue Album was ranked number three on Guitar World magazine 's top ten list of guitar albums of 1994 , with Bad Religion 's Stranger than Fiction and The Offspring 's Smash in first and second place respectively . The album also peaked at number 25 on Guitar World 's " Superunknown : 50 Iconic Albums That Defined 1994 " list .

Reviews of the album when its deluxe edition was released have reflected its rise in stature continuing to be positive . In 2004 , PopMatters gave the album a very positive review , saying " I 'd go so far to declare the ' Blue Album ' one of the greatest records of the last 20 years . " And Rolling Stone reiterated their original positive review by further describing it as " big , vibrant pop @-@ rock that would inspire thousands of emo kids . " Blogcritics Magazine gave the album a score of 10 / 10 and asserted that " this is one of the most important debut albums of the last ten years . "

In naming Weezer the 26th best album of the 1990s , Pitchfork summed up the album 's critical recognition :

An album so substantial the band misguidedly attempted to tap into its resonance through cover graphics a mere two releases later . In 1994 , 70s rock had come to mean either a bastardized version of Led Zeppelin or a bullshit reconstruction of punk rock . As guitar nerds , Weezer sought influence there but found true inspiration in forgotten bubblegum power @-@ pop like Cheap Trick , Raspberries , 20 / 20 , and The Quick . Most impressively , Rivers Cuomo rescued the thrilling guitar solo from finger @-@ tapping metal and disregarding grunge / punk . A decade later air @-@ guitar to the album feels far less embarrassing than singing along . With the help of Spike Jonze , Weezer kept joy alive in arena rock , making the critical repositioning of Weezer as some emo

touchstone even more absentminded . They called themselves Weezer , knowingly , for chrissakes .
? Brent DiCrescenzo

NME claimed that the album " pretty much invented emo 's melodic wing " . AllMusic gave the album 5 stars , explaining " What makes the band so enjoyable is their charming geekiness ; instead of singing about despair , they sing about love , which is kind of refreshing in the gloom @-@ drenched world of ' 90s guitar @-@ pop . "

= = = Accolades = = =

Since its release , The Blue Album has featured heavily in various " must have " lists compiled by the music media . Some of the more prominent of these lists to feature The Blue Album are shown below ; this information is adapted from Acclaimed Music .

(*) designates lists which are unordered .

= = = In popular culture = = =

In 2011 , Alvin and the Chipmunks and The Chipettes covered the song " Holiday " as a bonus track on the iTunes deluxe edition of the soundtrack Alvin and the Chipmunks : Chipwrecked : Music from the Motion Picture .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Rivers Cuomo , except where noted .

= = = Deluxe edition bonus disc = = =

The 2004 deluxe edition included a bonus disc titled Dusty Gems and Raw Nuggets .

The tracks on the bonus disc originally appeared on the following releases :

Tracks 1 and 3 from " Undone - The Sweater Song " single (1994)

Track 2 is from the soundtrack to Mallrats ; an earlier mix of the same song was included on the " Undone " single

Track 4 from DGC Rarities compilation (1994)

Tracks 5 and 6 from " Buddy Holly " single (1994)

Tracks 7 and 8 from " Say It Ain 't So " single (1995)

Tracks 9 ? 11 previously unreleased , and part of Kitchen Tape demo (1992)

Tracks 12 and 13 previously unreleased , pre @-@ production recordings done with Ric Ocasek just prior to Weezer 's recording (1993)

Track 14 is the version featured on the original release of the album . The mix was changed for the single and was later added to newer versions of the album . The single mix is the version included on Disc 1 of this Deluxe Edition .

= = Chart positions = =

= = = Album = = =

= = = Singles = = =

= = Personnel = =

Rivers Cuomo ? lead vocals , lead and rhythm guitars , keyboards , harmonica

Brian Bell ? backing vocals

Matt Sharp ? bass , backing vocals

Patrick Wilson ? drums , percussion , backing vocals

Mykel Allan - spoken intermission on " Undone - The Sweater Song "

Karl Koch - dialogue on " Undone - The Sweater Song "

Ric Ocasek ? producer

Chris Shaw ? engineer

Hal Belknap ? assistant engineer

Brian Bell does not actually play guitar on the album despite being credited as such in the liner notes .