

= Love Always =

Love Always is the debut album of American R & B duo K @-@ Ci & JoJo , released on June 17 , 1997 , by MCA Records . It was recorded at various studios in New York and the Los Angeles area in 1996 and 1997 . It was produced by JoJo and several others , including DeVante Swing , Jon @-@ John Robinson , James Mtume , and Jeff Redd . The duo were originally a part of Jodeci before this album .

The album peaked at sixth on the US Billboard 200 and also appeared on international charts . The single " All My Life " charted number one in multiple countries , and all four of the album 's singles peaked above the top 25 in the US Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs and the New Zealand Top 40 Singles . Love Always was received favorably by critics , who praised the brothers ' singing ability and the production . The album has been certified three times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) and gold by Music Canada and IFPI Sweden . As of June 1999 it had sold 2 @. @ 9 million copies in the United States .

= = Background = =

Previously , K @-@ Ci & JoJo had been members of the group Jodeci , which consisted of them and another pair of brothers , DeVante Swing and Mr. Dalvin . Under Uptown Records , the group released three studio albums certified platinum by the RIAA : Forever My Lady ( 1991 ) , Diary of a Mad Band ( 1993 ) , and The Show , The After Party , The Hotel ( 1995 ) .

Jodeci has been inactive since 1996 . K @-@ Ci & JoJo , seeking to shed Jodeci 's " bad boy image " , began working on other projects . They appeared as featured artists in songs including Tupac Shakur 's " How Do U Want It " , which topped the Billboard Hot 100 and E @-@ 40 's Rapper 's Ball , which peaked 29th on the Hot 100 . They recorded their first songs as a duo , " If You Think You 're Lonely Now " and " How Could You " , for the soundtrack albums Jason 's Lyric and Bulletproof , respectively . Both singles reached the top 20 on Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop songs .

= = Production , writing , and recording = =

JoJo told Ebony that he and K @-@ Ci " wrote 75 percent " of Love Always . The brothers said they wanted to make an album that everyone , including their Christian mother , would be able to listen to . K @-@ Ci told Ebony , " We want to write songs that women can listen to . [ ... ] You can listen to this in the car , riding with the folks . " Contrasting the album with the brothers ' work with Jodeci , K @-@ Ci told Billboard , " With Jodeci , we might sing ' Freek 'n You ' , and with K @-@ Ci & JoJo , we don 't use the word ' sex ' " .

Love Always was the first album K @-@ Ci & JoJo produced . Referring to DeVante Swing , who produced many of Jodeci 's songs , K @-@ Ci told Billboard , " We couldn 't just say , ' Oh , DeVante 's gonna make sure it 's mixed right . ' We had to do it . " Other contributors to the album included Rory Bennett , James Mtume , Jorge Corante , Mike Smoov , Fred Rosser , Jeff Redd , Joey Wlias , Laney Stewart , Gerald Baillergeau , DeVante Swing , Derrick Garrett , Craig Brockman , Victor Merrit , Jon @-@ John Robinson , Andrew Braxton , and Bradley Spalter . Mike Smoov , Jimi Randolph , Derrick Garrett , Thom Cadley , and Mikael Ifverson engineered the album .

Recording took place in 1996 and 1997 at recording studios in New York and the Los Angeles area :

= = Content = =

Love Always is written and performed in the R & B and soul styles . It consists of slow jams and love songs . The album 's opening track , " HBI " , is a short introduction and is followed by " Last Night 's Letter " , a slow jam about broken hearts . The next song , " Baby Come Back " , was written by K @-@ Ci about his past relationship with singer Mary J. Blige . " Love Ballad " is a cover of the

L.T.D. song .

= = Release and promotion = =

Love Always was released in the United States and Germany on June 17 , 1997 , in Canada on June 24 , 1997 , and in the United Kingdom on March 20 , 1999 . It was released in Australia in August 1998 packaged with six bonus remixes of " How Could You " , " Last Night 's Letter " , " All My Life " , and " You Bring Me Up " . The album was released on CD , cassette and LP , except in Australia , where it was only released on CD .

= = = Singles = = =

Four songs on Love Always became singles . All four appeared in the top 25 on Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs and the New Zealand Singles Chart . The first single , " You Bring Me Up " , was released on May 27 , 1997 . It peaked at 26th on the Billboard Hot 100 , 15th on R & B / Hip Hop Songs , 15th on the New Zealand Singles Chart , and 21st on the UK Singles Chart . A remix was made featuring Snoop Dogg . The second single , " Last Night 's Letter " , was released on September 16 , 1997 . It peaked at 46th on the Hot 100 , 15th on Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs , and 16th on the New Zealand Singles Chart .

The third single , " All My Life " , was released on March 17 , 1998 , and was the duo 's most successful song . JoJo wrote the song about his daughter but originally intended it for another artist . In an interview with MTV , he said , " The song was originally supposed to be used for ? another artist , a female artist on A & M Records . But we listened to it after we got out of the studio and it was like , ' I 'm keeping this , this is too hot . ' " " All My Life " peaked at number one on the Hot 100 and R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs , tying a record set by The Beatles by jumping from 15th to first on the U.S. charts . It was also a number @-@ one song in Australia , the Netherlands , and New Zealand . It peaked at second on the Norwegian Singles Chart , third on the Flanders Belgium Singles Chart , fourth on the Swedish Singles Chart and the Swiss Singles Chart , eighth on the UK Singles Chart , 11th on the Wallonia Belgium Singles Chart , 12th on the Austrian Singles Chart , and 43rd on the French Singles Chart . It was certified platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association and gold by IFPI Sweden . " All My Life " was nominated for Best R & B Video at the 1999 MTV Video Music Awards .

The fourth single , " Don 't Rush ( Take Love Slowly ) " , was originally the B @-@ side to " All My Life " ; it was released as a single in July 1998 after it achieved more airplay than " All My Life " . It peaked at 24th on the US Rhythmic Top 40 , 46th on Hot R & B Airplay , 16th on the UK Singles Chart , 25th on the Dutch Singles Charts , and 26th on the New Zealand Singles Chart .

= = Reception = =

= = = Commercial performance = = =

The album debuted at 24th on the US Billboard 200 , and went on to peak at sixth . It peaked at second on the Billboard Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums . On July 9 , 1998 , Love Always was certified three times platinum by the RIAA , for shipments of three million copies in the United States . It spent 90 weeks on the Billboard 200 and 91 weeks on the R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums . As of June 1999 , Love Always had sold 2 @. @ 9 million copies in the US , according to Nielsen SoundScan .

Love Always charted internationally , as well . It peaked at 26th in Canada , and on June 30 , 1998 , it was certified platinum by Music Canada , for shipments of 100 @, @ 000 copies in Canada . In Australia , the album debuted at 44th , before peaking the next week at 37th . In 1998 , Love Always was certified gold by the Australian Recording Industry Association ( ARIA ) , for shipments of 35 @, @ 000 copies in Australia . It peaked at fifth in New Zealand , 19th in the Netherlands , 28th in

Switzerland , 51st in the UK , and 56th in Sweden .

== Critical response ==

Love Always has received favorable reviews from music critics . Alex Henderson of Allmusic gave the album three stars out of five and called " Love Ballad " the " best thing the Hailey brothers have ever done ? inside or outside of Jodeci " . Henderson called the album 's ballads and slow jams " above average " and noted a lack of new jack swing and R @-@ rated lyrics of the sort he had observed in Jodeci 's music . He liked the songs " Now and Forever " , " Still Waiting " , and " Baby Come Back " and appreciated the 1970s soul music feel .

Vibe magazine 's Michael Gonzalez gave the album a favorable review , writing , " Love Always is a marvelous musical testament to black love in the ' 90s . " He enjoyed the production , especially from Rory Bennett , and compared the duo to Frankie Lymon . He noticed K @-@ Ci 's lyrics in " Baby Come Back " were about his relationship with Mary J. Blige stating " [ K @-@ Ci ] wails like a man driven crazy by his missteps . " Gonzalez also liked the songs " Don 't Rush ( Take Love Slowly ) " , and " You Bring Me Up " . Borders Group recommended " You Bring Me Up " and praised the brothers ' vocal talent .

== Track listing ==

Writing and production gathered from Australian @-@ charts.com.

== Personnel ==

Credits for Love Always adapted from Allmusic .

== Musicians ==

== Production ==

== Charts and certifications ==

== Release history ==