

= American Life =

American Life is the ninth studio album by American singer @-@ songwriter Madonna . It was first released on April 21 , 2003 , by Maverick Records and Warner Bros. Records . The album , produced in its entirety by Madonna and Mirwais Ahmadzaï , features references to many parts of American culture . The album is a concept album , with recurring themes of the American Dream and materialism . These themes reject the reputation Madonna held in the 1980s , earned by songs such as her worldwide hit " Material Girl " (1985) . The album contains rock , folk and electronica music , as well as influences of acoustic music on many tracks .

American Life received mixed reviews from music critics , with responses noting its consistency , but general responses called the record " about Madonna " and found it confusing . The album peaked at number one in fourteen countries . The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and British Phonographic Industry (BPI) both certified it platinum in recognition of one million shipments in the United States , and 300 @,@ 000 shipments in the United Kingdom , respectively . The album became the 32nd @-@ best @-@ selling album of 2003 and has sold five million copies to date . American Life garnered two nominations at the 46th Grammy Awards in 2004 .

Four singles were released from the album . The first , the title track , was released to a generally negative critical reception , with Blender naming it the ninth worst song of all time . It charted at number 37 in the US while it entered the top ten in most countries , peaking at number two in the United Kingdom . A controversial music video was pulled after scenes of war and violence were criticized which led to an edited version being released . Its following single , " Hollywood " , became her first single not to chart on the Billboard Hot 100 since 1983 . " Nothing Fails " and " Love Profusion " , the third and fourth singles respectively , featured a lack of promotion resulting in a poor commercial performance . Despite it , both peaked at number one in Spain .

Madonna promoted the album during a small promotional tour for the album in April and May 2003 . At the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards , she performed alongside Britney Spears , Christina Aguilera and Missy Elliott a medley of " Like a Virgin " and " Hollywood " and engaged in open @-@ mouth kissing with Aguilera and Spears gaining great controversy and publicity . American Life was supported by Madonna 's sixth concert tour , the Re @-@ Invention World Tour , which was the highest grossing tour of 2004 earning \$ 125 million . The tour was chronicled in a documentary titled I 'm Going to Tell You a Secret , which led to Madonna 's first live album of the same name .

= = Background and development = =

During the early 1990s , Madonna had focused on a number of provocative releases , like the erotic pictorial Sex book , the sadomasochist inspired album Erotica , and the erotic thriller , Body of Evidence , all of which she deduced was due to " a lot of rage and anger " within herself " . However , by the beginning of the new millennium , Madonna was living a calmer , more introspective and wholesome life with her husband Guy Ritchie and their children Lourdes and Rocco . According to biographer J. Randy Taraborrelli , the presence of Ritchie in Madonna 's life had a calming effect on the singer , making her more matured and easing her temper . Concentrating on her music career , Madonna was busy throughout of 2001 on her Drowned World Tour . On September 11 , 2001 , suicide bombers hijacked two jet airliners and crashed into the World Trade Center , resulting in the death of nearly 3 @,@ 000 people . The event had a profound effect on American society , with the cultural mood being bleak and paranoia . People , including Madonna , started asking questions about their culture and the American Dream , which had been a long @-@ lasting ideal for many . When Madonna started working on her ninth studio album , American Life , she wanted answers to her queries and an appropriate response to the 9 / 11 disaster and the ensuing Iraq war of 2003 . She believed that the ensuing months with the war would lead to a politically charged atmosphere throughout the country , and wanted to express that in the record .

Like her 2000 studio album , Music , Madonna enlisted the help of French DJ and producer Mirwais Ahmadzaï . Always interested in adapting herself and her music to the contemporary compositions , Madonna was inspired by the new Massive Attack and Lemon Jelly albums . " We set out to put the

two worlds of acoustic and electronic music together , " said Madonna . " It is another step on , but I 've never wanted to repeat myself . I don 't ever want to repeat myself or make the same record twice . " American Life became Madonna 's final studio album with Maverick Records , and marked the end of an eleven @-@ year recording history with the label . In an interview with VH1 titled Madonna Speaks , the singer discussed her 20 years in the music industry , and revealed her motivations behind American Life , about " material things " being unimportant . " I have lots of ' material ' things and I 've had lots of beliefs about things and what 's important , and I look back at the 20 years behind me and I realized that a lot of things that I 'd valued weren 't important " , she concluded . Discussing her thoughts on the conception of the album , she told Q magazine that through her 20 years of being in the entertainment industry , she would have a correct opinion on fame and fortune and its perils , which would be the base of the album .

= = Writing and inspiration = =

When Madonna started writing the songs on the album , she was inspired by different situations , like having guitar lessons and getting an idea , or sometimes Ahmadzaï would send over a rough demo to her without the basic chord progression . The songs on American Life and their lyrics were developed like that . Explaining her writing process , Madonna told Q magazine that the " The music has to jar my brain in terms of lyrics . Sometimes I write free verse . I have a journal and I note down ideas I get from newspapers and books " . Madonna also remembered Ahmadzaï 's downbeat existentialism regarding the condition of society around them , and the long discussions they had into the night , which ultimately reflected into the songwriting as anxiety they felt in their heart . American Life was deemed by some as a concept album featuring political themes based around the United States , with Madonna explaining that she felt " like America has changed over the years and that a lot of our values seem to be materially oriented and so superficial . And we all seem to be obsessed with fame just for the sake of fame , no matter what ? sell your soul to the devil if that 's what it takes . And we 're also completely obsessed with the way we look . " Madonna recalled that even she had been through such trials and those musings came out in the writing of the first three songs , the title track , " Hollywood " and " I 'm So Stupid " . John Norris from MTV described them as a trilogy , and an indicator of Madonna 's reassessment of her life while discussing things she wishes to put behind her . Madonna partly agreed , saying that the tracks are extensions of one another , and portray her desire of giving importance to less noteworthy things , and how she could come out of that " illusion " . Madonna discussed the materialistic themes of the record and her personal encounters which have led to the composition with MTV saying :

" Who better to say those things don 't matter than somebody who 's experienced them ? [People may say] , ' How can you say they don 't matter ? How can you say that money won 't bring you happiness if you don 't have a lot of money ? How can you say that fame and fortune are not a guarantee for happiness and joy and fulfillment in your life ? ' You have to have that experience to know . ' Cause you have all those things , I 've had all those things , and I 've had nothing but chaos around me . So I 'm just sharing what I know with the world . ' Cause I do think that we 've become completely consumed with being rich and famous , our society has . And I just want to tell people , take it from me , I have all those things and none of them ever brought me one minute of happiness . "

The glamorous world of Hollywood also reflected in her writing , especially in the second track of the same name . Describing it as a metaphor , Madonna said that " in Hollywood you can lose your memory and your vision of the future . You can lose everything because you can lose yourself . " The beginning of the album cleared away what was not important for her , so Madonna could concentrate on the things that did matter . So , in contrast to the first three tracks , the later songs on American Life also deal with issues close to the singer 's heart , like talking about her relationship with her parents on the track " Mother and Father " . When Madonna was five , her mother died of breast cancer and the track was " a way of letting go of the sadness and moving on . " According to Lucy O 'Brien , author of Madonna : Like an Icon , another concept of American Life was about " nothingness " . This was evident in the titles of the songs like " Nobody Knows Me " , usage of " no "

in " Love Profusion " , as well as " Nothing Fails " . Usage of the negative tone led Madonna to be sarcastic on people 's assumptions about her and emphasize about her knowledge of romantic love . But " Nothing Fails " , along with tracks " Intervention " and " X @-@ Static Process , " became the centerpiece of the album as a triptych of love songs for Ritchie . Beginning as a humble track that musician @-@ producer Guy Sigsworth wrote for his wife , " Nothing Fails " also has lyrics by singer Jem Archer , who was asked to collaborate with Sigsworth and Madonna during the first collaborative sessions of American Life . The track is followed by the folk @-@ inspired " Intervention " and " X @-@ Static Process , " both being reflective and emotional . Her reflective mood continued with the last track " Easy Ride , " which was inspired by the imagery of a full @-@ circle and symbolized life for the singer .

= = Recording and mixing = =

The album was mostly composed and entirely produced by Madonna and Ahmadzaï . Both had previously collaborated on Madonna 's studio album Music (2000) . The recording sessions for American Life started at late 2001 , then was put on hold as Madonna filmed Swept Away in Malta and starred in the West End play Up for Grabs . She returned to the Olympic Recording Studios and Sarm West Studios in late 2002 and finished off the sessions in London and Los Angeles in early 2003 . For the instrumentation featured in some of the song , Ahmadzaï played the guitars , and Stuart Price played the piano . Tom Hannen and Simon Changer , both of them worked as assistant engineer during the recording .

Unlike Music , Madonna had enlisted Ahmadzaï also as a songwriter on American Life hence what transpired was Madonna 's wholesale adaptation of the producers style and sound . He explained that there are some influences from his work , but Madonna mostly wanted a minimalist structure for the album . This was beneficial for him since he did not like working with a lot of people , and hence it became a close collaboration . Since electronic music was already popular , Ahmadzaï felt that it was necessary to go back to its underground roots and focus on the songwriting , rather than the technical aspects of recording and mixing . Describing it as modified songwriting , he said that although the concept " might sound simple at first , even rough . But when you pay attention , there is a lot of technology underneath " . This approach was an imperative for American Life . Recorded at three different studios using Ahmadzaï 's own gear along with the studio 's SSL mixing consoles , the album 's recording process was often laborious but was sparse in the musical arrangements of the songs . About the musical composition , Ahmadzaï told to Remix magazine that they " tried to under @-@ produce many tracks to make them sound rougher than the average international pop production . We wanted to do something totally modern and futuristic but not very apparent . You have to be very minimalist and choose every sound very carefully . Some tracks were composed in the big studio ; that can be very dangerous because you can lose perspective . But all initial directions of the tracks were made in my home studio . "

American Life is suffused with Ahmadzaï 's characteristic production techniques , like stuttering instruments and vocals , oscillating loop tones recalling 1950s Sonar pulses , morphing vocals consisting of grunts and squeals and treatments that make the music freeze in between rhythms . The producer hoped that using stuttering would become a rage in the future world of recording . He believed that people think it is not natural to skip and stutter the music . But he used it to create a new groove . With the help of Pro Tools , he froze the audio at any point he wanted to change the rhythm of the tracks . Madonna discussed the recording of the title track stating that Ahmadzaï had encouraged her to rap spontaneously , about all the materialistic objects that she herself had been using and doing . They had an instrumental breakdown in " American Life " , where the producer encouraged Madonna to add a rap about her everyday life . " Because I was always drinking soy lattes in the studio , and I drive my Mini Cooper to the studio , I was just like , ' OK , let me just talk about the things that I like ' . So I went and it was just total improv [sic] and obviously it was sloppy at first , but I got out all my thoughts and then I wrote everything down that I said and then I perfected the timing of it . So it was totally spontaneous , " she added .

For " Hollywood " , he used a drum kit and percussion from an E @-@ mu Emulator and also added

extra drum sounds to give the song an old , disco vibe . Wanting to have a loud bass synth sound , , Ahmadzaï used a Nord Lead synthesizer with lot of filtering manipulations . But he faced problems with it , so he used a Yamaha O2R mixer . He did not want " Hollywood " to sound like the music being played at the nightclubs , so he recorded Madonna 's vocals with heavy compression in her headphones . Two machines were used for the vocal editing in " Hollywood " . Madonna preferred the Antares Auto @-@ Tune plug in , while Ahmadzaï chose an AMS pitch shifter . Madonna wanted Auto @-@ Tune because she wanted " Hollywood " to have a more dance @-@ like feel to it , although Ahmadzaï was against it . The track " I 'm So Stupid " had gentle vocals , then the singing was frozen using a Roland VP @-@ 9000 . When Madonna sings " Aaaaaahhhhhh " , the vocals freeze and the process sounds natural , but in reality is not . When it came to adding the beats , he experimented by programming the drums in Logic Pro and changing the timing of the beats . The producer combines different samples of songs from his own collections and keeps on trying until something new is developed . The mixing for the tracks was done by Mark " Spike " Stent at the Westlake Recording Studios at West Hollywood , California , while Tim Young did the mastering of the songs at Metropolis Studios in London . Michael Colombier did the string arrangement with Geoff Foster acting as the strings engineer , conducting at AIR Studios .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Slant Magazine 's Sal Cinquemani stated that " Madonna couldn 't possibly have intended to make a pop album . American Life is a folk album in the purest definition of the term ? and it 's reflected right in the title . " Greg Kot from Chicago Tribune called the record an " electro @-@ folk album " with electronic beats and synthetic burps . " American Life " , the title track , is the first song on the record . Starting with Madonna 's multi @-@ tracked voice questioning , " Am I gonna be a star " , " should I change my name " , the lyrics then develop into what Rikky Rooksby of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna states as a complaint about modern @-@ day life . The lyrics accompany a " punchy octave synth figure " synchronized with a drum and bass beat . After three minutes of the song , Madonna performs a rap naming the people who were working for her . The second track and single " Hollywood " is introduced with sounds of tweeting birds , before an acoustic guitar starts with a four chord sequence that has been compared to songs by the band Red Hot Chili Peppers . The texture grows with addition of drums and synths , until after a minute the instrumental is pulled out , leaving just Madonna 's vocals and the acoustic guitar accompaniment . During the final sequence , Madonna raps , as is featured in the first song , with the repeated phrase " Push the button " . Lyrically , like the first track , it discusses American culture and greed focusing on Hollywood , California , as a place of stars and illusory dreams .

The next track " I 'm So Stupid " features an introduction with a two @-@ chord electric guitar which leads to a minor drum beat , with the guitar later changing to a three @-@ chord . The composition throughout is generally minor , but at the 2 : 15 mark , different pitched synths change manically , and towards the end the synths become less prominent as the guitars become the main focus . Lyrically , the song expresses disillusionment with Madonna singing " I used to live in a fuzzy dream " and " It was just greed " , also proclaiming that once she was " stupider than stupid " before stating " Everybody 's stupid " towards the end of the song . The fourth track " Love Profusion " starts with another acoustic guitar introduction , with rhythm being produced by a bass drum with synth @-@ strings added later in the song . Vocally , the line " I got you under my skin " is repeated , while a male voice acts as the backing for the track as the final words , " feel good " , are performed with no backing instrumental . " Nobody Knows Me " is the fifth track , featuring vocoder treated vocals . The song is accompanied by bleeping synths and a heavy drum part . The title is repeated throughout the song as she references " social disease " which is also repeated . A recurring theme of American Life is the acoustic guitar introduction to the songs , and is yet again featured in the sixth track " Nothing Fails " . The guitar is accompanied by a " light " drum section and low @-@ pitched vocals from Madonna . The song also features a cello in the first part , and a church choir in the second part . Lyrically , the song discusses a lover who is the one , and how their meeting was not just chance . A reference to the " tree of life " is made during the song as Madonna states " I 'm not

religious " but she wishes to pray .

Acoustic guitars introduces the seventh track , " Intervention " . It starts with a three chord minor sequence which changes to a four chord one during the chorus section and a bass section starts at the end of the track . Lyrically , the song is an optimistic track about how a relationship will last as Madonna says " the road looks lonely but that 's just Satan 's game " . " X @-@ Static Process " , the eighth track , starts once again with acoustic guitars and throughout there are vocal harmony lines in addition to an organ part . Lyrically , like the title track , it questions modern life as Madonna sings " Jesus Christ will you look at me , don 't know who I 'm supposed to be " . " Mother and Father " is the album 's ninth track , with a drum and bass beat paired with an electric guitar present in the instrumental . Lyrically , the song reflects on Madonna 's childhood including her mother 's death and her father 's reaction , and the effect on their relationship . The tenth track is " Die Another Day " , the theme to the James Bond film of the same name which featured dominating string and synth parts . The eleventh and final track on the album , " Easy Ride " , is a heavily string @-@ oriented song . It addresses Madonna 's feelings towards old age , wanting to live forever , and coming full circle to a point in her life where she could be comfortable .

= = Artwork and release = =

By 2003 , Madonna suggested that she was in a revolutionary mood , which led to journalistic discussions that another image makeover would take place for her . Still recovering from the commercial disappointment of Swept Away , Madonna changed her image completely to resemble that of a fighter , with inspirations from pictures of Argentinian guerrilla leader Che Guevara . French design team M / M Paris (Michael Amzalag and Mathias Augustyniak) were responsible for the artwork of American Life . The duo are best known for their collaborations with musicians and Madonna hired the duo after discussing the concept for just six minutes . The photo shoot for the album was done by photographer Craig McDean in January 2003 at Los Angeles , and cost a reported \$ 415 @, @ 000 . McDean had already worked with Madonna for the cover of Vanity Fair magazine in October 2002 ; this shoot had a military theme , with Madonna posing in dark green and black clothes , combat boots , and guns .

As with 1989 's album Like a Prayer , Madonna 's hair was dyed dark brown to signify " seriousness " , and on the cover of the album Madonna wore a beret while resurrecting the famous Guerrillero Heroico image of Guevara . In an interview with Veja magazine , she described Guevara as " an icon instantaneously identified with an revolution spirit . That goes for the whole album : the current moment , I feel a revolutionary state of mind " . Author Santiago Fouz @-@ Hernández wrote in his book , Madonna 's Drowned Worlds : New Approaches to Her Subcultural Transformations , that the inclusion of Guevara as an inspiration for the cover was one of the many instances of Madonna incorporating Hispanic identity and the Latino subculture in her work . Because of the paramilitary theme , the dyed hair and the artistic composition , was compared with an infamous seventies photo of kidnapped newspaper heiress , Patty Hearst . The cover also had military styled stenciled lettering . The word " American Life " is written in blood red color and has a punk @-@ rock style . Inside the CD booklet , she wielded an Uzi submachine gun , her body in various martial art poses , spelling out her name . By late 2003 , she had wiped out the military image completely , and followed with another subtle toned @-@ down image of that of a writer and philanthropist .

In an interview with Larry King in October 2002 , she said that she wanted to give the album a Hebrew name . Madonna then considered Ein Sof , which means endlessness , as a possible title for the album . However , as the months went on and the album became more of a meditation on the difficulty of leading a spiritual life in the glamour industry , the title was changed to Hollywood with Madonna saying that it was " a reflection of my state of mind and a view of the world right now " . Still , she was not satisfied with the name , and finalized on American Life .

American Life is Madonna 's second album to bear a " Parental Advisory " label after Erotica (1992) , due the profanity used in the title song . The album was released in the United States on April 22 , 2003 and eight months later , Warner Music France released a box set version containing both the album and the remix collection , Remixed & Revisited , in a cardboard sleeve entitled Édition

Spéciale 2CDs : American Life + Remixed & Revisited . To counter illegal downloads of the album 's songs before and after the release , Madonna 's associates created a number of false MP3 files of similar length and size . Some of these files delivered a brief message from Madonna saying " What the fuck do you think you 're doing ? " followed by minutes of silence . Madonna 's website was hacked and the hacker added a message appearing on the main page , saying " This is what the fuck I think I 'm doing ... " followed by download links for each of the album 's songs . The Madonna.com website was closed after the attack for about 15 hours . Liz Rosenberg , Madonna 's spokesperson , told The Smoking Gun that the defacement was indeed a hack , and not a marketing ploy . The defacement was linked to Phrack , an online hacker magazine whose representatives clarified that they did not " have [any] link with this [hacker] guy in any way , and we don 't even know his identity . " The hacked page also contained a derogatory reference to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) , the federal law aimed at cracking down on digital and online piracy . In addition , the defaced page included an impromptu marriage proposal to Morgan Webb , the host of a daily technology show called The Screen Savers .

= = Promotion = =

= = = Live performances = = =

To start marketing the album , Madonna embarked on a promotional tour across the United States and Europe . One of these performances , presented at the Total Request Live studios in New York , was shown by MTV in a special named Madonna on Stage & on the Record . Hosted by Carson Daly , she sang songs from the album and answered questions from the audience . Madonna also performed at HMV store in Oxford , United Kingdom to 500 people . While in the United Kingdom , she performed " American Life " and " Hollywood " at BBC One 's Friday Night with Jonathan Ross and Top of the Pops . Another performance on Tower 's Fourth Street in Manhattan was presented to around 400 people . A stage was built in preparation for the performances with long dark drapes and large speakers , and according to Billboard was so that over one thousand fans nearby could hear the performance . She also performed a private concert in Paris , France , at restaurant Cantine du Faubourg to people who won tickets on a promotion hosted by NRJ Radio , and also some of her French friends including designer Jean @-@ Paul Gaultier , director Luc Besson and producer Ahmadzaï .

On August 27 , 2003 , Madonna opened the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards with American recording artists Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera , performing a medley of " Like a Virgin " and " Hollywood " . American rapper Missy Elliott also performed her song " Work It " halfway through the performance . After " Hollywood " was performed by Madonna , she engaged in kissing with both Spears and Aguilera becoming an infamous moment for all three acts and in television history . In 2003 , Madonna planned to release a special commemorative box set to celebrate her 20th anniversary in the music business and the release of her first studio album , Madonna , in 1983 . The plan for the box set was eventually cancelled and Remixed & Revisited was released in its place . The compilation contains remixed versions of four songs from American Life and a previously unreleased song called " Your Honesty " .

= = = Singles = = =

Preceding the album release , " Die Another Day " was released as a single to promote the twentieth James Bond film of the same name . The song peaked at number eight in the United States , and number three in the United Kingdom . The production costs for the music video were over six million dollars , making it the second most expensive music video ever made , after " Scream " by Michael Jackson and Janet Jackson . " American Life " was released as the lead single from the album on April 8 , 2003 in the United States and on April 14 , 2003 in Europe . Blender magazine listed the song as the ninth worst song ever . There are two music videos . The first

version is based on a fashion runway , with extra 's including Children dressed in provocative war inspired outfits . The scene descends into violence and fighting to which the audience find amusement . At the end of the music video , then @-@ President of the United States , George W. Bush is portrayed by a lookalike lighting a cigar . The anti @-@ war content of its music video was interpreted as being unpatriotic , making Madonna withdraw its release from American music channels . She also released a statement saying she did so because she believed it was not appropriate to air it at that time , and that she did not want to risk offending anyone who could misinterpret its meaning . A second video was produced , showing Madonna donning military clothing and singing in front of the various flags of the world . The song debuted at number ninety on the Billboard Hot 100 , and peaked at number thirty @-@ seven on the chart , becoming Madonna 's 45th Top 40 hit in the chart . The song also peaked at number two in the UK , seven in Austria and Australia , and ten in France and Germany .

The second single , " Hollywood " , released on July 3 , 2003 in Europe and July 8 , 2003 in the US , failed to chart in the Hot 100 , becoming Madonna 's first single in twenty years not to do so since " Burning Up " (1983) . The song was a top five hit in Canada , Italy and the United Kingdom . " Nothing Fails " was released in October 26 , 2003 as the third single . It was a minor chart success , but did not match the success of previous singles from American Life , charting outside the top twenty in some countries . It peaked in the top ten in Canada and Spain . In late 2003 , " Nothing Fails " was remixed as " Nothing Fails (Nevins Mix) " for Madonna 's remix EP Remixed & Revisited . The remix peaked at number seven in Italy . " Love Profusion " , was the fourth and final single from the album , released on December 8 , 2003 . It peaked in the top ten only in Greece , Italy and Canada , her fifth top ten Canadian hit from the album and thirteenth top ten in @-@ a @-@ row . Also , it debuted and peaked at eleven on UK Singles Chart , becoming Madonna sixth single , of eight , in lost the top ten on the chart , after " One More Chance " (1996) . The promotional releases , " Nobody Knows Me " and " Mother and Father " , became very successful in American clubs , peaking at number four and number nine , respectively , on the US Hot Dance Club Songs chart . American Life became the first album to achieve seven top ten songs on this chart .

== = Tour == =

In 2003 , Madonna collaborated with photographer Steven Klein for an art installation project called X @-@ Static Process . The installation portrayed Madonna in different incarnations of her spiritual practices ? from yogi , prophet , queen to freak and pole dancer . The publication was a worldwide success , leading to a number of exhibitions in New York , London , Paris , Düsseldorf , Berlin and Florence . After the exhibition was over , Madonna was inspired by the images from the exhibitions and decided to incorporate them into her then unplanned tour and asked Klein to help her with the task . She then began developing her sixth concert tour called Re @-@ Invention World Tour . The poster released for the tour used one of the images from the installation project . It featured Madonna in a seventeenth @-@ century @-@ style dress , crawling on all fours towards the camera . The central theme of the show was unity versus violence . It was divided into five acts with different themes : French Baroque @-@ Marie Antionette Revival , Military @-@ Army , Circus @-@ Cabaret , Acoustic and Scottish @-@ Tribal segments . During the Q Awards , Elton John accused Madonna for lip @-@ synching in her shows which gained great controversy but was denied by Madonna 's representatives . Although musician Prince 's Musicology Live 2004ever tour was initially projected to be the highest grossing tour of 2004 , Billboard Boxscore published that the Re @-@ Invention Tour had sold 55 out of the 56 shows and grossed \$ 125 million . At the 2004 Billboard Touring Awards , Re @-@ Invention Tour received the Top Tour while Madonna 's tour manager Caresse Henry was awarded the Top Manager award . A documentary , titled I 'm Going to Tell You a Secret , which chronicled the tour , was released in 2005 .

== = Critical reception == =

American Life received mixed reviews from music critics , holding a score of 60 / 100 on music review website Metacritic , based on 17 professional reviews . Billboard 's Michael Paoletta noted the lyrical differences from past albums such as Ray of Light positively , saying " American Life relies less on spiritual introspection and more on woman @-@ in @-@ the @-@ mirror confrontation . " Entertainment Weekly 's Ken Tucker generally responded well , saying that at its best , the album offers blunt , questing and decisive music but the weakest point was Madonna sounding like a girl who 's grown content with her husband and kids and the ability to hire help to do her bidding . Dimitri Ebrlich of Vibe magazine gave a positive review for American Life , saying that Madonna " stayed still " in the album , and commenting that " This may be the first time Madonna hasn 't pushed herself to explore new ground , but at least she 's chosen a good place to rest . " Sal Cinquemani from Slant Magazine gave the album a mixed review , stating that American Life is not a " masterpiece " compared to her 1992 studio album , Erotica . " It 's frequently self @-@ indulgent , misguided , unpleasant , difficult to listen to , silly and humorless , but it 's also consistent , uncompromising and unapologetic , " Cinquemani opined , ending with the deduction that American Life stood for the last time Madonna made music without the primary objective of making a hit . In an earlier review , Cinquemani concluded that after years between subgenres and finally finding a comfortable niche in electronica , now showing promise as a folk @-@ rock songstress , the only thing for Madonna to do is make a full @-@ blown rock album .

Giving the album three out of five stars , Ben Ratliff from Rolling Stone summarized that the messages on the album are dour , but complimented Madonna for talking about the then @-@ current situation of the nation . Johny Davis from NME gave the album a rating of seven out of ten , saying that technically the album sounds good , but overall it felt like an unnecessary sequel to Madonna 's previous endeavors like Ray of Light and Music . Allmusic 's Stephen Thomas Erlewine stated that American Life is better for what it promises than what it delivers , and that it is better in theory than practice . Kelefa Sanneh from Blender awarded the album three stars out of five . " Just as disjointed as Music and much more severe ... Without a compelling back story , her songs seem diminished " . Dorian Lynskey from Q magazine also rated it three out of five , stating " ' Nothing Fails ' , the album 's centerpiece , is as good a showstopper as ' Live to Tell ' ... [but] it 's no wonder that a record about feeling confused ends up sounding confused " .

Jon Pareles from The New York Times felt that Madonna tried to be honest with the concept of American Dream in the album , but ended up producing songs akin to the " folkie psychobabble " of songwriters like Jewel . James Hannahan from Spin compared the album 's introspective themes to her previous albums Ray of Light and Music and also noted Madonna spends much of American Life bemoaning the emptiness of celebrity culture . Alexis Petridis of The Guardian responded well to parts of the record saying " American Life 's best tracks make a mockery of virtually all other current pop music " however his conclusive point in the review was that there was not enough of good songs . The Village Voice 's Jessica Winter called Madonna 's voice " redundant " and commented that " she ironizes ' the American dream ' only to pitch woo at her English husband and articulate a vague yet fiery frustration with her outrageously privileged station in the world " . Ed Howard from Stylus Magazine gave the album a negative review calling the album " about Madonna " instead of American culture explaining , " it 's Madonna who , surprisingly , has simply run out of things to say " . BBC 's Ian Young also gave a negative review , saying that " the tunes are bland and weak , the lyrics are uninspired and self @-@ absorbed and the semi @-@ Ibiza backing music is bare and recycled ? and we are convinced that she has lost it . "

American Life also achieved award nominations . In 2004 , American Life was nominated at the 46th Grammy Awards in two categories " Best Short Form Music Video " and " Best Dance Recording " , both for the song " Die Another Day . " It was also nominated for " Best Video from a Film " at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards . At the Hungarian Music Awards of 2004 and 2005 , the album was nominated both times in the category of " International Pop Album of the Year " , but failed to win . Another nomination was for a similar category at the NRJ Music Awards of 2004 .

= = Commercial performance = =

After its release , American Life debuted at number one on the United States Billboard 200 chart with 241 @,@ 000 copies sold in its first week . The sales were less than Madonna 's previous studio album , Music , which debuted with 420 @,@ 000 copies in 2000 , but was the only one that week to sell over 200 @,@ 000 copies . It was Madonna 's second consecutive number one debut , and her fifth number one album overall in the US . The next week , sales dropped by 62 % to 91 @,@ 000 copies , and the album slid from the top of the chart to number eight . It continued to decrease in sales down the chart and fell off the Billboard 200 . In September 2003 , following Madonna 's performance at the MTV Video Music Awards , the album saw a sales gain of 19 % , but did not chart back . On July 7 , 2003 , just months after the release , it was certified Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , signifying shipment of one million copies in the US alone . However , it became the third lowest selling studio album by Madonna behind her 2012 release MDNA and her 2015 release Rebel Heart , with sales of 680 @,@ 000 copies as of October 2012 , according to Nielsen SoundScan . It ranked at number 125 on the year @-@ end ranking of the albums by Billboard . In Canada , the album debuted at the top of the Canadian Albums Chart with sales of 18 @,@ 000 copies on May 10 , 2003 . According to Nielsen SoundScan , the sum was considerably less than her previous studio efforts , Ray of Light (1998) and Music (2000) , which debuted with 59 @,@ 000 and 50 @,@ 000 copies respectively . It gained a Platinum certification one month later from the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) , for shipment of 100 @,@ 000 copies of the album .

In the United Kingdom , American Life debuted atop the UK Albums Chart , with sales of 65 @,@ 013 copies , much less than the opening sum of 2000 's Music , which debuted with sales of 151 @,@ 891 copies . The next week , it was pushed down to the third position , by Justin Timberlake 's album , Justified , and The White Stripes album , Elephant . It continued its downward movement , falling to number five in its third week on the chart and was out of the top ten by its fifth week . It was present for a total of 19 weeks on the chart , ranking at number 52 on the UK year @-@ end tally . American Life sold 335 @,@ 115 copies by July 2008 and earned a platinum certification from the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) . In European countries , the album topped the charts in Austria , Belgium (Flanders) , Belgium (Wallonia) , Denmark , France , Italy , Norway , Sweden and Switzerland . The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) awarded American Life Platinum certification , signifying sales of over one million copies across Europe . The album also gained Platinum certifications in countries such as France , Russia , and Switzerland , and Gold certifications in Brazil , Greece , and the Netherlands .

In Japan , the album peaked at number four on the Oricon Weekly Albums chart remaining there for 13 weeks , and went on to gain a Gold certification from the Recording Industry Association of Japan (RIAJ) that same year , for shipping 100 @,@ 000 copies of the release . In Australia the album peaked at number three , before descending rapidly down the ARIA Albums Chart . Nevertheless , it gained a Platinum certification from the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) for shipping 70 @,@ 000 copies . Overall , American Life became the 32nd bestselling album of 2003 , with five million copies sold worldwide .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits and personnel adapted from the album 's liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =