

= Hollywood (Madonna song) =

" Hollywood " is a song by American singer @-@ songwriter Madonna . The song was written and produced by Madonna and Mirwais Ahmadzaï for her ninth studio album , American Life (2003) . On July 14 , 2003 , it was released as the second single from the album by Maverick Records . It later appeared on the greatest hits album , Celebration (2009) . " Hollywood " is a dance @-@ pop and folk rock song that lyrically discusses American culture and greed , focusing on Hollywood , California , as a place of pop stars and illusory dreams . Madonna 's vocals in the song was noted as that of a little @-@ girl 's ; during the song she also raps , with the repeated phrase " Push the button " . Ahmadzaï did the main programming for the track and kept the track as simple as possible , without using too many instruments .

Several remixes of " Hollywood " , done by DJs such as Jacques Lu Cont , The Micronauts , Paul Oakenfold , Deepsky and Victor Calderone , were included on physical releases of the single around the world . Music critics applauded the song 's catchiness but criticized its lyrics . The song topped Billboard 's Hot Dance Club Songs and Hot Dance Singles Sales component charts . The debut of the " Hollywood " remixes on the Dance Singles Sales chart gave Madonna her longest stretch of chart @-@ topping titles on this chart , " Hollywood " being her sixth in a row . It also reached the top ten in Canada , Finland , Italy and reached number two in the United Kingdom .

An accompanying music video , directed by Jean @-@ Baptiste Mondino , portrays Madonna highlighting the highs and lows of Hollywood . After the video was released , French photographer Guy Bourdin 's son filed a federal lawsuit that accused Madonna of ripping off the work of his father , showing sequences of the video to be similar to his father 's photographs taken in 1980s . " Hollywood " was first performed in an acoustic version along with " American Life " and " Mother and Father " on a promotional tour for the album . In August 2003 , Madonna opened the MTV Video Music Awards performing a medley of " Like a Virgin " and " Hollywood " with Britney Spears , Christina Aguilera and Missy Elliott . During the performance , Madonna kissed Spears and Aguilera on the lips , generating strong reactions from the media . " Hollywood " was later used as a dancers ' interlude on the 2004 Re @-@ Invention World Tour .

= = Background and writing = =

When Madonna started working on her ninth studio album , the cultural mood of America was bleak and that of paranoia after the September 11 attacks . There was discontent and fear all around as the terrorism and hatred took people by surprise , as they started questioning the feasibility of the American Dream . While developing the songs for American Life with producer Mirwais Ahmadzaï , Madonna interrogated and pondered upon those values . The confusion , disorientation and the anger they created seeped into the making of each and every song , including " Hollywood " . She later spoke about Ahmadzaï 's downbeat existentialism and the long discussions they had about this , and society 's obsession with fame and fortune . In an interview with Q , in April 2003 , she described it as the allure of the beautiful life in " Hollywood " . Explaining in detail ,

" I 've had 20 years of fame and fortune , and I feel that I have a right to an opinion on what it is and what it isn 't . All everyone is obsessed about at the moment is being a celebrity . I 'm saying that 's bullshit and who knows better than me ? Before it happens you have all kinds of notions about how wonderful celebrity is and how much joy it 's going to bring you . Then you arrive ... Look like this you 're gonna be happy . Drive this car you 're gonna be popular . Wear these clothes and people are gonna wanna fuck you . It 's a very powerful illusion and people are caught up in it , including myself . Or I was . "

In the VH1 special Madonna Speaks , the artist further clarified that the theme behind " Hollywood " , as well as " American Life " And " I 'm So Stupid " from the album , was about her " wanting to shout from the rooftops that we have all been living in a dream . I have been living in a dream ? and you 're all living in a dream and we have to wake up to reality . " Madonna 's first single from American Life ? the title track ? became the lowest charting first single from a Madonna album since her debut , reaching a peak of number 37 on the Billboard Hot 100 . Warner Bros. Records hastily

wanted to save the album from dropping off the charts , and decided to release " Hollywood " , believing the song to have commercial success potential .

= = Recording = =

" Hollywood " was produced by Madonna , along with Ahmadzaï . The recording sessions for American Life started in 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 in late 2002 and finished off the sessions . Initially , Madonna was not satisfied with the original version of " Hollywood " recorded , so she developed an alternate melody for it . The instruments used on " Hollywood " are similar to the ones used on the other songs from American Life . The mixing for the track was done by Mark " Spike " Stent at the Westlake Recording Studios at West Hollywood , California , while Tim Young did the mastering of the song at Metropolis Studios in London . Ahmadzaï played the guitars , and also did the necessary programming . 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 . Describing the recording of the vocals , Ahmadzaï said :

" We used mainly analog compressors on the vocals , sometimes very cheap or mid @-@ budget stuff , recorded with a Sony G800 tube mic , a Neve 8081 preamp and an LA @-@ 2A compressor / limiter . But everything is about the setting ... We experiment a lot with vocal sounds . For example , the pitch @-@ down vocal at the end was initially much longer . The mix of this one was very hard ? like almost all tracks ? because there was so much stuff going on . This is why maybe the final version is so simple . "

= = Composition = =

" Hollywood " is a " bouncy folk @-@ rock tune " , as noted by James Hannaham of Spin , while Ken Micallef of Electronic Musician described it as " a clubby disco beat underpins a mammoth bass line with freaky percussion , queasy arcing tones and madly treated vocals . " It also contains house beats with elements of space age and retro music , as well as synthpop . Following the sound of twittering birds , the song opens with a four @-@ chord sequence played on a Martin D @-@ 28 acoustic guitar ; the riff was compared to songs of the Red Hot Chili Peppers by Rikky Rooksby , author of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna . It is followed by the sound of drums and synthesizers until after a minute , when the arrangement is pulled out , leaving just Madonna 's vocals and the acoustic guitar accompaniment . Madonna 's voice glides over pop beats throughout the song . During the final sequence , Madonna 's singing is slowly morphed lower in pitch into a distorted , robotic voice and she raps , with the repeated phrase " Push the button " . According to the sheet music published at Sheetmusicplus.com , " Hollywood " is written in common time with a moderately fast tempo of 126 beats per minute . It is composed in the key of C major with Madonna 's voice spanning from B3 to C5 . An abrupt shift of key takes place at about three minutes into the song , from B minor to C ? minor , which according to Rooksby was utilized to give the song 's closing choruses a different treatment . The song follows a basic sequence of Bm ? D ? A ? G ? Em as its chord progression .

Lyrically , it discusses American culture and greed , focusing on Hollywood as a place of pop stars and illusory dreams . The bridge opens with Madonna saying , " Music stations always play the same songs / I 'm bored with the concept of right and wrong " . Contemporary author Ben Shapiro noted the verse " seems to be Madonna 's credo . Her purposeful degradation of morality has led to

monumental success for her @-@ and created a monumentally bad influence for her teenage fans . " Further , Madonna questions the Hollywood experience , singing , " How could it hurt you when it looked so good ? " . Alexis Petridis of The Guardian noted Madonna 's vocals in the song are " high @-@ pitched [to sound like a] little @-@ girl " , with the intention of " [underlying] the notion of innocence lost " .

= = Remixes = =

Several remixes of " Hollywood " , done by DJs such as Jacques Lu Cont , The Micronauts , Paul Oakenfold , Deepsky and Victor Calderone , were included on physical releases of the single around the world . In August 2003 , the song was remixed with " Into the Groove " and performed with Missy Elliott under the title " Into the Hollywood Groove " as part of a promotional campaign for clothing retailer , GAP . Copies of the promotional CD were given to customers and were not available for individual purchase . An extended version , " The Passengerz Mix " , was also included on the remix album Remixed & Revisited (2003) . A promotional video for the remix was also shot . Rob Walker of Slate considered the video " interesting because Madonna has always been praised as much for her ability to market herself as for her actual talent as a singer and performer " . However , he noted that " [the singer] can 't even get an actual commercial right . Maybe Madonna really is over . " A parody of the commercial which satirized at Madonna 's age was featured on the ninth season of MADtv .

" Hollywood " was also remixed by American DJ duo Blow @-@ Up . The remix was set to be included on Madonna 's second remix album planned for 2004 ; however , it remained unreleased . A Billboard review by Michael Paoletta considered it a " funky dark remix " . An unofficial remix was commissioned to DJ Junior Vasquez for designer Donatella Versace 's spring / summer 2004 menswear show in Milan , in spite of the singer having a falling out with Vasquez , following the DJ releasing an unauthorized single titled " If Madonna Calls " . The original version that Vasquez played at nightclubs contained an actual phone message from Madonna left on Vasquez 's answering machine . Madonna 's publicist Liz Rosenberg confirmed that this did not mean the singer would collaborate with Vasquez in the future since the commissioning of the remix was just a " personal favor " for Versace .

= = Critical reception = =

" Hollywood " received mixed reviews from music critics . Michael Paoletta from Billboard described the song as " punky " and compared it to " Ray of Light " (1998) . Dimitri Ebrlich of Vibe magazine gave a positive review for the song , describing it as " disarmingly self @-@ deprecatory as it reflects on people 's desperate attempts to make it in America 's glamor industry " , writing that it was a perfect fit for American Life . Jude Adam of Third Way magazine gave the song a positive review , considering it as " quirky , sunny , and sweet in perfect measures . " Stephen Thompson of The A.V. Club considered the song as " actually catchy " . Alexis Petridis of The Guardian noted that Madonna divulges in the song that not everyone who wants to make it in the movies succeeds . Jessica Winter from The Village Voice commented that in the song , " Madonna channels a generic teen @-@ pop chanteuse " . Dennis Ferrera from Out , while interviewing Madonna for her 2005 album Confessions on a Dance Floor , described the song as a " killer single " . Another positive review by J. J. Evans from Naperville Sun described " Hollywood " as a track which best exemplifies Madonna 's " silly way of writing " but felt that it worked in this case . Chris Heath from Yahoo ! Music commented that " ' Hollywood ' breaks free of its inferior siblings to strike out as a sexy sliver of dance pop that 's as good as anything on Music " .

Ian Youngs of BBC News noted that the song was another diatribe about fame and how difficult it is being in the public eye . He further added that it " ranks among the disappointments " on the album saying it feels lacklustre and commented about the " embarrassing rap " . Ed Howard from Stylus Magazine commented that barring Madonna 's rapping , " Hollywood " is at least engaging . Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine thought " following up ' American Life ' with ' Hollywood ' was nearly

as ballsy " due to its lyrical content . Edna Gundersen of USA Today noted that the song " attest [s] to her undiminished skills as a shrewd pop composer " . Michael Hubbard of musicOMH commented that everything rhymes with " Hollywood " , and after commented the song would be better without these lazy lyrics , adding " [The song] has the name Madonna on it so it will sell , but it 's hardly vintage stuff . Time for some musical reinvention to go with the incessant changes of image . " In another review , Chuck Taylor from Billboard expressed his disappointment with the song . He explained that " Hollywood " is " a far cry from the ingenious fortitude displayed on so many previous singles of [Madonna 's] two decades of career " . He panned Ahmadzaï 's limited electronic production and Madonna 's excessive usage of acoustic guitar on the track , along with " whiney , preachy lyrics " . Writing for The Sydney Morning Herald , Bernard Zuel called Ahmadzaï a " one @-@ trick pony " for his production , but felt he pulled it off " on the groove @-@ rich ' Hollywood ' " . Ben Wener from The Beaver County Times condemned the track as a " knowingly hypocritical attack on Hollywood " .

= = Chart performance = =

" Hollywood " failed to enter the Billboard Hot 100 in the United States , or the Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart . It was the first time since " Burning Up " (1983) that a Madonna single did not reach the Hot 100 . However , it peaked at number one on both Billboard 's Hot Dance Club Play and Hot Dance Singles Sales component charts . The debut of the " Hollywood " remixes atop the Dance Singles Sales chart gave Madonna her longest stretch of chart @-@ topping titles on this chart , " Hollywood " being her sixth in a row . This stretch began with " Music " in 2000 , followed by " Don 't Tell Me " , " What It Feels Like for a Girl " , " Die Another Day " and " American Life " . " Hollywood " was Madonna 's 22nd number @-@ one on the Dance Singles Sales chart , the most for any artist . On the Billboard Hot Singles Sales chart , the song debuted at number four , but did not accumulate enough points to appear on the Hot 100 . At the 2003 Billboard Year @-@ end recap , Madonna was the number two Dance Club Play artist and the top Dance Singles artist . " Hollywood " was ranked at numbers 19 , 7 and 45 on the Hot Dance Club Play , Hot Dance Singles Sales and Hot Singles Sales charts respectively . Other than the dance charts , " Hollywood " also reached a peak of number 35 on the Adult Pop Songs . In Canada , the song peaked at number five on Canadian Singles Chart .

On July 19 , 2003 , " Hollywood " debuted at its peak of number two in the UK Singles Chart , being kept from the top spot by " Crazy in Love " by Beyoncé Knowles . The song was present for a total of seven weeks on the chart , and as of August 2008 , has sold 59 @,@ 633 copies according to the Official Charts Company . In Australia , " Hollywood " debuted on the chart at number 16 , before falling out to number 37 the next week . On April 27 , 2003 , " American Life " debuted at number 55 on the Austrian Singles Chart , peaking at number 34 after four weeks . The song achieved moderate chart positions in both the Flemish and Wallonian territories in Belgium , peaking at numbers 14 and 32 , respectively . Making its debut at its peak position of number 22 , " American Life " charted for a total of 23 weeks in France during 2003 . Between 2008 and 2009 , the song charted for five weeks . On the Dutch Singles Chart , the song made its debut at number 12 , spending a total of six weeks in the chart . On April 24 , 2003 , " American Life " debuted at number 20 on the Swedish Singles Chart . Similarly in Switzerland , the song debuted at number 15 on the Swiss Singles Chart , spending 13 weeks on the chart .

= = Music video = =

The music video for " Hollywood " was filmed at Universal Studios in Universal City , California and directed by Jean @-@ Baptiste Mondino , who previously worked with Madonna on her videos for " Open Your Heart " (1986) , " Justify My Love " (1990) , " Human Nature " (1995) , " Love Don 't Live Here Anymore " (1996) , and " Don 't Tell Me " (2000) . In the United States , it premiered on June 23 , 2003 , on VH1 . Madonna had long been a fan of the work of French fashion photographer Guy Bourdin since about a decade ago , commenting on his photographs as " They 're so sick and

interesting . These girls , you have to see the look on their faces ? they 're really bizarre . " Arianne Phillips created the costumes for the video and she described Madonna 's looks as an homage to old Hollywood glamour , while trying to be literal as well as conceptual . She paid tributes to stars like Ginger Rogers , Jean Harlow and Mae West . According to Mondino 's own words , the concept of the video was :

" Some kind of artifice that Hollywood can provide , that is so wide and has a graphic story @-@ line about it as well as some humor about it , and to show the beauty , the scariness , the sexiness and the loneliness that one 's success can be , ' cause everybody 's dreaming about Hollywood , no matter what . The expectation can be very dangerous , and maybe for somebody like Madonna , who might be at a point , to realize that to be on the top is maybe not that important . That 's what I feel about the video . "

The music video features Madonna in different styles and fashions . It also includes her dripping in twenty million dollars worth of vintage jewels and gowns in several transformations , including an original 25 carat ring and bracelet that was worn by West in the 1933 film , *She Done Him Wrong* . A real doctor (Dr. David Kish) was hired by Madonna to administer the fake shots , since she wanted to make the scenes appear real . The first day of shooting took place on June 2 , 2003 , and the scenes shot included the wall @-@ of @-@ mirrors , the massage , the botox injection and the ballet dancing sequences . The next day started with the French maid , the motel TV , the telephone conversation and the glamour shot scenes . Henry Keazor , one of the authors of *Rewind , Play , Fast Forward : The Past , Present and Future of the Music Video* , noted that Madonna exposed herself during the interventions portrayed in the video , by playing with the rumors and the stereotypes surrounding her .

After the release of the music video for " Hollywood " , Samuel Bourdin , the son of Guy Bourdin , filed a federal lawsuit that accused Madonna of ripping off the work of his father . Bourdin said they are " strikingly similar " to pictures taken by his father from the 1950s to 1980s decades and published in French Vogue magazine . He accused Madonna of copyright infringement over at least eleven of Bourdin 's works , including one of Madonna with her legs spread on top of a TV set . " It 's one thing to draw inspiration ; it 's quite another to simply plagiarize the heart and soul of my father 's work " , Bourdin said at the time . Included in Bourdin 's federal complaint were side @-@ by @-@ side comparisons of his father 's work with images with stills from the " Hollywood " video . According to Dustin Robertson , editor of the " Hollywood " video , the sequences featuring Madonna in a red dress staring into a mirror are the ones which were pointed by Bourdin 's estate in the lawsuit . The lawsuit named Madonna , Warner Bros. Records , and Mondino as defendants . The details presented in the lawsuit read as : " Factors such as composition , background , wardrobe , lighting , narrative , camera angle , decor , and objects depicted are strikingly similar ... There are very few scenes or sequences in the ' Hollywood ' video that are not directly derived from the Bourdin works . " Details of the financial settlement are confidential , and Madonna acknowledged no wrongdoing in her liberal appropriation of the images . Bourdin 's lawyer , John Koegel , said the parties reached a " very , very successful settlement " , adding that terms of the deal did not allow him to discuss exact dollar amounts . In 2011 , news website Independent Online disclosed the settled amount by Madonna to be \$ 600 @,@ 000 .

= = Live performances = =

To start marketing *American Life* , Madonna performed the *American Life* Promo Tour . A performance on Tower 's Fourth Street in Manhattan was presented to around 400 people and featured acoustic performances of " American Life " , " Mother and Father " , and " Hollywood " . On August 27 , 2003 , Madonna opened the MTV Video Music Awards performing a medley of " Like a Virgin / Hollywood " with Britney Spears , Christina Aguilera , and Missy Elliott . The performance started with Madonna 's daughter Lourdes walking on stage with another girl , dressed as flower girls at a wedding . Spears appeared on stage atop of a giant wedding cake , wearing a wedding gown and veil ; she sang the first few lines of " Like a Virgin " before Aguilera appeared from behind the cake and joined her . Madonna then emerged from the cake wearing a black coat and hat and

started singing " Hollywood " before proceeding to kiss Spears and Aguilera on the lips . Missy Elliott came out from a wedding chapel to sing her song " Work It " halfway through the performance . The whole performance was a tribute to Madonna and an homage to her performance of " Like a Virgin " at the awards ' inaugural show in 1984 .

The kiss generated strong reaction from the media and the celebrities alike . Nekesa Mumbi Moody from Associated Press deduced " Twenty years after the first MTV Video Music Awards , and not much has changed ? Madonna still makes jaws drop and cheeks blush . " Brian Hiatt from Entertainment Weekly felt that " The close @-@ up of [Madonna] locking lips with the 21 @-@ year @-@ old Spears was an indelible MTV moment ? sexy , vaguely transgressive , and as meaningless as it was entertaining . " Elysa Gardner from USA Today explained that the performance " offered a poignant reminder of MTV 's role in defining a youth culture that has become something of a tease ? winking at convention without offering any fresh alternatives . " The MTV producers were skeptical , saying that " It was sensational , but I wonder what the good folk in places like Provo , Utah state , would make of it . Middle America is not gonna let this one go lightly . " When asked about it , Madonna revealed , " I am kissing [Britney] and passing my energy on to her . Like kind of a mythological fairytale . " The performance was listed by Blender magazine as one of the twenty @-@ five sexiest music moments on television history . MTV listed the performance as the number @-@ one opening moment in the history of the MTV Video Music Awards . In Madonna 's 2004 Re @-@ Invention World Tour , a remix interlude of " Hollywood " featured a breakdancer , a firedancer , a bellydancer , a tapdancer , and a skateboarder . The screens displayed animations of tarot cards . The performance was included in the I 'm Going to Tell You a Secret live album and documentary . On the same tour , the performance of " Into the Groove " contained samples from the remix " Into the Hollywood Groove " .

= = Track listings and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Madonna ? lead vocals , background vocals , songwriter , producer
Mirwais Ahmadzaï ? songwriter , producer , guitars , programming
Tim Young ? audio mastering
Mark " Spike " Stent ? audio mixing
Credits for " Hollywood " are adapted from American Life liner notes .

= = Charts = =