

= Burn the Bastards =

" Burn the Bastards " is a 1988 song by Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty as The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu (The JAMs) , from their second , and final before changing names , album Who Killed The JAMs ? . The " bastards " of the title are copies of The JAMs first album , 1987 (What the Fuck Is Going On ?) , which Drummond and Cauty burnt on a bonfire in a Swedish field after a copyright dispute with the Swedish pop group ABBA . The song (which is based upon Sly and the Family Stone 's " Dance to the Music ") was released as a single , along with a separate single of remixes titled " Burn the Beat " . Both singles were credited to The KLF , marking a change of name and with it a change of musical genre , from The JAMs ' sample @-@ fuelled political hip @-@ hop to The KLF 's upbeat and uptempo house music .

= = Conception = =

= = = Background = = =

Early in 1987 , Jimmy Cauty and Bill Drummond formed a musical outfit , The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu (The JAMs) , later to also be known as The Timelords and , more famously , The KLF . The JAMs deliberately invited controversy by spending a year producing incendiary electronic music that was built around plagiarised samples of other artists , underpinned by beatbox rhythms and political raps . The song " Burn the Bastards " , which was the duo 's final single in this mould , was inspired in part by the legal backlash of their provocative output .

Their debut album , 1987 (What the Fuck Is Going On ?) , had been investigated by the Mechanical @-@ Copyright Protection Society , who in August 1987 ordered The JAMs to recall and destroy all unsold copies of 1987 , for its illegal use of extensive samples from ABBA 's " Dancing Queen " . The JAMs journeyed to Sweden ? with their unsold LPs and an NME journalist in tow ? in an attempt to negotiate with ABBA . When this failed , The JAMs made a bonfire in the Swedish countryside and burnt the LPs . Back in the UK , they continued with their plagiaristic productions , which culminated with a second LP , Who Killed The JAMs ? . Its sleeve depicts the 1987 bonfire , and it contains " Burn the Bastards " , a sample @-@ heavy celebration of the fire set to house music . Ritualistic burnings became a recurring aspect of Drummond and Cauty 's work , including the burning of a 60 @-@ ft (18 @-@ m) wicker man during the 1991 summer solstice (The Rites of Mu) , and , as the K Foundation in 1995 , their burning of £ 1 million .

= = = Release = = =

On 5 March 1988 , Drummond and Cauty released The KLF 's debut single " Burn the Beat " , an instrumental house music version of " Burn the Bastards " , on their own KLF Communications label . The single also featured instrumental remixes of other tracks from Who Killed The JAMs ? . All 5 @, @ 000 pressed copies of the single ? catalogue number JAMS 26T ? were exported . On 18 April 1988 , another single , " Burn the Bastards " , was released in the UK , to fill the hitherto overlooked catalogue number KLF 002 . This single , also by The KLF , featured the LP version of " Burn the Bastards " alongside another instrumental version , " Burn the Beat (Club Mix) " . The single releases marked a change in direction of Drummond and Cauty 's music , to an upbeat and uptempo house music tone . Indeed , the record label of " Burn the Bastards " stated , " This is a transition record " . Neither " Burn the Bastards " nor " Burn the Beat " entered the UK Singles Chart , although the release peaked at number 15 in the UK Indie Singles Chart .

= = Composition = =

" Burn the Bastards " is a celebratory house music song based upon Sly Stone 's " Dance to the Music " : a trumpet break and drum line are sampled , and the lyrical structure of that song is also

mirrored . Whereas " Dance to the Music " vocally introduces the instruments used , so " Burn the Bastards " has Drummond sing of The JAMs ' methods , such as " All we need is a beatbox , for people who only need a beat " . The choral line " Dance to the music " is modified to " JAMs have a party " .

Referring to the fate of the 1987 LPs , Drummond sings " Build a fire , stoke it good , throw them on , and watch the bastards burn " , accompanied by a stark , ring modulated chorus , " Mu Mu ! " . A later portion of the lyrics alludes to New Year 's Eve 1987 : " Five to twelve , almost gone . 1987 , what the fuck have we done ? " .

A driving 4 / 4 rhythm and a sampled Roland TB @-@ 303 loop provide acid house overtones . These elements are brought further to the fore in " Burn the Beat " , which dispenses with Drummond 's vocals .

Most of The KLF 's work was highly self @-@ referential : lyrics were usually enigmatic narratives of The KLF 's real and fictional exploits , and vocal samples were re @-@ used in a variety of musical contexts . The signatory " Mu Mu ! " refrain , which first appeared on this song , recurred throughout the duo 's music , including " What Time Is Love ? (Live at Trancentral) " (1990) , " Last Train to Trancentral (Live from the Lost Continent) " and " America : What Time Is Love ? " (1991) , and " Fuck the Millennium " (1997) .

The song also contains samples of " Bad " by Michael Jackson .

= = Reviews = =

Announcing a change of name in January 1988 , Bill Drummond had said " We might put out a couple of 12 " records under the name The K.L.F. , these will be rap free just pure dance music , so don 't expect to see them reviewed in the music papers " . As predicted , " Burn the Beat " and " Burn the Bastards " attracted little attention from the music press .

Reviewing Who Killed The JAMs ? , Sounds described " Burn the Bastards " as " a JAMs manifesto " which " assumes a sinister edge alongside the pile of blazing copies of 1987 pictured on the sleeve " , citing the track as evidence that The JAMs were " defiant , outspoken , still a wily step ahead " .

= = Formats and track listings = =

" Burn the Beat " was originally a KLF Communications 12 " limited to 5 @, @ 000 copies exported from the UK . In 1989 , it was released in the US by TVT Records . " Burn the Bastards " was released by KLF Communications for a UK audience .

Key

I - " Burn the Bastards " (LP edit) (4 : 07)

L - " Burn the Bastards " (LP version) (6 : 28)

J - " Burn the Bastards (JAMs Have A Party Mix) " (4 : 11)

C - " Burn the Beat (Club Mix) " (4 : 51)

M - " Burn the Beat (Mu Mu Mix) " (4 : 43)

P - " The Porpoise Song " (5 : 43)

PR - " The Porpoise Song (Instrumental Remix) " (5 : 09)

G - " Prestwich Prophet 's Grin (Instrumental Remix) " (4 : 14)