

= Invincible (Michael Jackson album) =

Invincible is the final studio album by American recording artist Michael Jackson . It is his sixth studio album released through Epic Records and his tenth studio album overall . It was released on October 30 , 2001 . Similar to Jackson 's previous material , Invincible explores themes such as love , romance , isolation , media criticism , and social issues .

The album peaked at number one in eleven territories worldwide , including the United States (with first @-@ week sales of 363 @,@ 000 units) , the United Kingdom , Australia , France and Switzerland . Invincible charted within the top ten in six other territories ; its least successful charting area was Mexico , where the album peaked at number 29 . Total sales for the album are estimated to be at 10 million copies . Upon release , the album received mixed reviews from contemporary music critics .

= = Background = =

During Jackson 's time as a member of The Jackson 5 , he frequently wrote material for the group and began working on projects as a solo artist , which eventually led to recording his own studio albums , notably Thriller (1982) and Bad (1987) . The success of Thriller , which still holds its place as the best selling album of all time with a reported 110 million units sold , often over @-@ shadowed Jackson 's other projects . Prior to the release of Invincible , Jackson had not released any new material since Blood on the Dance Floor : HIStory in the Mix in 1997 , or a studio album since HIStory : Past , Present and Future , Book I in 1995 . Invincible was thus looked at as Jackson 's ' career come back ' .

Invincible is dedicated to the fifteen @-@ year @-@ old Afro @-@ Norwegian boy Benjamin " Benny " Hermansen who was stabbed to death by a group of neo @-@ Nazis in Oslo , Norway , in January 2001 . The reason for this tribute was partly due to the fact that another Oslo youth , Omer Bhatti , Jackson 's friend , was also a good friend of Hermansen . The dedication in the album reads , " Michael Jackson gives ' special thanks ' : This album is dedicated to Benjamin ' Benny ' Hermansen . May we continue to remember not to judge man by the color of his skin , but the content of his Character . Benjamin ... we love you ... may you rest in peace . " The album is also dedicated to Nicholette Sottile and his parents Joseph and Katherine Jackson .

= = Production = =

Jackson began recording new material for the album in October 1997 , and finished with " You Are My Life " being recorded only eight weeks before the album 's release in October 2001 - the most extensive recording of Jackson 's career . The tracks with Rodney Jerkins were recorded at The Hit Factory in Miami , Florida . Jackson had shown interest in including a rapper on at least one song , and had noted that he did not want a ' known rapper ' . Jackson 's spokesperson suggested New Jersey rapper named Fats ; after Jackson heard the finished product of the song , the two agreed to record another song together for the album . Rodney Jerkins stated that Jackson was looking to record material in a different musical direction than his previous work , describing the new direction as " edgier " . Jackson received credit for both writing and producing a majority of the songs on Invincible . Aside from Jackson , the album features productions by Jerkins , Teddy Riley , Andre Harris , Andraeo " Fanatic " Heard , Kenneth " Babyface " Edmonds , R. Kelly and Dr. Freeze Bill Gray and writing credits from Kelly , Fred Jerkins III , LaShawn Daniels , Nora Payne and Robert Smith . The album is the third collaboration between Jackson and Riley , the other two being Dangerous and Blood on the Dance Floor : HIStory in the Mix . Invincible is Jackson 's tenth and final studio album to have been recorded and released . It was reported that it cost thirty million dollars to make the album , making it the most expensive album ever made .

= = Composition = =

Invincible is composed of R & B , hip hop , dance @-@ pop , adult contemporary and urban songs . The album 's full length is seventy @-@ seven minutes eight seconds , and it contains 16 songs - fifteen of which were written (or co @-@ written) by Jackson . It was noted that the album shifts between aggressive songs and ballads . Invincible opens with " Unbreakable " ; the last line in the first verse recites the lyrics , " With all that I 've been through / I 'm still around " . In a 2002 interview with the magazine Vibe , Jackson commented on his inspiration for writing " Speechless " , saying

You 'll be surprised . I was with these kids in Germany , and we had a big water @-@ balloon fight - I 'm serious - and I was so happy after the fight that I ran upstairs in their house and wrote " Speechless " . Fun inspires me . I hate to say that , because it 's such a romantic song . But it was the fight that did it . I was happy , and I wrote it in it 's [sic] entirety right there . I felt it would be good enough for the album . Out of the bliss comes magic , wonderment , and creativity .

" Privacy " , a reflection on Jackson 's own personal experiences , is about media invasions and tabloid inaccuracies . " The Lost Children " is about imperiled children . Jackson sings in a third person in " Whatever Happens " . The song 's lyrics , described by Rolling Stone magazine as having a " jagged intensity " , narrate the story of two people involved in an unnamed threatening situation . Invincible features four ballads : " You Are My Life " , " Butterflies " , " Don 't Walk Away " and " Cry " . " Cry " , similar to Jackson 's " Man in the Mirror " , is about healing the world together . The lyrics to " Butterflies " and " Break of Dawn " were viewed as " glaringly banal " and it was implied that they could have been written by anyone . " Threatened " was viewed as being a story teller . The song was viewed as a " Thriller redux " . The song " You Are My Life " is about Jackson 's two children at the time , Prince and Paris . The song features Jackson singing , " You are the sun , you make me shine , more like the stars . "

= = Promotion and singles = =

It was reported that the album had a budget of twenty five million dollars set aside for promotion . Despite this , however , due to the conflicts between Jackson and his record label , little was done to promote the album . The album spawned three singles , although all were given limited releases . " You Rock My World " was only released to radio airplay in the United States , consequently only peaking at number ten on the Billboard Hot 100 . Internationally , where it was released as a commercial single , it was more successful , peaking at number one in France , number two in Norway , Finland , Denmark , Belgium and the United Kingdom , number three in Italy , number four in Australia , and five in Sweden and Switzerland . The second single , " Cry " , was not released in the United States . It was only moderately successful , with the song 's most successful territories being Spain , Denmark , France and Belgium , charting at number six , sixteen , thirty and thirty one .

The album 's third single , " Butterflies " , was only released in the United States to radio airplay , consequently only peaking at number fourteen on the Billboard Hot 100 and at number two for five weeks on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Singles Chart . " Heaven Can Wait " also charted at the bottom of the R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Charts , at number seventy two due to radio airplay without an official release ; the song did not chart internationally . " Unbreakable " was originally supposed to be released as a single , but it was ultimately cancelled . It was however , later included on The Ultimate Collection box set .

Unlike with most of Jackson 's adult studio albums , there was no world tour to promote the album (world tour was cancelled due to conflict between Jackson and his record label) . There was , however , a special 30th Anniversary celebration at Madison Square Garden in September 2001 to mark Jackson 's 30th year as a solo artist . The singer performed a song from Invincible and marked his first appearance onstage alongside his brothers since The Jacksons ' Victory Tour in 1984 . The show also featured performances by Britney Spears , Mýa , Usher , Whitney Houston , Tamia , ' N Sync , and Slash , among other artists . The show aired on CBS in November 2001 as a two @-@ hour television special and garnered 29 @-@ 8 million viewers .

Following Sony 's decision to abruptly end all promotion for the album , Jackson made allegations in July 2002 that Mottola was a " devil " and a " racist " who did not support his African @-@ American

artists , but merely used them for his own personal gain . The singer accused Sony and the record industry of racism , deliberately not promoting or actively working against promotion of his album . Sony disputed claims that they had failed to promote *Invincible* with sufficient energy , maintaining that Jackson refused to tour in the United States .

= = Critical and public reception = =

Invincible received mixed reviews . At Metacritic , which assigns a high rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received a mixed score of 51 based on 19 reviews . AllMusic editor Stephen Thomas Erlewine commented that it has a " spark " and " sound better than anything Jackson has done since *Dangerous* . " Erlewine noted that while the album had good material it was " not enough to make *Invincible* the comeback Jackson needed - he really would have had to have an album that sounded free instead of constrained for that to work - but it does offer a reminder that he can really craft good pop . " David Browne of *Entertainment Weekly* , felt that *Invincible* is Jackson 's " first album since *Off the Wall* that offers virtually no new twists " but remarked that the album " feels like an anthology of his less @-@ than @-@ greatest hits " . James Hunter of *Rolling Stone* critiqued that the album 's later ballads made the record too long . Hunter also commented that Jackson and Riley made " *Whatever Happens* " " something really handsome and smart " , allowing listeners " to concentrate on the track 's momentous rhythms " such as " Santana 's passionate interjections and Lubbock 's wonderfully arranged symphonic sweeps " . Mark Beaumont of *NME* called it " a relevant and rejuvenated comeback album made overlong " , while *Blender* also found it " long @-@ winded " .

In his review for *The Village Voice* , Robert Christgau said that Jackson 's skills as a musician are often forgotten , but noted that the album seemed too long compared to other Jackson albums . While Christgau felt some material was " offensive " , he described the album 's first three tracks as being the " Rodney Jerkins of the year " adding that he did not " believe the [album 's] hype matters " . Nikki Tranter of *PopMatters* said that it is both innovative and meaningful because exceptional songs such as " *The Lost Children* " and " *Whatever Happens* " more than make up for overly sentimental songs like " *Heaven Can Wait* " and " *You Are My Life* " . *Q* magazine said that it is an aurally interesting , albeit inconsistent , album . In a negative review for *The New York Times* , Jon Pareles suggested that the album is somewhat impersonal and humorless , as Jackson rehashes ideas from his past songs and is " so busy trying to dazzle listeners that he forgets to have any fun . " In a retrospective review for *The Rolling Stone Album Guide* , Pareles said that *Invincible* showed Jackson had lost his suave quality to " grim calculation " .

Shortly after the release of the album , in a poll conducted by *Billboard* magazine , " an overwhelming majority " of people ? 79 % of 5 @,@ 195 voters ? were not surprised by *Invincible* entering the *Billboard* 200 at number one . *Billboard* also reported that 44 % agreed with the statement , proclaiming that Jackson was " still the King of Pop " . Another 35 % said they were not surprised by the album 's ranking , but doubted *Invincible* would hold on for a second week at the top of the chart . Only 12 % of people who responded to the poll said they were surprised by the album 's charting debut because of Jackson 's career over past six years and another 9 % were taken aback by the album 's success , in light of the negativity that preceded the album 's release . *Invincible* received one Grammy Award nomination at the 2002 ceremony . The album 's song " *You Rock My World* " was nominated for Best Pop Vocal Performance - Male , but lost to James Taylor 's " *Don 't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight* " . Due to the album 's release in October 2001 , it was not eligible for any other nomination from the 2002 Grammy Awards . In December 2009 , (just a few months after Jackson 's death) readers of *Billboard* magazine voted *Invincible* as the best album of the decade , from their readers poll .

= = Commercial performance = =

Invincible was Jackson 's first studio album to be released in four years , since *Blood on the Dance Floor* : HIStory in the Mix in 1997 . In the album 's first week of release , with the sales of 363 @,@

000 units , the album debuted at number one on the Billboard 200 on the charts issue date of November 17 , 2001 . Invincible was Jackson 's fifth number one entry on the Billboard 200 , and the fourth to chart at number one in its debut week as a solo artist . Despite the first week sales of Invincible being good , the album sold less than HIStory in its opening week , with the album having sold 391 @,@ 000 units . Invincible also charted at number one on Billboards R & B / Hip Hop Albums Chart for four weeks . After eight weeks of release , in December 2001 , Invincible was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) for the sales of five hundred thousand units . In the same month the album was certified platinum for the sale of one million units . On January 25 , 2002 , the album was certified two times platinum for the sales of two million units . Some of the songs from Invincible would be used for the Immortal World Tour

Internationally , Invincible was a commercial success . The album peaked at number one in twelve countries worldwide , including the United Kingdom , Australia , Belgium , Denmark , The Netherlands , Germany , Norway , Sweden and Switzerland . It also charted within the top ten in several countries , including Austria , Canada , Finland , Italy , New Zealand , and Norway . Mexico was the album 's least successful charting territory , peaking within the top thirty at number twenty nine . The album has reportedly sold 10 million units worldwide . However , the sales for Invincible were notably low compared to his previous releases , due in part to a diminishing pop music industry , the lack of promotion , no supporting world tour and the label dispute . Commenting on the sales of Invincible back in late 2003 , Bernard Zuel of The Sydney Morning Herald stated :

" Holly Valance or Delta Goodrem would think their Christmases had come at once if they sold five or six million copies of their albums worldwide . Michael Jackson did something similar in the past two years with his seventh solo album , Invincible , and he 's been branded a failure in the industry and the media . Unfair ? Yes , of course , because his Invincible figures are better than those for 95 per cent of the thousands of artists released each year and would provide a healthy retirement fund for anyone . What 's more , that failure tag is consistently applied by comparisons with his 1982 album , Thriller , which has sold about 100 million copies and its follow @-@ ups , Bad , that sold about 30 million copies . However , selling 10 million copies is still phenomenal compared to the album sales of most artists . "

In 2004 , Invincible re @-@ entered Billboard charts . Invincible placed at 154 on the Billboard 200 on December 4 , 2004 . The album also reached at number forty eight on Billboards R & B / Hip Hop Albums Chart that same week . Following Jackson 's death in June 2009 , his music experienced a surge in popularity . Invincible charted at number twelve on Billboards Digital Albums Chart on July 11 , 2009 . Having not charted on the chart prior to its peak position , the album was listed as the ninth biggest jump on that chart that week . It also charted within the top ten , peaking at number nine , on Billboard 's Catalog Albums Chart on the issue date of July 18 . On the week of July 19 , 2009 , Invincible charted at number eighteen in Italy . Invincible peaked at number sixty four on the European Albums Chart on the charts issue date of July 25 . The album also charted at number twenty nine in Mexico in July , and eighty four on the Swiss Albums Chart on July 19 , 2009 .

Internationally , the album has received multiple certifications . Invincible was certified platinum by the British Phonographic Industry , for the sales of over 300 @,@ 000 units in the United Kingdom . The album was certified platinum by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) for the sales of 40 @,@ 000 units in Switzerland . The IFPI also certified the album gold in Austria for the sales of 15 @,@ 000 units . Australian Recording Industry Association certified Invincible two times platinum for the sales of 140 @,@ 000 units in Australia . Other certifications include , a gold certification from Argentine Chamber of Phonograms and Videograms Producers for the sales of 20 @,@ 000 units in Argentina .

= = Track listing = =

Notes

" Unbreakable " features a rap verse by The Notorious B.I.G. The rap verse was originally from the song " You Can 't Stop the Reign " by Shaquille O 'Neal . It was written by Carl McIntosh , Jane Eugene and Steve Nichol .

" Heartbreaker " and " Invincible " feature a rap verse by Fats .

" Break of Dawn " , " 2000 Watts " and " Threatened " were excluded from the original Chinese release . In the Chinese version box set The Collection released in 2013 , all the 16 tracks are included .

= = Personnel = =

Credits adapted from Invincible album liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =