

= 30 Seconds to Mars (album) =

30 Seconds to Mars is the debut studio album by American rock band Thirty Seconds to Mars . It was first released on August 27 , 2002 , by Immortal Records and distributed by Virgin Records . The album was produced by Bob Ezrin , Brian Virtue , and Thirty Seconds to Mars , and was recorded in rural Wyoming during 2001 and early 2002 . It had been in the works for a couple of years , with lead vocalist Jared Leto writing the majority of the songs .

30 Seconds to Mars was described as a concept album centering on human struggle and self @-@ determination , characterized by personal lyrics that use otherworldly elements and conceptual ideas to illustrate a truthful personal situation . The album incorporates progressive sounds with influences and elements from new wave , space rock , and electronica . Upon release , 30 Seconds to Mars received mostly positive reviews from music critics , who commended the album 's lyrical content and the band 's musicianship , which has been compared to the works of Pink Floyd , Tool , and Brian Eno .

The album debuted at number 107 on the Billboard 200 and number one on the US Top Heatseekers . It was a slow @-@ burning success that eventually sold two million copies worldwide . It produced two singles , " Capricorn (A Brand New Name) " and " Edge of the Earth " . Thirty Seconds to Mars promoted the album by opening concerts for bands such as Puddle of Mudd , Incubus , Sevendust , and Chevelle .

= = Background and recording = =

By 1998 , Thirty Seconds to Mars was performing gigs at small American venues and clubs . When they first started , lead vocalist Jared Leto did not allow his vocation as a Hollywood actor to be used in promotion of the band . They played their first concerts under different names , before finally settling on the name " Thirty Seconds to Mars " , which was taken from a rare manuscript titled Argus Apocraphex . During this period , the band recorded demo tracks such as " Valhalla " and " Revolution " , or " Jupiter " and " Hero " , which later appeared on the debut album as " Fallen " and " Year Zero " respectively , but also " Buddha for Mary " . Their work led to a number of record labels being interested in signing Thirty Seconds to Mars , which eventually signed to Immortal Records . In 1999 , Virgin Records entered into the contract .

The work of Thirty Seconds to Mars generated the interest of record producer Bob Ezrin , who had previously worked on several groundbreaking projects , including The Wall by Pink Floyd , Love It to Death by Alice Cooper , and Destroyer by Kiss . Thirty Seconds to Mars contacted Ezrin because they felt that he had the ability to help them achieve their own vision and create a distinct sound ; moreover , the band 's members grew up listing to his work with Pink Floyd , Kiss and Alice Cooper . Brian Virtue , who had previously worked with Jane 's Addiction , joined the band and Ezrin in producing the record .

Thirty Seconds to Mars retreated to the isolation of Wyoming 's countryside in 2001 to record the album , tentatively titled Welcome to the Universe . The band and Ezrin chose an empty warehouse lot on 15 @,@ 000 acres , starting an intense period of preproduction focused on fifty songs . The isolation allowed the band to work at a different pace . Jared Leto said that while recording in Wyoming , " there was an interesting dichotomy , a kind of contradiction with the technology and the organic world that we were surrounded [...] It 's something that I think ended up in the music " . Ezrin helped the band to understand the importance of an album 's structure and how to create a progression , rather than a simple series of singles . " We really wanted to create something that had depth , " Leto explained . He described the process of working with Ezrin as tumultuous but also fulfilling , having its own dynamics . He also stated that Virtue was a key element in helping the band define their sound .

The track " Fallen " , originally titled " Jupiter " , was the first to be produced for the album . Thirty Seconds to Mars initially thought to exclude the track from the record since they were not satisfied with it , but then they decided to rework the song because there were people that had strong feelings about it . The track features programming by Danny Lohner and background vocals by

Maynard James Keenan . Several musicians , including Elijah Blue Allman , Renn Hawkey , as well as producers Ezrin and Virtue , contributed on selected tracks .

= = Composition = =

= = = Style and influences = = =

The style of the album combined progressive metal and space rock with influences and elements from new wave and electronica , utilizing programming and synthesizers . According to Jared Leto , the band wanted to create " something that had cohesiveness and kind of an atmospheric musical story to it " . He identified groups that had a sense of identity and atmosphere as being influential on the album 's songwriting . He cited classic stoner rock artists , to which he and his brother Shannon had listened while growing up . Eventually , they gravitated toward more conceptual work like Pink Floyd , David Bowie and The Cure . Thirty Seconds to Mars also drew influences from acts such as Björk , Rush , and Depeche Mode ; according to Shannon Leto , the inspirations derived from " mostly big conceptional bands ; bands that had depth ; bands that were dynamic " .

The sound of 30 Seconds to Mars takes on many musical stylistic shifts . Elizabeth Bromstein from *Now* magazine described it as a concoction of ' 80s electronics , industrial music and nu metal with a heavy dose of progressive rock . Jaan Uhelszki of *Alternative Press* felt that the album is made of " sterner stuff " , with the band 's prog @-@ metal foundation " enhanced by an unexpectedly powerful sense of melody " . Smiley Ben of *BBC Collective* noted in the album alternative rock tendencies . Ryan Rayhill from *Blender* found the album befitting prog @-@ rock prototypes Rush and opined that *Thirty Seconds to Mars* " emerged with an eponymous debut that sounds like *Tool* on *The Dark Side of the Moon* " , referring to the 1973 album by Pink Floyd .

= = = Lyrics and themes = = =

30 Seconds to Mars is a concept album focusing on human struggle and self @-@ determination . It deals with characters who battle with social alienation , emotional isolation , and political malaise . The title itself " *30 Seconds to Mars* " indicates the accelerated human society and suggests a potential escapism from it . The album 's lyrics describe the personal human experience through the use of metaphors and moments of fantasy . Jared Leto regarded it as a " very personal album that sometimes uses otherworldly elements and conceptual ideas to illustrate a truthful personal situation " . He cited the human struggle as the most inspiring source for the band and explained that the record features " a definite desire for change , for renewal , for a new beginning and ultimately , for escape " . Author Karin Lowachee commented that Leto , who wrote most of the lyrics , allows the listener to draw his or her own conclusions to the meanings of the songs . She noted that " this makes the music especially personal , as whatever images you conjure from the sound and words can be interpreted by your own inner language " .

Opening track " *Capricorn (A Brand New Name)* " deals with a desire for renewal . Leto , however , stated that he prefers to let the listener take its own understanding and meaning from the song , claiming that the interpretation , from individual to individual , is one of the most interesting aspects of music . The track " *Fallen* " faces the necessity to escape from the inner world that every person has created for itself . The lyrics of " *Oblivion* " , originally titled " *The Reckoning* " , lead into a frantic threat , in which " *Unity divides / Division will unite* " . Leto described this paradox as a rather common but unfortunate occurrence . A dramatic narration drives " *Buddha for Mary* " , whose story is not about a specific person and represents a metaphor . " *End of the Beginning* " features a foreboding tone and emphasizes the human nature in constant search for something . The album ends with the hidden track " *The Struggle* " , whose lyrics were taken from the ancient Chinese military treatise *The Art of War* , attributed to Sun Tzu .

The track " *Revolution* " , excluded from the final track listing , was considered by some critics as having an anti @-@ American tone . Leto rejected the claim and explained that it can be taken "

many different ways " and if taken literally or politically , it could be misinterpreted . He said that the band " didn 't want a song like that to overshadow what we are about " and especially after the September 11 attacks , they felt it did not fit thematically with the rest of the album , stating that " it took on new dimensions " . The album features elements inspired by the science fiction novel Dune by Frank Herbert , which influenced the album 's songwriting for its themes regarding the interactions of politics , religion , technology , and human emotion .

= = Packaging = =

The photography for the album was handled by drummer Shannon Leto , with additional works provided by Ken Schles . The cover art features a teenage boy and some of the band 's symbolism . It includes a phoenix logo , named " Mithra " by the band , that bears the motto " Provehito in Altum " . Roughly translated from Latin , the phrase means " Launch forth into the deep " . The band chose a phoenix for its association with rebirth and renewal in the Greek mythology . The group expressed interest in signs and symbols and their relationships with cultures and subcultures . The album 's cover art was unveiled through the band 's official website on July 29 , 2002 . However , it was not conceived to be the original concept for the artwork . The initial cover art was discontinued and destroyed during production following the September 11 attacks due to the graphic content of the image . It featured a fighter pilot ejecting from an exploding plane . Thirty Seconds to Mars explained that they never saw it as a violent image , but felt that it was inappropriate in the wake of the events .

= = Release and promotion = =

30 Seconds to Mars was released on August 27 , 2002 on Immortal Records in the United States and September 30 on EMI in the United Kingdom . It was originally expected to be released in early 2002 . However , the band was behind schedule and the cover design needed a reshoot . The album 's compact disc featured enhanced material developed by Little Lion Studios , including a promotional video titled " Capricorn " directed by Lawton Outlaw and a behind the scenes footage edited by Ari Sandel . The Japanese edition of the album included the bonus track " Anarchy in Tokyo " . " Capricorn (A Brand New Name) " was the first single taken from 30 Seconds to Mars . It was issued a month before the album 's release on July 23 , 2002 . It had an accompanying music video directed by Paul Fedor . The British released of the single was pressed with the B @-@ side " Phase 1 : Fortification " . " Edge of the Earth " was released as the album 's second single on March 3 , 2003 , with a music video directed by Kevin McCullough .

After five years since its original release , 30 Seconds to Mars was made available in Australia on April 7 , 2007 on Virgin Records . EMI re @-@ issued a limited edition of the album in Japan on December 2 , 2009 . To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the album , Thirty Seconds to Mars hosted an event called MarsX on August 27 , 2012 . It was broadcast worldwide through the online platform VyRT and included live playback and commentary of the record with the band , interactive discussion focused on the formation of Thirty Seconds to Mars , and exclusive acoustic performances . The album was also re @-@ issued as a limited edition picture disc double @-@ vinyl LP .

= = = Touring = = =

The band promoted the album through a number of tours in North America . Even before its release , Puddle of Mudd invited Thirty Seconds to Mars to open a six @-@ week tour for them in the spring of 2002 . On January 30 , Thirty Seconds to Mars began a promotional tour in North America . The band played its first European concert on June 24 , 2002 , at The Barfly in London , England . In July 2002 , they began a club tour and also embarked on a North American tour supporting Incubus . In early October , they were invited by MTV to join the Campus Invasion Tour , playing ten dates in Canada alongside I Mother Earth , Billy Talent , and Pepper Sands . The band was also scheduled

to open a spring tour for Adema but was forced to withdraw due to scheduling conflicts .

After playing a series of shows supporting Our Lady Peace , Thirty Seconds to Mars opened an autumn tour for Sevendust . The band 's first appearance on television was on Last Call with Carson Daly on November 18 , which aired on November 27 , 2002 . It was the last performance with guitarist Solon Bixler , which left the band due to issues primarily related to touring . The band later performed on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and The Late Late Show with Craig Kilborn , which marked the first live performance with guitarist Tomo Milčević . In 2003 , the band went on tour with Chevelle , Trust Company , and Shihad , and played thirteen shows for Lollapalooza .

= = Critical reception = =

30 Seconds to Mars earned mostly positive reviews upon release . However , at Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received an average score of 60 , based on 5 reviews . Jason Pettigrew from Alternative Press regarded it as " an ambitious , immense @-@ sounding work that 's at once rich in melody " and " lyrically jarring " . Ryan Rayhill from Blender noticed " throbbing synths " and " exploding guitars " , and called the album a " high @-@ minded space opera of epic scope " narrating " tales of living in deep , black oblivion " . Smiley Ben of BBC Collective described the overall sound as " certainly compelling " , and praised the sonic variety , writing that the band " knowingly push [es] boundaries " producing " great music with an edge " . AllMusic reviewer Jon O 'Brien called the record a " highly ambitious space @-@ themed concept album " , and commended its " heavy , riff @-@ laden " guitars , " soaring " vocals and sci @-@ fi lyrics .

Johan Wippsson from Melodic claimed that the band has " something new to add to the world " with their space @-@ influenced modern rock . Jeremy Gladstone of Kludge commented that the album reaches its peak with " Buddha for Mary " , which he called a " virtual sonic achievement " , but felt that the quality of the songs drops off at the halfway point , describing the entire project as " top @-@ heavy " . Canadian critic Karin Lowachee found the group 's sound and vision reminiscent of their " concept @-@ styled forbears " but " uniquely owned " for a contemporary audience , and wrote that the band " defies the trend by stepping out ahead of it and into the future " , giving the listener something original to enjoy . Amber Authier from Exclaim ! echoed this sentiment , stating that the band stretched musical borders and represented something that is " a little different " , offering a " solid sound " .

Mitch Joel from Blistering commended the band 's musical diversity , noting that they are " worth more than most of their peers on a song @-@ by @-@ song magnitude . " Elizabeth Bromstein of Now magazine found the track @-@ to @-@ track variation limited , although she appreciated the range of styles . Peter Relic of Rolling Stone gave a mixed response , stating that the album has its finer moments but felt that it is undone by Jared Leto 's " baffling , pretentious poetry " and the " sanitized quality of the heavy guitars . Q magazine described it as having " a polished sheen " , but opined that the " earnest , sci @-@ fi @-@ tinged lyrics gets monotonous " over the course of the album . In contrast , Jason D. Taylor from AllMusic commented that the " space @-@ age themes compliment the group 's advanced musical achievements wonderfully " . Megan O 'Toole of The Gazette felt that every track on the album is a " unique masterpiece that simultaneously operates on a number of different musical and spiritual levels " , writing that its music has the potential to " affect and infect the deepest recesses " of the soul .

= = Impact = =

Jason D. Taylor of AllMusic considered the release of 30 Seconds to Mars a " daring new step in musical evolution " and noted that its impact left " vast corridors of sound open for the listener to meander down at will " . He commented that Thirty Seconds to Mars managed to record an album that " breathes life " into the " empty shell that corporate rock has become " , and felt that in " reanimating an avenue of musical expression that has for many years been on its deathbed " , the band possibly offered the best rock experience of 2002 . Kludge listed 30 Seconds to Mars as one

of the best 100 albums of 2002 . Melodic included it on their list of top 50 albums of the year and regarded it as " one of the most unique album when it comes to an own style " . Music critic Megan O 'Toole felt Thirty Seconds to Mars managed to " carve out a unique niche for themselves in the rock realm " .

A writer of MuchMusic called the album a " work that is built to last " , noting that the band produced " something unique " with " depth and substance " . Artistdirect agreed and explained that 30 Seconds to Mars established the group as " fresh , new force " , revealing a " multi @-@ faceted outfit that thrived on creative exploration and escape " . Jon O 'Brien , writing for AllMusic , labelled the album one of the " more convincing actor @-@ turned @-@ rock star " efforts . In a retrospective review in 2012 , Ian Winwood from Kerrang ! deemed the record an " epic starting point " for the music that followed , and stated that it displayed Jared Leto 's " vast , cinematic writing style " . He considered its music " undoubtedly the most aggressive they 've created " and regarded lead single " Capricorn (A Brand New Name) " as the band 's " most muscular moment " .

= = Commercial performance = =

In the United States , 30 Seconds to Mars entered the Billboard 200 at number 107 on the issue dated September 14 , 2002 . It also debuted at number one on the Top Heatseekers . After nine weeks , it fell to number 40 , with sales of over 40 @,@ 000 units . As of August 2006 , Nielsen SoundScan estimates actual sales of the album at over 120 @,@ 000 in the United States . Its lead single , " Capricorn (A Brand New Name) " , entered the Mainstream Rock Tracks chart at number 40 and eventually reached a peak of number 31 . In the United Kingdom , 30 Seconds to Mars debuted at number 136 on the UK Albums Chart . It was certified silver by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) in July 2013 , denoting shipments of over 60 @,@ 000 units .

In France , 30 Seconds to Mars debuted at number 142 on the national albums chart on October 5 , 2002 . After its release to the Australian market , the album entered the ARIA Charts at number 95 on the issue dated June 11 , 2007 . It peaked at number 89 the following week . In Greece , it entered the national albums chart in June 2011 , in view of a band 's concert held in Athens in July , reaching a peak of number 41 . 30 Seconds to Mars was a slow @-@ burning success , and eventually sold two million copies worldwide as of March 2011 .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Jared Leto , except where noted .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits adapted from 30 Seconds to Mars album liner notes .

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = Release history = =