

= Nimrod (album) =

Nimrod (stylized as nimrod .) is the fifth studio album by the American punk rock band Green Day , released on October 14 , 1997 through Reprise Records . The group began work on the album in the wake of their cancellation of a European tour after the release of Insomniac (1995) . Recorded at Conway Studios in Los Angeles , the album was written with the intent of creating a set of stand @-@ alone songs as opposed to a cohesive album .

The album peaked at number ten on the Billboard U.S. charts and was certified double platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) . The record was also certified triple platinum in Australia and double platinum in Canada . Upon release , Nimrod received generally positive reviews from critics , who praised Armstrong 's songwriting . The album yielded the acoustic hit " Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " , which appeared in numerous pop culture events , including the series finale of the sitcom Seinfeld in 1998 . To promote the album , Green Day embarked on an extensive touring schedule .

Retrospectively , Nimrod is noted for its musical diversity and experimentation . It contains elements of folk , surf rock , and ska ; the lyrical themes discussed on the record include maturity , personal reflection , and fatherhood .

= = Background = =

In 1995 , Green Day released Insomniac , which did not perform as well commercially , as the band 's breakthrough major @-@ label debut Dookie (1994) . Speaking of Insomniac , vocalist / guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong noted , " It did a lot better than I thought it was going to do ... From the sound of it , we knew it wasn 't going to sell as much as Dookie . " The group embarked on an extensive world tour to promote Insomniac in early 1996 , which saw the band performing in sports arenas that contrasted with the small clubs the group was accustomed to playing . The members became increasingly uncomfortable with the level of stardom they had attained ; Armstrong recalled , " We were becoming the things we hated , playing those big arenas . It was beginning to be not fun anymore . "

Green Day also became homesick as touring forced the members to leave behind their families . The band eventually decided to cancel the late 1996 European leg of the Insomniac tour to take time off to spend at home . During this time , the band continued to write , and eventually completed over three dozen new songs by the beginning of 1997 . Although the group 's last effort with producer Rob Cavallo was considered a disappointment , the band did not contemplate choosing anyone else to work with on Nimrod , as the members viewed Cavallo as a " mentor " .

= = Recording and production = =

The album was recorded at Conway Studios in Los Angeles , and the band stayed at the Sunset Marquis Hotel during the sessions . Nimrod took four months to record and , Armstrong partially attributed the lengthy recording time to spending " a little too much time " playing pool and foosball during the sessions . The recording schedule , which lasted from noon to two in the morning every day , became frustrating for the group members , who began drinking heavily . Bassist Mike Dirnt recalled , " One night one of us was walking down the halls knocking on people 's doors while naked . " Another incident involved drummer Tre Cool throwing his hotel room television set out of his window . Armstrong noted , " There was a lot of glass . You have to live that arrogant lifestyle every now and then . " To keep the band focused , Cavallo enlisted his father and manager Pat Magnarella to supervise the group .

While working on Nimrod , Green Day explained to Cavallo their desire to create a more experimental album as the band had grown tired of its traditional three chord song structure . Armstrong drew inspiration from The Clash 's landmark record London Calling , and referred to Nimrod as " the record I 've wanted to make since the band started . " The album was intended to break the constraints of typical punk rock music . To preserve the quality of his songwriting ,

Armstrong began writing each song on acoustic guitar , to which the rest of the band would later add heavier instrumentation and faster tempos . Green Day recorded around 30 songs for Nimrod and picked 18 of them for the record . Dirnt explained that the recording was much more loosely structured than previous albums , and that creating songs was the focus as opposed to making a cohesive record . He observed , " We 've always screwed around with different types of music during our jams , but we 'd say , ' OK let 's stop and get back to the album . ' This time we just let them come up . "

Reprise Records president Howie Klein spent a lot of time in the studio with the band during recording , and recalled that , " What I realized immediately is that they had seemed to mature in their musical direction . It wasn 't just more of the same . There was so much growth in the band . " The musical maturation displayed on Nimrod was partially inspired by Bikini Kill 's *Reject All American* (1996) , which encouraged Armstrong to balance " rough punk rock songs " and " delicate pretty songs " . Armstrong wrote " Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " in 1990 and did not show the song to his bandmates until the Dookie recording sessions in 1993 . During the sessions , the song was determined to be too different from the rest of the songs on Dookie , and producer Rob Cavallo was unsure of how to structure the recording . When the time came to record Nimrod , Armstrong decided to use the song , and Cavallo suggested they add strings to the track . He sent the band to play foosball in another room while he recorded the strings , which took " like fifteen , twenty minutes , maybe a half an hour at the most . " Cavallo reflected on his decision to add the strings " I knew we had done the right thing . I knew it was a hit the second I heard it . "

In addition to the strings on " Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " , the music of Nimrod contains a variety of other instruments that were not featured on previous Green Day albums . " Walking Alone " features Armstrong playing the harmonica , despite the fact that he did not " know how to play it at all " . " Hitchin ' a Ride " opens with a Middle Eastern @-@ inspired violin performed by Petra Haden of That Dog . The band invited Gabriel McNair and Stephen Bradley of No Doubt 's horn section to play on the ska @-@ influenced " King for a Day " .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Nimrod is more musically varied than previous Green Day albums . Armstrong noted that with the album , Green Day went down " different avenues , " adding : " Each song has its own character and identity so we wanted to be able to bring that out as much as possible . " " Nice Guys Finish Last " has been considered a song that " eases the transition " from *Insomniac* to Nimrod . Sandy Masuo of the Los Angeles Times likened " Worry Rock " to the music of Elvis Costello . " Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " has been referred to as a " pop @-@ punk campfire singalong ballad " . After opening with Haden 's violin solo , " Hitchin ' a Ride " evolves into a bass @-@ driven rock song with a " Stray Cats vibe " . Cool referred to " Take Back " (which features a more upfront hardcore @-@ style , both musically and vocally) and " Platypus (I Hate You) " as " some of the most punk songs we 've ever done " . " Last Ride In " is a surf rock @-@ influenced instrumental , and " King for a Day " is a ska punk song featuring a horn section . Armstrong compared the song to the Oi ! genre , and noted " It would be funny for a bunch of macho fraternity guys to be singing along and , little do they know , the song 's about being in drag . " The " chiming " guitar riffs of " Redundant " have been compared to those of The Byrds .

Lyrically , Nimrod touches upon more reflective themes not present on earlier Green Day albums . Much of the album illustrates Armstrong 's sentiments on growing up and his role as a husband and father . " The Grouch " centers on Armstrong 's fears of " wasting away , getting fat , becoming impotent , and losing his ideals . " On " Walking Alone " , he reflects on old friends from his childhood , and notes that he is " too drunk to figure out they 're fading away . " Armstrong discusses the struggle to stay sober on " Hitchin ' a Ride " . " Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " was inspired by Armstrong 's failed relationship with a woman that ended when she joined the Peace Corps in 1990 . The same woman is also the subject of " She " from Dookie , " Whatsername " from *American Idiot* (2004) and " Amanda " from *¡ Tré !* .

However , other songs contain subject matter and themes more typical of Green Day 's previous

work . Armstrong wrote " Nice Guys Finish Last " about the band 's interactions with the band 's lawyers and managers and how " everybody thinks they know what 's best for you . " " Jinx " contains self @-@ deprecating lyrics characteristic of many of the band 's songs , while " Prosthetic Head " has been referred to as a " typical ticked @-@ off kiss @-@ off " . " King for a Day " tells the story of a cross @-@ dresser . " Uptight " contains repeated mentions of suicide ; Armstrong explained , " I think the word ' suicide ' just sounded really good . And the line , ' I 'm a son of a gun ' . It made sense , but I can 't really explain why it made sense . It just sort of does . "

= = Critical reception = =

The album received generally positive reviews from critics . Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic gave Nimrod three and a half stars out of five , calling it an " invigorating , if occasionally frustrating listen " , and although he praised Armstrong 's " gift for hooky , instantly memorable melodies " , he noted that " the 18 tracks whip by at such a breakneck speed that it leaves you somewhat dazed . " Greg Kot of Rolling Stone enjoyed the album 's melodic nature as well as the " measure of sincerity " present in Armstrong 's vocals . Kot appreciated the return of the band 's " juvenile sense of humor " that he felt was lacking on *Insomniac* , and praised the musical diversity on the record , remarking , " This music is a long way from Green Day 's apprenticeship at the Gilman Street punk clubs , in Berkeley , Calif . But now that the band has seen the world , it 's only fitting that Green Day should finally make an album that sounds as if it has . "

A group of editors writing for *People* also praised the record 's " fresh and original " melodies and " quick @-@ tempoed cool " , adding , " Kudos to Green Day , young punk 's reigning purists , for sticking with what they know best . " Sandy Masuo of the *Los Angeles Times* enjoyed the " mature songwriting that really makes this album tick " , noting that " Naturally , a couple of thrash ' n ' bash hard @-@ core paeans are included , but they 're surrounded by songs that are surprisingly varied in character and grounded in a pop aesthetic that evokes a gaggle of great tunesmiths . " Stephen Thompson of *The A.V. Club* wrote , " If Green Day still has a loyal following , its fans are bound to find something to like on *Nimrod* ; for all the attempts at diversity , the record is packed with mile @-@ wide hooks and sing @-@ along anthems . "

= = Chart performance = =

Nimrod debuted at number ten on the *Billboard* 200 , selling 81 @,@ 000 copies in its first week of release , and remained on the chart for 70 weeks . On March 16 , 2000 , *Nimrod* was certified double platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) for shipments of over two million copies . In Canada , the album peaked at number four , remaining on the chart for four weeks . On July 6 , 1998 , the record was certified double platinum by the Canadian Recording Industry Association for shipments of over 200 @,@ 000 copies . In Australia , the album debuted at number twelve and later peaked at number three on the country 's chart . The record was later certified triple platinum in Australia .

= = Promotion = =

The *Nimrod* promotional tour began in the fall of 1997 , and began with an in @-@ store record signing at a Tower Records in Manhattan . The band was upset upon reading reviews that suggested the band had lost its punk edge , and started a riot during its scheduled eight @-@ song set at the store . Armstrong then wrote the words " fuck " and " nimrod " in black spray paint on the storefront windows , and proceeded to moon the audience of 1 @,@ 400 people . After the riot settled down , Cool threw his bass drum into the crowd while Armstrong attempted the same with a 200 @-@ pound monitor , which was wrestled away from him by a store manager . No charges were filed and no injuries were reported , but the store was closed for the day to repair damages caused .

On the tour in promotion of the album , Green Day aimed for simplicity and decided not to bring new

instrumentalists to play for the new songs . Armstrong commented , " Right now we 're refraining from pulling out a lot of that ' Nimrod ' stuff . We want to make things small . We don 't want to bring a horn section or a violin player out with us . A lot of people want to hear the old stuff , and that stuff is still just as significant to us . " The Nimrod tour marked the first time the band performed its now @-@ routine ritual of inviting audience members onstage to play instruments . During the tour , Armstrong felt that he became a better performer , noting , " I think some people walk away from a Green Day concert with the emotions you would get from some kind of theater performance where the crowd feels involved ? where it 's not just about the singer . It 's not just about the band . "

While performing at the 1998 KROQ Weenie Roast in Irvine , California , Third Eye Blind bassist Arion Salazar ran onstage and " bear @-@ hugged " Dirnt , who was caught off @-@ guard . The incident escalated into an on @-@ stage scuffle before Salazar was taken away by security . After the performance , Dirnt confronted Salazar backstage , and as the two were arguing , a beer bottle struck Dirnt in the head , causing a small fracture in his skull . Eyewitnesses later attributed the bottle throwing to a fan of Third Eye Blind . Salazar and the band 's management soon released a statement : " I am sorry that my attempt at doing something I thought would be funny escalated into Mike getting hurt . That was never my intention . I simply had too much to drink and made a very bad decision . If I had been in Mike 's place , I am sure I would have acted similarly . My heart goes out to him and I hope he recovers quickly . "

" Good Riddance (Time of Your Life) " appeared in numerous events of popular culture , including a scene involving the death of a cancer patient on the medical drama ER and the series finale of the sitcom Seinfeld in 1998 .

= = Track listing = =

All lyrics written by Billie Joe Armstrong , all music composed by Green Day .

= = Personnel = =

Adapted from Nimrod liner notes .

= = Charts and certifications = =