

= Vs . (Pearl Jam album) =

Vs. is the second studio album by the American rock band Pearl Jam , released on October 19 , 1993 through Epic Records . After a relentless touring schedule in support of their 1991 debut album Ten , Pearl Jam headed into the studio in early 1993 facing the challenge of following up the commercial success of its debut . The resulting album , Vs . , featured a rawer and more aggressive sound compared with the band 's previous release . It was the band 's first collaboration with producer Brendan O'Brien .

Pearl Jam decided to scale back its commercial efforts for Vs . , including declining to produce music videos for any of the album 's singles . Upon its release , Vs. set the record for most copies of an album sold in its first week , a record it held for five years . Vs. occupied the number one spot on the Billboard 200 chart for five weeks , the longest duration for a Pearl Jam album . The album has been certified seven times platinum by the RIAA in the United States .

= = Recording = =

For its second album , Pearl Jam felt the pressures of trying to match the success of its debut album , Ten . In a 2002 interview , guitarist Mike McCready said , " The band was blown up pretty big and everything was pretty crazy . " Vs. was the first Pearl Jam album to have production duties handled by producer Brendan O'Brien . It was also the band 's first album with drummer Dave Abbruzzese , who had joined the band in August 1991 and toured for the album Ten . Rehearsals for Vs. began in February 1993 at Potatohead Studio in Seattle , Washington . The band then moved to The Site in Nicasio , California in March 1993 to begin recording . Abbruzzese called the tranquil recording site " paradise " while lead vocalist Eddie Vedder said , " I fucking hate it here ... I've had a hard time ... How do you make a rock record here ? "

The band took the approach of recording one song at a time , and agreed with O'Brien to mix the songs as each one was finished . O'Brien had the band members set up much as they do live , and most of the songs were developed out of jam sessions . Guitarist Stone Gossard said , " I think we allowed things to develop in a more natural , band @-@ oriented sort of way , rather than me bringing in a bunch of stuff that was already arranged . " Gossard added that most of the songs were arranged once Vedder joined in and started singing , elaborating , " You could tell when the music wanted to change just by the way he was singing . " In a 2009 interview , Gossard stated , " [Vs .] was probably where it felt better recording wise . I saw how it could change and evolve which gave me a lot of inspiration to go we can do ballads , we can do fast stuff , we can do slow stuff , we can do punk stuff . That was where I realized there were gonna be a lot of places to go with Ed . "

The first week of recording produced " Go " , " Blood " , " Rats " , and " Leash " before the band hit a lull . In order to keep up his intensity , Vedder traveled into San Francisco and began sleeping in his truck , as well as the sauna at the recording studio . Bassist Jeff Ament said , " Recording Vs . , there was a lot more pressure on Ed . The whole follow @-@ up . I thought we were playing so well as a band that it would take care of itself ... He was having a hard time finishing up the songs ; the pressure , and not being comfortable being in such a nice place . " Ament added that " toward the end it got fairly intense " and that the band " tried to make it as uncomfortable for [Vedder] as we could . " Eventually the band was able to get " back on track " according to Ament as Vedder was allowed " to get in the space of his songs . " The album was finished in May 1993 . Vedder later said , " The second record , that was the one I enjoyed making the least ... I just didn 't feel comfortable in the place we were at because it was very comfortable . I didn 't like that at all . "

= = Music and lyrics = =

The album featured a much looser and rawer sound compared to the band 's debut album , Ten . Ament said , " When we made Vs . , our second record , I remember thinking , ' Man , I wish our first record sounded like this . ' I thought it was more direct , more powerful . " Besides the heavier songs , the album features two acoustic ballads in " Daughter " and " Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in

a Small Town " . A few of the songs incorporate elements of funk , including " Animal " , " Blood " , and " Rats " . McCready stated that it wasn ' t that the band " sat down and decided to be funky , " but rather it came from the band " exploring different directions and combining our influences . " Paul Evans of Rolling Stone said " ' Animal ' , ' Daughter ' and ' Blood ' ... are songs of a kind of ritual passion , tapping into something truly wild . " In a 2002 interview , Gossard said , " We got our heavyosity out on that record . "

The songs on the album tackle personal as well as social and political concerns . Vedder said that " you write what comes to you ... You try to reflect the mood of the songs . " Topics on the album include child abuse (" Daughter ") , gun culture (" Glorified G ") , police racism (" W.M.A. ") , and the media (" Blood ") . " Daughter " , " Dissident " , and " Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town " are three storytelling songs . " Daughter " tells the story of a child who is abused by her parents because they do not understand her learning disability ; " Dissident " tells the story of a woman who takes in a political fugitive ; and " Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town " tells the story of an old lady who has been stuck in a small town her whole life .

" Glorified G " , a song mocking gun enthusiasts , was inspired by an incident that involved Abbruzzese telling the band he had just bought two guns which sparked a conversation about guns within the band . " W.M.A. " was inspired by an incident that happened outside Pearl Jam ' s rehearsal studio in which Vedder got into an altercation with a group of police officers who hassled a black friend of his but ignored him . Vedder said that " Rearviewmirror " is about being " in a car , leaving ... a bad situation . " Vedder stated that " Rats " is about the idea that " rats are probably a hell of a lot more admirable " than humans . " Leash " was written about the same girl that the Ten song " Why Go " is about . Regarding " Indifference " , Vedder said it is about " [trying to] do something to make some other peoples ' lives better than they are , even if it means going through hell . Three Faces of Me . "

= = Release and reception = =

Vs. debuted at the top of the Billboard 200 album chart and stayed there for five weeks . Vs. sold 950 @ , @ 378 copies in its first five days of release , which set a record for the most copies of an album sold in its first week of release and outperformed all other entries in the Billboard top ten that week combined . Vs. held this record for five years before it was broken by Garth Brooks ' 1998 album , Double Live . While Double Live officially beat Vs. in first week sales , Vs. still holds an unbreakable record in that Soundscan only counted the first five days of an album ' s release in its first week sales until 1998 . Vs. has been certified seven times platinum by the RIAA , and , as of July 2013 , has sold 6 @ , @ 010 @ , @ 000 copies in the United States according to Nielsen SoundScan .

Rolling Stone staff writer Paul Evans gave Vs. a favorable review , saying , " Few American bands have arrived more clearly talented than this one did with Ten ; and Vs. tops even that debut . " He added , " Like Jim Morrison and Pete Townshend , Vedder makes a forte of his psychological @ - @ mythic explorations ... As guitarists Stone Gossard and Mike McCready paint dense and slashing backdrops , he invites us into a drama of experiment and strife . " Jon Pareles of The New York Times stated that " Pearl Jam uses its new album ... to broaden its music , " and added that " most of the album ... projects individual misery as public catharsis . " AllMusic staff writer Steve Huey gave the album four out of five stars , saying " Vs. may not reach the majestic heights of Ten , but at least half the record stands with Pearl Jam ' s best work . "

David Browne of Entertainment Weekly gave the album a B ? . He said , " Vs. is not a carbon copy of Ten ; for that alone , [Pearl Jam] get points . " However , he countered by saying that " Vs. confirms once and for all that there ' s nothing underground or alternative about [Pearl Jam] . " Critic Robert Christgau gave the album a " dud " rating .

Pearl Jam made a conscious decision beginning with the release of Vs. to scale back its commercial efforts . " We pulled back after the second record pretty hard , " Ament stated . " A lot of it had to do with being in the eye of the storm and not being able to think straight . " The band declined to produce music videos after the very successful " Jeremy " , and opted to give fewer

interviews as well as make fewer television appearances . " Ten years from now , " Ament said , " I don 't want people to remember our songs as videos . "

Vs. included the hit singles " Go " , " Daughter " , " Animal " , and " Dissident " . All four singles placed on the Mainstream Rock and Modern Rock charts . " Daughter " was the most successful song from Vs. on the rock charts , reaching the number one spot on both the Mainstream Rock and Modern Rock charts , spending a total of eight weeks at number one on the former . Album tracks " Glorified G " and " Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town " also charted . At the 1995 Grammy Awards , " Daughter " received a nomination for Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal and " Go " received a nomination for Best Hard Rock Performance . Vs. received a nomination for Best Rock Album .

In 2011 , Pearl Jam released a remastered Vs . , along with Vitalogy , in three formats : an Expanded Version , a three @-@ CD Deluxe Edition and a Limited Edition Collector 's Boxed Set . The Expanded Version features three bonus tracks recorded by Brendan O 'Brien at The Site studio during the Vs. sessions : a previously unreleased acoustic version of " Hold On " , " Cready Stomp " - a previously unreleased studio outtake , and the band 's cover of Victoria Williams ' " Crazy Mary " featuring Williams on backing vocals and guitar , which had previously been issued on the 1993 tribute album , Sweet Relief : A Benefit for Victoria Williams . The three @-@ CD Deluxe Edition features both the Legacy Versions of Vs. and Vitalogy with their bonus tracks and a copy of Live at the Orpheum Theater , Boston , April 12 , 1994 .

= = Packaging = =

The album 's cover art , photographed by Ament , features a black @-@ and @-@ white picture of a sheep from a farm in Hamilton , Montana . According to Ament , the cover was a representation of how the band felt at the time , with Ament stating " we were slaves . " The album booklet contains additional drawings and writings by Vedder , including one page apparently doodled at a business meeting that says " I will never trust anybody again . " The lyric page for " W.M.A. " features a portion of a news story concerning Malice Green , allegedly a victim of police brutality .

Originally , the album was titled Five Against One (The song " Animal " features the lyric " One , two , three , four , five against one ... ") . Concerning the original album title , Gossard said , " For me , that title represented a lot of struggles that you go through trying to make a record ... Your own independence ? your own soul ? versus everybody else 's . " The album title was changed at the last minute , first to a self @-@ titled album and then to Vs . , a nod to the general theme of conflict present in most of the songs on the album . Regarding the title Vs . , Vedder said , " They were writing all these articles ... Our band against somebody else 's band . What the hell are they talking about ? You know , don 't try to separate the powers that be . We 're all in this together . "

The decision to change the album 's name at the last minute resulted in a few different versions of the album . There are also different versions of the album that are unrelated to the title . Regarding the different versions of the album , some of the first pressings of the cassette still contained Five Against One printed on the cassette itself , the first couple of pressings of the cassette do not contain the title printed on the artwork at all , and the lyrics to " Indifference " are included in the cassette version . The first couple of pressings of the CD do not contain the title printed on the artwork at all , and the initial versions of the CD came in an Ecopak , which was a variation on the traditional CD sized Digipak . While not rare , they went out of print quickly and are now hard to find . The song titles are not printed on the back cover of this version , but the artwork remains the same . The vinyl version has never had the title printed on it , and the cover art on the vinyl copies is different from the CD and cassette . For all versions , the picture of the " elderly woman " changed at some point after the first pressings . Allegedly , the original woman never gave permission for her picture to be used , so Pearl Jam changed the picture to another woman . The difference is easy to spot , as " the new and improved woman behind the counter " is printed below the picture .

= = Tour = =

Pearl Jam promoted the album with tours in the United States in the fall of 1993 and the spring of 1994 . The fall 1993 tour focused on the Western United States , while the spring 1994 tour focused on the Eastern United States . Industry insiders compared Pearl Jam 's tour to the touring habits of Led Zeppelin , in that the band " ignored the press and took its music directly to the fans . " During this tour the band set a cap on ticket prices in the attempt to thwart scalpers .

Several songs from the band 's third album , Vitalogy , were premiered during this tour . The band 's April 3 , 1994 concert in Atlanta , Georgia at the Fox Theatre was broadcast live on the radio in the United States . A few days later , the body of Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain was found in his home in Seattle due to an apparent suicide , which deeply affected Vedder . At the band 's April 8 , 1994 concert in Fairfax , Virginia at the Patriot Center , Vedder proclaimed , " I don 't think any of us would be in this room tonight if it weren 't for Kurt Cobain . " Vedder later said that " the day that we found out about Kurt ... I was just spinning . I was lost and didn 't know if we should play , or if we should just go home , or if we should attend the services . I still have some regrets about that , even though in the end it was probably better that we played the last two weeks of the tour . I decided I would play those next two weeks and then I 'd never have to play again . "

Pearl Jam was outraged when it discovered after a pair of shows in Chicago , Illinois in March 1994 that ticket vendor Ticketmaster had added a service charge to the tickets . Following the tour , the band brought a lawsuit against Ticketmaster that accused them of being a monopoly whose anticompetitive practices allowed markup prices of more than 30 % . The band 's intention was to get ticket prices lowered for its fans . Pearl Jam 's plans for a 1994 summer tour were cancelled as a result of a Ticketmaster boycott .

On April 16 , 2016 at the Bon Secours Wellness Arena in Greenville , South Carolina , during their 2016 tour , Pearl Jam played the entire album in order as part of their set .

= = Track listing = =

All lyrics written by Eddie Vedder . All music is credited to Pearl Jam , actual music composers listed below .

= = = Reissue bonus material = = =

= = = Vs . Tour bonus live CD = = =

Performed April 12 , 1994 at the Orpheum Theater , Boston , MA . The penultimate show of the Vs. tour , this concert featured some songs from the upcoming follow @-@ up album Vitalogy . The CD omits eight songs from the original performance : " State of Love and Trust " , " Hard to Imagine " , " Go " , " Animal " , " Alone " , " Better Man " , " Yellow Ledbetter " , " I 've Got a Feeling " (The Beatles cover) .

" Oceans "

" Even Flow "

" Sonic Reducer " (Dead Boys cover ; guest performance : Mark Arm)

" Immortality "

" Glorified G "

" Daughter "

" Not for You "

" Rats "

" Blood "

" Release "

" Tremor Christ "

" Once "

" Fuckin ' Up " (Neil Young cover)

" Dirty Frank "

" Rearviewmirror "

" Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town "

= = Outtakes = =

Two songs were rejected from the album that later appeared on the band 's follow @-@ up Vitalogy , " Whipping " and " Better Man " . Both songs made their live debuts at the band 's May 13 , 1993 concert in San Francisco at Slim 's Café where the band premiered most of the newly recorded songs for Vs . " Better Man " was said to have been rejected because Vedder was not comfortable with the song 's accessibility . Another song that was recorded during the album 's sessions is " Hard to Imagine " . " Hard to Imagine " later made its way on to the soundtrack for the 1998 film , Chicago Cab ; however , this version was recorded during the sessions for Vitalogy . The version recorded for Vs. appears on the 2003 rarities compilation , Lost Dogs . According to Gossard , " Hard to Imagine " was cut from Vs. because the band already had enough mellow songs for the album . Pearl Jam 's cover of the Victoria Williams song " Crazy Mary " (to which Williams herself contributed background vocals and guitar) was also recorded during these sessions . " Crazy Mary " appeared on the 1993 tribute album , Sweet Relief : A Benefit for Victoria Williams , and later on the 2011 Vs. reissue , as a bonus track . The Pearl Jam / Cypress Hill collaboration " Real Thing " was also recorded around this time . " Real Thing " appeared on the 1993 Judgment Night soundtrack .

= = Personnel = =