

= Bat Out of Hell =

Bat Out of Hell is the second album and major @-@ label debut by American rock singer Meat Loaf , as well as being his first collaboration with composer Jim Steinman , released in October 1977 on Cleveland International / Epic Records . It is one of the best @-@ selling albums in the history of recorded music , having sold over 30 million copies worldwide . Rolling Stone magazine ranked it at number 343 on its list of the 500 greatest albums of all time in 2003 .

Its musical style is influenced by Steinman 's appreciation of Richard Wagner , Phil Spector , Bruce Springsteen and The Who . Bat Out of Hell has been certified by the Recording Industry Association of America as a platinum album , fourteen times over . As of May 2015 , it has spent 485 weeks in the UK Charts . The album went on to become one of the most influential and iconic albums of all time and its songs have remained classic rock staples .

This album 's title also became the title for two more Meat Loaf albums . Steinman produced the album Bat Out of Hell II : Back into Hell (1993) . Desmond Child produced the album Bat Out of Hell III : The Monster Is Loose (2006) .

= = Pre @-@ production = =

The album developed from a musical , Neverland , a sci @-@ fi update of Peter Pan , which Steinman wrote for a workshop in 1974 , and performed at the Kennedy Center Music Theatre Lab in 1977 . Steinman and Meat Loaf , who were touring with the National Lampoon show , felt that three songs were " exceptional " and Steinman began to develop them as part of a seven @-@ song set they wanted to record as an album . The three songs were " Bat Out of Hell " , " Heaven Can Wait " and " The Formation of the Pack " , which was later retitled " All Revved Up with No Place to Go " .

Bat Out of Hell is often compared to the music of Bruce Springsteen , particularly the album Born to Run . Steinman says that he finds that " puzzling , musically " , although they share influences ; " Springsteen was more an inspiration than an influence . " A BBC article added , " that Max Weinberg and Roy Bittan from Springsteen 's E Street Band played on the album only helped reinforce the comparison . "

Steinman and Meat Loaf had immense difficulty finding a record company willing to sign them . According to Meat Loaf 's autobiography , the band spent most of 1975 writing and recording material , and two and a half years auditioning the record and being rejected . Manager David Sonenberg jokes that they were creating record companies just so they could be rejected . They performed the album live in 1976 , with Steinman on piano , Meat Loaf singing , and sometimes Ellen Foley joining them for " Paradise " . Steinman says that it was a " medley of the most brutal rejections you could imagine . " Meat Loaf " almost cracked " when CBS executive Clive Davis rejected the project . The singer recounts the incident in his autobiography . Not only did Davis , according to Meat Loaf , say that " actors don 't make records " , the executive challenged Steinman 's writing abilities and knowledge of rock music :

Do you know how to write a song ? Do you know anything about writing ? If you 're going to write for records , it goes like this : A , B , C , B , C , C. I don 't know what you 're doing . You 're doing A , D , F , G , B , D , C. You don 't know how to write a song ... Have you ever listened to pop music ? Have you ever heard any rock @-@ and @-@ roll music ... You should go downstairs when you leave here ... and buy some rock @-@ and @-@ roll records .

Meat Loaf asserts " Jim , at the time , knew every record ever made . [He] is a walking rock encyclopedia . " Although Steinman laughed off the insults , the singer screamed " Fuck you , Clive ! " from the street up to his building .

However , Todd Rundgren found the album hilarious , thinking that it was a parody of Springsteen . The singer quotes him as saying : " I 've got to do this album . It 's just so out there . " They told the producer that they had previously been signed to RCA . In one 1989 interview with Classic Rock magazine , Steinman labeled him " the only genuine genius I 've ever worked with . " In a 1989 interview with Redbeard for the In the Studio with Redbeard episode on the making of the album ,

Meat Loaf revealed that Jimmy Iovine and Andy Johns were potential candidates for producing *Bat Out of Hell* before being rejected by Meat and Steinman in favor of Rundgren, who Meat initially found cocky but grew to like.

= = Production = =

Recording started in late 1975 in Bearsville Studios, Woodstock, New York. Roy Bittan and Max Weinberg, the pianist and drummer from Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band played on the album, in addition to members of Rundgren's group Utopia: Kasim Sulton, Roger Powell and John "Willie" Wilcox. Edgar Winter played the saxophone on "All Revved Up". Rundgren himself played guitar, including the "motorcycle solo" on "Bat Out of Hell". Both Steinman and Rundgren were influenced by Phil Spector and his "wall of sound". According to Meat Loaf, Rundgren put all the arrangements together because although "Jim could hear all the instruments" in his head, Steinman hummed rather than orchestrating.

When Rundgren discovered that the deal with RCA did not actually exist, Albert Grossman, who had been Bob Dylan's manager, offered to put it on his Bearsville label but needed more money. Rundgren had essentially paid for the album himself. Mo Ostin at Warner Bros. was impressed, but other senior people rejected them after they performed live. Steinman had offended them a few years earlier by auditioning with a song named "Who Needs the Young", which contains the lyric "Is there anyone left who can fuck? Screw 'em!"

Another E Street Band member, Steve Van Zandt, and Sonenberg arranged to contact Cleveland International Records, a subsidiary of Epic Records. After listening to the spoken word intro to "You Took the Words Right Out of My Mouth" ("Hot Summer Night"), founder Steve Popovich accepted the album for Cleveland.

Rundgren mixed the record in one night. However, the mixes were not suitable to the extent that Meat Loaf did not want "Paradise" on the album. Jimmy Iovine, who had mixed Springsteen's *Born to Run*, remixed some of the tracks. After several attempts by several people, John Jansen mixed the version of "Paradise" that is on the album. According to Meat Loaf, he, Jansen and Steinman mixed the title track.

Phil Rizzuto's baseball play @-@ by @-@ play call for "Paradise by the Dashboard Light" was recorded in 1976 at The Hit Factory in New York City by Rundgren, Meat Loaf and Steinman. As an Italian Catholic, Rizzuto publicly maintained he was unaware that his contribution would be equated with sex in the finished song. However, Meat Loaf asserts that Rizzuto only claimed ignorance to stifle some criticism from a priest and was fully aware of the context of what he was recording.

= = Composition = =

Todd Rundgren acknowledges that Steinman was highly influenced by the "rural suburban teenage angst" of Bruce Springsteen. According to manager David Sonenberg, "Jim would always come up with these great titles and then he would write a song that would try to justify the greatness of the title."

The album opens with its title track, "Bat Out of Hell", taken from Steinman's *Neverland* musical. It is the result of Steinman's desire to write the "most extreme crash song of all time." It features a boy who is riding so fast and ecstatically that he is unable to see an obstruction until it is "way too late". The next track, "You Took the Words Right Out of My Mouth", opens with spoken word, performed by Steinman and Marcia McClain, that was also taken from the *Neverland* musical, as were the next two tracks.

"All Revved Up with No Place to Go" describes the beginning of a relationship and also the taking of the girl's virginity:

You and me 'round about midnight
Someone's got to draw first blood [...]
Oooh I got to draw first blood.

Side two opens with " Two Out of Three Ain 't Bad " , which was written near the end of the album 's production . The song documents the break @-@ up of a relationship where despite the fact that the man wants and needs the woman , he will never love her , however he tries to be positive and supportive in emphasizing that the two emotions of want and need are very positive and " Ain 't Bad " , which gives the song a sarcastic twist . A further twist is that the reason the man will never love the woman is because he already loves another woman , who broke up with him because she already loved another man . Rundgren identifies how the song was influenced by the Eagles , who were successful at the time . The producer also highlights the " underlying humor in the lyrics " , citing the line " There ain 't no Coupe de Ville hiding at the bottom of a Cracker Jack box . " He says you could only " get away " with that lyric " in a Meat Loaf song " .

The sixth track , " Paradise by the Dashboard Light " , is an epic story about teen romance and sex . A duet between Meat Loaf and Ellen Foley , the couple reminisce about driving to a secluded spot , at which he plans to have sex . They " make out " heavily in the middle instrumental section , described in metaphor in a baseball commentary by New York Yankees announcer Phil Rizzuto . However , she stops him just before they have sex , insisting that he first proclaim that he will " love her forever " . He swears to love her until the end of time . The final part of the song displays the couple in an acrimonious relationship , in which they are " praying for the end of time " because " if I got to spend another minute with you I don 't think that I can really survive . " Whereas the title track is the " ultimate car crash song " , this , according to the writer , is the " ultimate car sex song " . It epitomizes the album 's , as Ellen Foley describes , " pre @-@ pubescent sexual mentality " .

The seventh and final track , " For Crying Out Loud " , is a more sedate love song . It recounts the positive changes that a girl has made to the singer 's life , which had " reached the bottom " . The song also incorporates some sexual innuendo with the line " And can 't you see my faded Levi 's bursting apart . "

Comparing the album to Steinman 's late @-@ 1960s musical The Dream Engine , Classic Rock magazine says that Steinman 's imagery is " revved up and testosterone @-@ fueled . Songs like " Paradise by the Dashboard Light " , " Two Out of Three Ain 't Bad " and " For Crying Out Loud " echoed the textbook teenage view of sex and life : irrepressible physical urges and unrealistic romantic longing . "

Steinman 's songs for Bat Out of Hell are personal but not autobiographical :

I never thought of them as personal songs in terms of my own life but they were personality songs . They were all about my obsessions and images . None of them takes place in a normal world . They all take place in extreme world . Very operatic ... they were all heightened . They don 't take place in normal reality .

For example , citing the narrative of " Paradise " , Rundgren jokes that he can 't imagine Steinman being at a lakeside with the most beautiful girl in school , but he can imagine Steinman imagining it .

= = Cover = =

Steinman is credited with the album cover concept , which was illustrated by Richard Corben . The cover depicts a motorcycle , ridden by a long @-@ haired man , bursting out of the ground in a graveyard . In the background , a large bat perches atop a mausoleum that towers above the rest of the tombstones . In 2001 , Q magazine listed the cover as number 71 in its list of " The Hundred Best Record Covers of All Time . "

Steinman had wanted equal billing with Meat Loaf on the album 's title . He wanted it to be called " Jim Steinman presents ... " or " Jim and Meat , " or vice versa . For marketing reasons , the record company wished to make ' Meat Loaf ' the recognizable name . As a compromise , the words " Songs by Jim Steinman " appear relatively prominently on the cover . The singer believes that this was probably the beginning of their " ambivalent relationship . "

= = Title = =

The phrase " Bat Out of Hell " can be traced back to the Greek playwright Aristophanes ' 414 B.C.

work titled *The Birds* . In it is what is believed to be the first reference to a bat out of Hell :

Near by the land of the Sciapodes there is a marsh , from the borders whereof the unwashed Socrates evokes the souls of men . Pisander came one day to see his soul , which he had left there when still alive . He offered a little victim , a camel , slit his throat and , following the example of Odysseus , stepped one pace backwards . Then that bat of a Chaerephon came up from hell to drink the camel 's blood .

Steinman registered " Bat Out of Hell " as a trademark in 1995 , and sought to prevent Meat Loaf from using the title . In 2006 , however , the singer sought to cancel Steinman 's trademark and use the title for *Bat Out of Hell III : The Monster Is Loose* .

In the film *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* , Eddie , the character played by Meat Loaf , is killed and then served as dinner . As the meal is rolled out , audience members now traditionally yell out , " Here comes Meat Loaf like a bat out of hell . " (The phrase " Let me sleep on it " , from " Paradise by the Dashboard Light " , is yelled out at another point .) Originally , the audience yelled out " What ? Meat Loaf again ? " until Meat Loaf 's album became a hit .

= = Reception = =

Bat Out of Hell was released by Cleveland International on October 21 , 1977 . Cleveland International 's parent label was Epic Records , where almost everyone hated it . Steve Popovich , the head of Cleveland International Records , was relentless in his efforts to get Epic and all of CBS Records and radio on board . In 1993 , Steinman reflected that the album is " timeless in that it didn 't fit into any trend . It 's never been a part of what 's going on . You could release that record at any time and it would be out of place . "

Response to the album was slow . Steinman asserts that it was " underpromoted " , having a reputation of being " damaged goods because it had been walked around to so many places . " Due to the enthusiastic response to the music videos from the record Australia and England were the first to develop interest . The BBC television programme *Old Grey Whistle Test* aired a clip of the live band performing the nine @-@ minute title track . According to *Classic Rock* , response was so overwhelming , that they screened it again the following week . They later invited the band to perform " Paradise " live . " As a result , in the UK *Bat* became an unfashionable , uncool , non @-@ radio record that became a ' must @-@ have ' for everyone who heard it , whether they ' got ' Steinman 's unique perspective or not . "

The album was not an immediate hit ; it was more of a growing one . *Bat Out of Hell* still sells about 200 @,@ 000 copies per year and has sold an estimated 43 million copies worldwide , including 14 million in the United States and over 1 @.@ 7 million albums in Australia , where it is the second best @-@ selling album in the country behind John Farnham 's *Whispering Jack* (1 @.@ 73 million copies) and even re @-@ entered the ARIA Charts in June 2007 , at # 34 . It stayed on the United Kingdom charts for 485 weeks , a feat surpassed only by the 522 weeks of Fleetwood Mac 's *Rumours* . In 1989 , *Kerrang !* magazine listed the album at No. 38 among the " 100 Greatest Heavy Metal Albums of All Time " . In 2003 , the album was ranked number 343 on *Rolling Stone* magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time . In 2005 , *Bat Out of Hell* was ranked number 301 in *Rock Hard* magazine 's book of *The 500 Greatest Rock & Metal Albums of All Time* . In 2006 it was voted number nine in a poll conducted by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to discover Australia 's most popular album . In November 2007 , Meat Loaf was awarded the Classic Album award in *Classic Rock* 's *Classic Rock Roll Of Honour* .

Reviews were initially mixed , but have since become much more positive . At first *Rolling Stone* called the songs " swell , but ... entirely mannered and derivative " and noted that the arrangements " aren 't bad " , although the musicians were commended . The review ended with the assertion that the " principals have some growing to do . " Modern reviews are more positive , however . *Allmusic* declares " this is Grand Guignol pop ? epic , gothic , operatic , and silly , and it 's appealing because of all of this . " They acknowledge that Steinman is " a composer without peer , simply because nobody else wanted to make mini @-@ epics like this . " Rundgren 's production is applauded , as is the wit in the music and lyrics . " It may elevate adolescent passion to operatic dimensions , and that

's certainly silly , but it 's hard not to marvel at the skill behind this grandly silly , irresistible album . "

Also , Meat Loaf revealed on In the Studio with Redbeard that he was not well received early on in the tour when he was opening for Cheap Trick . In the same interview , Meat Loaf revealed that when he played at a CBS Records convention in 1978 , record executives and superstar Billy Joel (who was in the audience) gave Meat Loaf a standing ovation for his performance after a haunting rendition of the closing track " For Crying Out Loud " , and credits this as the turning point in the album 's success in the United States .

= = Dispute between Cleveland International and Sony Records = =

In 1995 , Cleveland International sued Sony for unpaid royalties from sales of the album . Under the terms of the 1998 settlement agreement ending the suit , Sony agreed to include the Cleveland International logo on all future releases of the album . In 2002 , Stephen Popovich , founder of Cleveland International and the owner of the rights to its name , sued Sony , alleging that Sony had failed to include the Cleveland International logo on some copies of the album and on some compilations Sony released that included songs from the album . On May 31 , 2005 , the federal district court in Cleveland , Ohio , entered judgment against Sony pursuant to a jury verdict in favor of Popovich and awarded Popovich more than US \$ 5 @ , @ 000 @ , @ 000 in damages for Sony 's breach of the 1998 settlement agreement . On November 21 , 2007 , the federal appellate court in Cincinnati , Ohio , affirmed the judgment of the trial court .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Jim Steinman .

= = = Versions = = =

The album also exists in numerous other formats and rereleases , including a Super Audio CD version , a 25th anniversary edition (2001 ? Epic / Legacy # 62171) with two bonus tracks (" Great Boléros of Fire (live intro) " [3 : 54] and " Bat Out of Hell (live) " [11 : 10] , and a Bat Out of Hell : Revamped release (1993) featuring the bonus song " Dead Ringer for Love " .

= = Sales and certifications = =

= = Personnel = =

Track numbers indicate that a musician only plays the instrument so noted on that specific track .

= = = Arrangements = = =

Kenneth Ascher ? string arrangements (3 , 5)
Steve Margoshes ? orchestra arrangement (7)

= = = Band = = =

Meat Loaf ? lead vocals , backing vocals (6) , percussion (2)
Todd Rundgren ? guitar (1 , 2 , 4 ? 6) , percussion (1 , 2) , keyboards (1) , backing vocals (1 ? 3 , 5 , 6)
Kasim Sulton ? bass guitar (1 , 2 , 4 ? 7) , backing vocals (1)
Roy Bittan ? piano , keyboards (1 , 2 , 6)
Steve Margoshes ? piano (7)
Cheryl Hardwick ? piano (7)

Jim Steinman ? keyboards (1 , 2 , 6) , percussion (1 , 2) , " lascivious effects " (6) , dialogue intro (2)

Roger Powell ? synthesizer (1 , 2 , 5 , 6)

Edgar Winter ? saxophone (2 , 4 , 6)

Max Weinberg ? drums (1 , 2 , 6)

John " Willie " Wilcox ? drums (4 , 5 , 7)

Marcia McClain ? dialogue intro (2)

Phil " Scooter " Rizzuto ? play @-@ by @-@ play (6)

Ellen Foley ? featured vocal (6) , backing vocals (1 , 2 , 4 , 6)

Rory Dodd ? backing vocals (all except 4)

Gene Orloff ? concert master (7)

Members of New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra ? orchestra (7)