

## = Me Against the World =

Me Against the World is the third studio album by American hip hop artist 2Pac . It was released March 14 , 1995 on the Interscope Records label . It was his impending prison sentence , troubles with the police and Shakur being poor , which many believe might have contributed to Shakur 's artistic reemergence on record , as his material is believed by Steve Huey of AllMusic to have become markedly more " confessional " , " reflective " , and " soul @-@ baring " .

Me Against the World , released while Shakur was imprisoned , made an immediate impact on the charts , debuting at number one on the Billboard 200 . This made Shakur the first artist to have an album debut at number one on Billboard 200 while serving time in prison . The album served as one of Shakur 's most positively reviewed albums , with many calling it the magnum opus of his career , and is considered one of the greatest and most influential hip hop albums of all @-@ time . Me Against the World won best rap album at the 1996 Soul Train Music Awards .

## = = Background = =

In 1993 , Tupac Shakur was already a success in the hip hop industry , with two gold @-@ certified singles that reached the top twenty on the pop charts ( " I Get Around " , " Keep Ya Head Up " ) , and a platinum @-@ selling sophomore album that would peak just inside the top twenty @-@ five of the Billboard 200 ( Strictly 4 My N.I.G.G.A.Z. ) . However , the 22 @-@ year @-@ old artist had a series of incidents and charges of breaking the law . In the summer of 1993 , Shakur was charged for assaulting director Allen Hughes while filming Menace II Society ; Shakur was later sentenced to fifteen days in jail . Later , in October 1993 , Shakur was charged with shooting two off @-@ duty police officers in Atlanta , though the charges would eventually be dismissed . In November , Shakur and two members of his entourage were charged with sexually assaulting a female fan , for which , 2Pac was the main person who was found guilty of sexual assault charges , including sodomy , in which he was sentenced to 1 @-@ 5 to 4 @-@ 5 years in Clinton Correctional Facility and Rikers ' Island , a maximum state penitentiary . According to Shakur , the album was made to show the hip hop audience his respect for the art form . Lyrically , Shakur intentionally tried to make the album more personal and reflective than his previous efforts .

## = = Recording and production = =

The musical production on the album was considered by several music critics to be the best on any of Shakur 's albums up to that point in his career . Steve " Flash " Juon at RapReviews gave the production on the album a perfect 10 of 10 rating , particularly praising tracks like " So Many Tears " and " Temptations " . Jon Pareles of the New York Times remarked that the production had a " fatalistic calm , in a commercial mold " . He compared the album 's production and synthesized hooks to that of Dr. Dre 's G @-@ funk style , stating that " while 2Pac doesn 't sing , other voices do , providing smooth melody " . James Bernard at Entertainment Weekly was not quite as enthusiastic about the album 's production , remarking that Shakur 's " vocals are buried deep in the mix . That 's a shame ? if they were more in @-@ your @-@ face , the lackluster beats might be less noticeable . " The album 's recording sessions took place at ten different studios , while it was mastered at Bernie Grundman Mastering . Although the album was originally released on Interscope . Amaru Entertainment , the label owned by Shakur 's mother Afeni Shakur , has since released the album twice .

## = = Lyrical Themes = =

It was like a blues record . It was down @-@ home . It was all my fears , all the things I just couldn 't sleep about . Everybody thought I was living so well and doing so good that I wanted to explain it . And it took a whole album to get it all out . I get to tell my innermost , darkest secrets I tell my own personal problems .

Some of the album's main themes concern the loss of innocence, paranoia, and occasional self-loathing. Much attention is paid to subjects such as the pain of urban survival. Not all of the music deals with such extremely bleak subject matter, however. Some tracks, such as "Old School", lean more to the nostalgic, though somewhat bittersweet side in Shakur's remembrance of his youth and the early days of hip hop music. The album is also well known for the more sensitive tracks "Dear Mama" and "Can U Get Away", which are both directed towards and reveal Shakur's devotion to the women he loves. On "Dear Mama", Shakur pays tribute to and expresses his undying affection for his own mother, continuously reminding her that though his actions might sometimes seem to state otherwise, "you are appreciated". On the track "Can U Get Away", Shakur attempts to impress a woman who has managed to gain his affections, away from the woman's abusive relationship. Four of the most eerie and revered tracks on the album are "If I Die 2Nite", "Lord Knows", "Outlaw" which directly references the shooting that Tupac went through before it happened, and "Fuck The World". Throughout the entirety of the album Shakur employs various poetical deliveries, ranging from alliteration ("If I Die 2Nite"), to the use of paired couplets ("Lord Knows").

= = Singles = =

"Dear Mama" was released as the album's first single in February 1995, along with the track "Old School" as the B-side. "Dear Mama" would be the album's most successful single, topping the Hot Rap Singles chart, and peaking at the ninth spot on the Billboard Hot 100. The single was certified platinum in July 1995, and later placed at number 51 on the year-end charts.

The second single, "So Many Tears", was released in June, four months after the first single. The single would reach the number six spot on the Hot Rap Singles chart, and the 44th on the Billboard Hot 100.

"Temptations", released in August, was the third and final single from the album. The single would be the least successful of the three released, but still did fairly well on the charts, reaching number 68 on the Billboard Hot 100, 35 on the Hot R & B / Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, and 13 on the Hot Rap Singles charts.

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical reception = = =

In a contemporary review, Cheo H. Coker at Rolling Stone called the album Shakur's best and said it was "by and large a work of pain, anger and burning desperation? [it] is the first time 2Pac has taken the conflicting forces tugging at his psyche head-on". Jon Pareles, writing in The New York Times, called Shakur the "St. Augustine of gangster rap" due to his ambivalence towards the behavior and nature of the gangster lifestyle. In a negative review, Robert Christgau of The Village Voice felt that Shakur is "witless" when dealing with fundamental hip hop themes of persecution and accused him of "self-pity": "The subtext of his persecution complex is his self-regard". "This may be the first hip-hop blues LP," observed Matt Hall in Select. "Not so much in the music, although the harp blasts owe more to Howlin' Wolf than Tupac's previous two solo efforts, but more with Shakur's vocals, which are at once rebellious and resigned. . . . Me Against the World is a statement of intent, a note from the depths of America, and a fine, thoughtful LP."

Jaleel Abdul Adil of the Chicago Sun Times stated that "2Pac's latest also mixes toughness and tenderness. Desperation follows raw anger on "Fuck the World" and "It Ain't Easy", but most tracks confess frailties beneath the rapper's tough exterior. "Dear Mama" is a tear-jerking tribute to his mother. "Lord Knows" discloses desperate considerations of suicide, and "So Many Tears" ponders a merciless world that wrecks young lives. 2Pac even includes a

sorrowful " shout @-@ out " to Robert Sandifer , the Chicago teenager whose brief life ended in a brutal shooting . After earlier releases that lacked focus and consistency , 2Pac finally presents a polished project of self @-@ examination and social commentary . It 's ironic that it arrives as his sentence begins . "

= = = Retrospect = = =

In a retrospective review , AllMusic editor Steve Huey dubbed the album " [ Shakur 's ] most thematically consistent , least self @-@ contradicting work " , and stated , " it may not be his definitive album , but it just might be his best " . Steve " Flash " Juon of RapReview seemed to feel differently , remarking that the album " is not only the quintessential Shakur album , but one of the most important rap albums released in the 1990s as a whole " . Rap / Hip @-@ Hop Expert Henry Adaso from rap.about.com named it the 2nd best rap album from 1995 and then stating " Me Against The World was 2Pac at his very best : no excessive thug braggarts , no name @-@ inscribed lyrical missiles aimed at New York rivals . In fact , he stops to pay homage to rap pioneers on " Old School , " irrespective of region . "

On MTV 's Greatest Rappers of All Time list , Me Against the World was listed as one of 2Pac 's " certified classic " albums , along with 2Pacalypse Now , All Eyez On Me and The Don Killuminati : The 7 Day Theory . " One of the best five rap albums ever , " remarked Mojo , after Shakur 's death .

= = = Accolades = = =

In 1996 , at the 38th Grammy Awards , Me Against the World was nominated for Best Rap Album and the single " Dear Mama " was nominated for Best Rap Solo Performance . In 2008 , the National Association of Recording Merchandisers , in conjunction with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame , recognized Me Against the World as one of the " most influential and popular albums " , ranking it number 170 on a list of 200 other albums by artists of various musical genres .

? The information regarding accolades is adapted from Acclaimed Music , except for lists that are sourced otherwise . ? ( \* ) signifies unordered lists

= = = Commercial performance = = =

The album debuted at the number one spot on the Billboard 200 chart and stayed there for 4 weeks straight , it sold 240 @, @ 000 copies in the first week , and became certified double platinum by the end of the year . Likewise , it also debuted at number one on the Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart , thus giving 2Pac the first number one album on both R & B and Pop charts . While Shakur was in prison , the album over @-@ took Bruce Springsteen 's Greatest Hits as the best @-@ selling album in the United States , a feat which he took pride in . Shakur became the first artist to have a number one album while serving a prison sentence . It achieved multi platinum status and has sold 3 @, @ 524 @, @ 567 copies in the United States as of 2011 .

Tupac Shakur 's virtual appearance at the annual Coachella Festival ( April 15 , 2012 ) led to the album selling 1 @, @ 000 copies the following week ( up by 53 % from the previous week ) .

= = Track listing = =

Notes

^ [ a ] signifies a co @-@ producer .

^ [ b ] signifies an additional producer .

Sample credits

" If I Die 2Nite " contains samples of " Tonight Is The Night " performed by Betty Wright , " Tonight " performed by Kleeer and " Deep Cover " performed by Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg .

" Me Against the World " contains samples of " Walk on By " performed by Isaac Hayes and " Inside

My Love " performed by Minnie Riperton .

" So Many Tears " contains samples of " That Girl " performed by Stevie Wonder and " The Dude " performed by Quincy Jones .

" Temptations " contains samples of " Sing a Simple Song " performed by Sly & the Family Stone , " Computer Love " performed by Zapp and " Watch Yo Nuggets " performed by Redman featuring Erick Sermon .

" Young Niggaz " contains samples of " She 's Strange " performed by Cameo .

" Heavy in the Game " contains an interpolation of " Just Be Good to Me " performed by The S.O.S. Band .

" Lord Knows " contains samples of " All I Ask " performed by The Blackbyrds .

" Dear Mama contains samples of " In All My Wildest Dreams " performed by Joe Sample and " Sadie " performed by The Spinners

" Can U Get Away " contains samples of " Happy Feelin 's " performed by Maze featuring Frankie Beverly .

" Old School " contains samples of " We Share " performed by The Soul Searchers and " Dedication " performed by Brand Nubian ; contains interpolations of " Brooklyn 's in the House " performed by Cutmaster D.C. , " Adventures of Super Rhyme ( Rap ) " performed by Jimmy Spicer , " My Adidas " performed by Run @-@ DMC , " Rock The Bells " performed by LL Cool J and " Eric B. Is President " performed by Eric B. & Rakim .

" Death Around the Corner " contains samples of " Winter Sadness " performed by Kool & the Gang , " When We Were Kids " from the movie American Me , " Piece of the Action " from the movie King of New York and " I Want Him Dead " from the movie The Untouchables .

= = Personnel = =

Credits for Me Against the World adapted from AllMusic

= = Charts and Certifications = =

= = = Certifications = = =

= = = Chart positions = = =