

# Prince ♀ Reimagined



*an alternate universe discography of The Purple Yoda*

I was nine or ten the first time I heard a Prince song. Some age where it was something I might have heard out of a car radio or at a friend's house, but not something my parents were listening to. Apart from records and cassettes from the fifties and sixties, and some Disney records for me (raise your hand if you ever Mousercized), the only album from the actual 1980s that we had in our house before I discovered a box of cassettes full of U2 and hair metal at a YMCA Camp, was Michael Jackson's "Thriller".

I'll get to my first exposure to Prince later. And then I'll talk about coming way late in the game to his most famous album, and then how a middle school dance got me into the filthy stuff. But his early stuff? Not until I was in my late thirties.

Maybe because I was born at the tail end of it, I've never liked the sound of AM radio soft rock and R&B. I can enjoy a song or two from that era, but after about three songs, I'm out. It takes effort to listen to Simon & Garfunkel, even though I genuinely love their music.

To me, early Prince is just funk music trying to bust out of AM radio. I like it. It works. But rarely am I in the mood to listen to it. It's in that Before My Time era where nobody I spent a lot of time with was nostalgic for it, and I just prefer 80s and 90s Prince. But that's not to say there isn't a great album to be made from his 70s and very early 80s output.

*Prince*



The first track off of Prince's first album, **For You**, is a perfect Intro To Religious Prince. Like, how did anyone not foresee his religious conversion coming? Sure, the man was Filthy! But, also, so much of his music owes itself to Christian spiritual influence. While this song may just be about Prince's desire to share his music with the world, it sounds like something an acapella choir would perform to let Jesus know that all of their art is for his emaciated, loin cloth wearing ass. It's a sweet, soft, lilting welcome song.

So let's fuck it right up as soon as possible. **Gotta Stop (Messing Around)** gives us a perfect 70s funk riff for Prince to be a judgmental prick about someone's sexuality. And, ok, it's probably himself that he's casting shade on, but it's still a judgey song for someone who's going to spend most of his career singing about fucking. But I love the Devo-like synth happening near the end of the track. And once he says *stop*, it's over.

When I was in my mid-twenties and living in Burlington Vermont, I worked with a Good Christian Girl, whose father owned the company I worked for. She was super proud that she was a virgin, and was going to stay that way until marriage, but she would always talk about the guys she gave head to, and how much she loved to do anal. This amused the hell out of me. I imagine Prince having a similar interaction, and coming up with **Head**, which sounds like a really good early 70s funk song that

happens to be about a bride-to-be who loves going down and being gone down upon. And Prince claims to be just the man to lick her away from her impending groom.

Do you like spacey adolescent Bowie, but wish his music was more about fucking? **Sister** is Prince's fucked up, incest ideation. I had really hoped, when I heard this the first time, that Prince was an only child. But he has four sisters. I bet this song creeps them the hell out.

Let's move away from filthy lyrics to a filthy guitar riff. Something more Van Halen than Bootsy Collins. The whole homophobic *it's better to be with a man* delivered to a woman hasn't aged well. And the last verse and couplet of **Bambi** are gross in a much different way than "Sister". I just imagine both of these songs are persona work from the perspective of someone Prince never liked.

Now we're slowing back down to the AM radio bullshit. **When We're Dancing Close And Slow** is so 70s croony that it irritates me. My enjoyment of this song is all spite. The breathy vocals, the "I love you in a non-threatening way baby" vibe, though, makes me laugh, as he sings about how he wants to share his feelings with the woman he's whispering to. Oh, and he wants to come inside her. Can't you feel his love touching you? The moral of the song is: Don't dance with Prince if you don't want him poking you with his dick and leaking precum on you. So, maybe don't dance with Prince at

all.

I only knew **I Feel For You** as a Chaka Khan song until the late 90s. I had no idea it was written by Prince, or that he recorded it first. Despite the rise of the feelings-oriented folk singing man of the 1970s, I think it says a lot that this song only won a Grammy when it was sung by a woman. I do think Chaka Khan's version is superior, with its added rap elements, and her name said roughly four billion times like a 1980s Jason Derulo. Also, if her video was any more 1984 (the year, not the Orwell book) it would just be Q\*Bert spinning on a Rubik's cube with a fade (Yes, the Rubik's Cube has the fade not Q\*Bert, I don't know why that's important, but it is). I might only enjoy the Prince song because I'm nostalgic for Khan's version.

There is a certain sound that I associate with sitcom intros from the 1970s and early 1980s. And that's the driving riff of **Soft And Wet**. I can just picture Tom Hanks in drag, entering a series of rooms to this song. Or Richard Mulligan looking beleaguered after accidentally knocking over a house of cards. I mean the song is all about fucking, but it sounds like it's a forgettable pop song about nothing.

**When You Were Mine** is another song that I didn't realize was Prince until much later. I grew up listening to the Cyndi Lauper cover, which isn't much different. Also, I was much older before I

realized Cyndi Lauper was a cover artist. Like, all her hits except for “Time After Time” were first recorded by other people. Like “I Feel For You”, I enjoy this more out of nostalgia for the version I grew up with. But it’s still a solid tune.

The first real hint at what’s coming in the future is **Partyup**, which is another song that starts out as just a generic 70s synth song about seemingly nothing. But instead of being all about fucking, it’s about not wanting to go to war and kill people. I like to imagine it’s Prince’s subtle dig that he doesn’t want to ever be some Billy Joel getting famous for singing about a war he didn’t actually fight in. The ending cavalcade is an interesting precursor to the end of “1999”.

Rising out of “Partyup” is **In Love**. Look, baby, Prince really wants to fuck you. Has he not been clear? He really wants to “play in your river” and other creepy nonsense that is radio subtle for “let’s fuck”. Sure, he talks about he’s falling deeper in love with you and can’t live without you, but the only deeper Prince wants involves penetration. Make sure he wears a condom because young Prince could get it. And seemingly did get it on an incredibly regular basis. There is almost definitely a strain of gonorrhea named after him.

Oh, hey, did you know Prince wants to fuck you, baby? Well he does. And he wants it to a disco beat

in **I Wanna Be Your Lover**. In this version of the story, he's poor and doesn't want to pressure you. He doesn't want to pressure you, but he is going to follow you around singing songs about how he'd totally be the best at fucking you. But no pressure. He just wants to be your mother and your sister. So, in many ways, this is the antithesis to Madonna's "Justify My Love", even though both songs are trying to rip your clothes off and throw you on their almost definitely uncomfortable bed.

Not only does Prince wanna be your lover, he also wants to **Do It All Night**, which was how I talked about sex when I was fourteen and not having any. This song is almost identical to "I Feel For You" but with a cool upbeat synth riff breaking through every once in a while. Once again, Prince is talking about how the other men trying to get with you aren't as good at The Sex as he is. Yea, yea. I see what you're saying Prince, will you get out of my driveway? I need to get to work.

Christ, are you still here Prince? **Just As Long As We're Together**. Can I guess what this song is about? Is it about how you're going to please your woman and be respectful of her. And also about how you're going to be fucking all the time? I. am. shocked.

**Why You Wanna Treat Me So Bad** seems to hint that there is finally some karma for Prince Hormones. Look, Prince. She's not your girlfriend. This relationship you have with her where you're



going to get married and fuck all the time in a river or whatever? It's all in your head. If she wanted to fuck you, she would have fucked you. Take your pre-incel sadness to your bedroom and work it out with your hands. Leave. her. alone. She's not treating you bad, you're being a creepy stalker.

Wrapping up this tale of Creepy Prince the Wannabe Sex Addict (who, in real life, was almost definitely getting all the flesh he wanted), is **Gotta Broken Heart Again**, which he fucken deserves based on the narrative of this album. He spent all his money *on a long distance phone call / begging* someone who was not his girlfriend to come back to him. It's a shame he didn't grow up in The Age Of The Internet, he could have saved himself a bunch of money. I also love that the album ends with *there ain't nothing left to say*. Then explain the thirty some-odd albums that follow this.

My first exposure to Prince was in my rich-ass uncle's third or fourth house. It was on Cape Cod. He had helicoptered in from somewhere, and a couple of my cousins and I each got a chance to take a ride in the helicopter. It was overfuckenwhelming. And hot. It was scorching hot.

My cousins, who are about a decade older than me, were laying on the carpet in the basement, listening to music. Specifically "Raspberry Beret" and "1999" which they kept rewinding to listen to again. And I know they were talking to me about what the songs meant, but I don't remember anything they said. I just remember the music. I had only hear snippets of it before. And it would be another decade before I owned a Prince album, but I knew something about his music was important. Like a helicopter ride.

*Revolution*



A piano flutters. Nothing 70s AM radio here. This could be now. The vocals hit, and it's unmistakably Prince, somewhere between crooning and croaking his heartbreak in **Condition Of The Heart**. He's no longer faking poverty. He's got some serious cash now, but it hasn't got him the love he's searching for. So he's going to duet with himself, like two Broadway actors lamenting being left by the same person. It's excellent harmonic work.

The drums kick in. 1. 2. 1. 2. 3. **Paisley Park** is mostly vocal doubling and sparse guitar. It's a place to go to overcome heartbreak. And it's ... *in your heart*. These lyrics would be garbage with 70s Prince. But 80s Prince has a soft steel saber where you and I have a larynx. There is nothing weak about his falsetto bursts.

Summer synths in. Younger Prince would be thrilled that he had a woman who's loving him back. But this slightly more mature Prince feels like his love is moving too fast in **Little Red Corvette**. Oh shit, what if this love he's been searching for is too much for him? The build to the *you must be a limousine* screech is a perfect pop moment in any decade.

Oh, is the new Prince trope going to be that love is not enough for him? **She's Always In My Hair** suggests no. His love doesn't give him any breathing room, but her presence is good for him,

and he knows it. This is a massive step forward for The Purple One. A lot of personal growth. A filthy little bass line. Synth pushed to the background.

*Don't worry / Prince won't hurt you / He only wants you / to have some fun.* If you don't want to dance along with **1999**. I can't help you. Dez Dickerson, Lisa Coleman, and Jill Jones join a deliberately disjointed vocal split. This song would go on to chart twice for Prince. Once in the early 80s, and again on the eve of 1999. It is both one of his peak hits, and his final big hit. The transition from chanting *party to mommy / why does everybody have a bomb* is one very few artists could or would ever try to pull off.

A filthy guitar lick. A falsetto scat. **Temptation.** *This little Prince thinks a lot about you, see?* He's gone from being a creepy youngin trying to get your number to the guy on stage, spitting fire. Effortlessly bouncing from classic rock vocals to talking to screeching falsetto to the low timbres of a laugh. Holy fuck does he sing the hell into this song, and the guitar is scorching right there with him. The piano and saxophone at the end aren't even fair. *You have to want it for the right reasons / I do / You don't / Now die.* And let's screech the hell out of here with some piano flourishes. *Now I understand . love is more important than sex.* Bite your tongue, mature Prince.

Everybody is looking for **The Ladder**. The classic R&B formula of a low voice talking over a trio of female background singers that soars into the lead singer and the trio echoing the lyrics off each other works beautifully here. It's somehow very 1950s, 1970s, 1980s, and right now.

**Pop Life** funks in on a slick bass. Mature Prince has some questions for Young Prince. I think it's the first time he plainly uses the term *addiction* to describe his lifestyle. Something he's going to struggle with in his lyrics for decades to come. We're going to let this track fade out naturally.

Tinkle of funk. Drum machine beat. Falsetto. **Kiss**. A list of things you don't have to be for Prince to love you. He's all about just spending time and kissing you right now. If you don't love this song, I'm not sure why you're reading anything that even contains the word *Prince*. Even disgraced royalty sing this song in the shower.

Marching feet stomp us into more falsetto and soap opera intro piano. An anthem about being glad you're **Free** is a tough sell these days when mostly old, mostly white Americans and British people shout about freedom while being racist as fuck, and trying to limit the rights of anyone not in their tax bracket. This song could be a hell of a dog whistle.

And now some lovely revisionist history. A song about Young Prince losing his virginity and being great at it. A lot of string instruments and a drum machine serve as the background to the featured player, the **Raspberry Beret**. I like this version of Prince, so hot that when an amazing looking woman comes in, she throws herself at him for consensual sex, more than the whiney wannabe rape machine of the previous album.

A metronome bass continues Prince's crooning about fucking portion of the album. While "Raspberry Beret" is an entirely different approach to singing about fucking than Prince used on the first album, **Girl** is the same methodology and images he used on the first album but the creepiness is toned way down. Oh, it's still there, but it's at Well Intended Member Of The Patriarchy Creepy not Standing Outside Your House With A Boombox And A Machete Creepy.

Is Prince qualified to be singing all these songs about how great at sex he is? Well he is a certified **International Lover**, according to himself. A 1950s style chorus announces that he's going to buy her diamonds and pearls, even though he hasn't even written that album yet. What a swell, guy. What a constantly swelled guy. When I say his voice is pure sex on this song, I mean he is definitely doing his damndest to sound like he's getting his freak on while he was recording this song. The pilot announcement portion of the song is so over-the-top, it should be a space shuttle pilot announcement.

Picking things back up is the relentless drum and sparse synth of **Something In The Water (Does Not Compute)** rolls us back to Prince being super sad that not every girl he wants to put his penis in wants his penis. It's better produced and catchier than the attempts from the first album but he does finally come out and call a woman a bitch for not bowing down to his purple cock. If "Free" could be a white Supremacist anthem, this could definitely have Mens' Rights Activists standing up and holding their MAGA hats over their hearts.

Let's get the fuck out of that and have some peppy **Hellos** sprinkled around us. Keyboards abound. Prince wants you to know he is Capital F FAMOUS but wants to help others and make the world a better place. These lyrics could have been written by Bono. But the music is good god damn.

The drumbeats roll us right into **Automatic**. He's still an addict. He's still in love. He still wants to kiss you. And wants to kiss you. And forgive you. And kiss you. *You ask me if I'll kiss you, it's automatic / And if you cry, me cry, boo-hoo, that's automatic too, ooh* may be his worst lyrics in the 1980s, and fuck him for pulling it off.

Creeping out beneath the synths is a piano riff and drum machine beat that could only mean we're going **Under The Cherry Moon**. Poor unloved Prince is now going to just die because he's so special



and loves you so much that he's like a hero for wanting to kiss you *a special way*. The piano is the real hero in this song. I would let it kiss me. But no tongue. I know where Prince's fingers have been.

Back to keyboards! And funk! **DMSR** gives us a great slut shaming sexy dance song. I may have put this on the album by accident. I thought it was gonna be one of those Youtube videos where somebody slowly pulls things out of their purse, or slows a belch down so that a two second clip takes nine minutes. Turns out that's ASMR. My bad. "DMSR" is Dance Music Sexy Romance. Prince ... Prince ... I'd say he was better than this, but it's not too long before he names an entire album Lovesexy. The drum / synth combination into the funk riff near the end make this track worthwhile.

Time to get weeeeeeeepy, y'all. **Sometimes It Snows In April** is just a straight up beautiful ballad. It has to be the final track because, my god, what do you follow this up with?

A year or so, I was mentioning something about my reimagined discographies, and the subject of Prince came up, and I said something along the lines of “Well, I have a few Prince albums that I’ve reimagined, but I also have Purple Rain, and that’s untouchable.” And Billy Tuggle replied with something along the lines of “Really, bro? Untouchable?”

And he was so right. Unlike most of my Prince mixes, this isn’t a repiecing of two or three albums into one steady flow, this is a fleshing out. Purple Rain is a fantastic album. But could it flow better if you added a couple of the b-sides to it? Hell. Yes.

*Purple*



I know this is sacrilege. I know that diehard Prince fans KNOW that “Let’s Go Crazy” is the perfect start to an album. And those people will always and forever have the actual releases of Purple Rain to prove how right they will always be. But I love listening to croony religious Prince sing about **God** while he alternates between falsetto and screeching. Fluctuating vocal Prince is my favorite Prince, and this is a great way to draw people in. See, he’s singing about Christianity, but, like, in an inclusive way. None of your Nazi-sympathizing, National Anthem defending, constantly spouting the word “illegals”, piece of shit Uncle Bernard’s selective Christianity bullshit. And the song ends with *Who screamed? / Was it you?*

So, of course, we fade in to the end of the previous track with a scream of **When Doves Cry**. I’m sure there are bad versions of this song, but I have been fortunate enough to avoid them. This is one of the most perfect blends of Prince, synth, and guitars that he recorded in the 80s. There’s not much to say about it. I mean, you’ve heard it, right? And if you haven’t, why are you reading about Prince? Go listen to this song.

Climbing out of Prince’s lamenting of crying doves is the peppy **Take Me With You**. It’s a perfect radio pop single. And Prince continues to mature in his love song methodology. Ok, it’s a bit beggy, but that’s way better than stalkey. Although, who is this person he’s so in love with that has their own

mansion? I mean, if you've got a mansion, you can take Prince and me, too, right? Like, surely there are enough bedrooms for all of us.

On the original album, "Take Me With You" flows into **The Beautiful Ones**, and this is absolutely the correct choice. We need desperate Prince screeching his larynx out about how much he needs You. Yes, you. He needs you! *Baby, baby, baby, baby / he wants you / woo!* Sometimes the direct approach is best.

Billy Tuggle's original suggestion, when I thought Purple Rain was untouchable, was to check out the extended cut of **Computer Blue**. I'm sure Billy Tuggle has been wrong at least once or twice in his life, but this was not one of those times. It is worth every one of its thirteen minutes and fifteen seconds. The guitar solos are insane. The effects are fantastic. Lisa and Wendy's vocals. are. appropriately. robotic. And Prince continues to get his squeal on. So, ok, maybe Prince was listening to too much Rush when he conceived of this track, but it was totally worth it.

Out of the maddening riff and effects of "Computer Blue" cuts through a familiar strum. Take out your lighters, **Purple Rain** comes much earlier on this version of the album. I will forever imagine him when he played this during the Superbowl in the actual (not actually purple) rain. Like he ordered

the weather, and it had no chance but to obey. I know this is two long-ass tracks back to back. But I wouldn't cut a second from either of them.

The tinkly piano outro and the violins and cheering crowd (though this isn't really a live version) get rolled in with the opening riffs and tinkly synth of **17 Days**. The song is catchy enough that you can ignore sadboy Prince, sitting in his room, lamenting that somebody has done left him again. Instead of being all weepy about it, he's at that phase where he gives short answers to his friends and sighs a lot. It's like he knows he's been so melodramatic around his friends that he's got to be as chill as possible, while still establishing that he has been sad for seventeen days now. (Also, it's still raining.)

The organ pierces the fade. Minister Prince enters. The sermon is ready. **Let's Go Crazy** motherfuckers.

**Darling Nikki** is the first time in this discography that Prince engages in slut priding instead of slut shaming. Nikki is so good at sex, even Prince has to give her an "oh damn".

**I Would Die For You** continues the blend of desperate Prince who really really wants to fuck you, and the Prince who is learning how to talk like an adult about relationships. Also, continuity alert: turns out, PRINCE IS A DOVE! I mean, we know he cries. This changes ... well, nothing actually.

But it's a perfect bridge into the final track, **Baby, I'm A Star**. Turns out *We are all a star*. That's a great note to go out on.





While my conversation with Billy Tuggle inspired me to rethink which albums I held sacred, the post that got me to re-edit and post about my Reimagined Prince discography was Scott Woods ruminating on whether or not he would sacrifice the existence of Sign O' The Times so that the world could have had Prince's Camille album.

I am not trying to answer that hypothetical question. It just inspired me to think, "What would Sign O' The Times be if Camille already existed?"

Controversy is the name I've given the Camille album because it's Filthy. Not as Filthy as the early New Power Generation era Prince, but definitely more sexual than his previous albums, which were already mostly about sex. His actual Controversy album is good. I just didn't get to it early enough in my musical education to be enamored by it.

Most of this version of this album has Prince pitching up his voice. The idea is that it's more feminine? I don't hear that. It just sounds unnatural to me. I'm not a big fan of pitch correction, but the instrumentation on this album (which is not pitched up) and the writing is so good that I can get around the false eccentricity of the vocals. I get, artistically, why Prince made the decision but his voice is one of the best pop funk voices of all-time, and I would have rather had his natural voice.

Still, as Scott Woods said, “The Camille album SLAPS HARD.” And I’m here for it, though I’ve added some tracks that I thought fit on to the album, either because he used the same vocal trick, or because they’re exactly the right kind of dirty for this album.

I also love the idea of a universe where this precise album is what he released as a follow up to Purple Rain.



You may have noticed with my Prince Reimaginings, and my U2 reimaginings that I like an album that builds slowly and then crashes into a banger, either part way through the first track, or in the transition to the second track. But there are certain albums that need to start with a bang, and this is one of them, so I'm keeping with the Camille track listing, and starting this with **Rebirth Of The Flesh**. In addition to the weird vocals, this album goes in with grungey funk starting with the very first chord. The song also includes what I consider the album's non-sexual thesis: *We're not here for the money / We're here to play*. He's Prince, man. He's using the royal *we* here.

I'm already diverging from Camille with the second track. The first Prince song I heard with the pitched up vocals was **Crystal Ball**. The song is the spiritual successor to "Computer Blue". It's super duper long. It's got some excellent guitar work. It's got spacey effects. It has unusual vocals. For some reason, whenever I hear, in my head, *Expert lover / my baby / ya ever had a crystal ball*, my brain follows it up with *they call it Nutbush / oh Nutbush / Nutbush City limits*. It's because of where the vocals fit on the track that it evokes Tina Turner's classic, but part of my brain deeply enjoys the testicular connection between "Crystal Ball" and "Nutmash". But, like, I hope to never experience a person with the combination of those two things.

**Housequake** is a high school marching band percussionist's dream. It's a hard dancey jam with silly lyrics. I enjoy playful Prince, and he is clearly having fun on this track.

It's not hard to imagine "Batdance" somewhere on this album. And while I loved that track when it came out, it's not quite what I'm looking for anywhere in this discography. On the other hand, **Scandalous** is a lovely cooling off song after the first three banger/steamers. It has Prince singing with falsetto instead of up-pitch but I think it provides a needed pause, and the drums are totally in-line with the percussion on the rest of this album. And when he dips out of falsetto for the super low *baby*, I get the damned chills.

Whipping out of that ballad is the upbeat **Good Love**. This almost feels like a dirty precursor to "Starfish & Coffee". Also, it's the best thing that includes *in the heat of the night* that doesn't involve Carroll O'Connor or Sidney Poitier. This is also some of his finest surreal imagery sex lyrics. *Technicolor children in Picadilly Square / Whisper words, erotica, when you kiss me there / Gustav Mahler number three is jamming on the box / I'll have another glass of you, this time on the rocks is perfection.*

Back to the grunge funk we go with **If I Was Your Girlfriend**. As someone who has had some terrible boyfriends, I would never want Prince as a boyfriend or girlfriend. Dude is textbook bad at relationships. The scenario he lays out in this song, that he wasn't a good boyfriend to this woman, so he'd rather be her close friend, but ponders what she would allow him to do if they were just girlfriends. He does dip back into his stalker mode in this song, but the way he approaches it, it's ... SLIGHTLY less creepy.

**Erotic City** was the b-side to "Let's Go Crazy" from Purple Rain. I think it's the earliest incarnation of his Camille character. It's interesting to hear this character playing with The Revolution. It's not too different from the music he recorded mostly by himself. It is, of course, filthy. More synthy than any of the previous songs, but I still think it fits.

The title track, **Controversy** bubbles out of "Erotic City". But I don't just include it because it's eponymous to this album. It's part of my "If this album dropped immediately after Purple Rain, how would people react?" theory. He'd need this song as a bit of an explanation. And a second single. It almost doesn't matter what the first single would be, but this would have to be the follow up. I mean, did he seriously just work The Lord's Prayer into THIS song? O.....k. And is it followed up by a rap where he wishes to be nude, and that all people were food? So, like, we are our own daily bread? Eat

of my body, bitches, because every human is delicious? Ok, Prince. Pass the salt you purple weirdo.

Ooooh, we're back to the Batman soundtrack. **Partyman** has the up-pitch vocals that are so familiar on this album. And it has a similar message to Controversy (apart from the sexual cannibalism suggestion). It's a nice, short, little bridge from "Controversy" to

**Shockadelica**, which comes in on the drums and sexual howling tip. Are the lyrics to the chorus seriously *Doo-bee-doo-bee, yeah, Shockadelica / Shockadelica / Doo-bee-doo-bee, Shockadelica? Is this a dream or is this real?*

Another earlier track, **Do Me Baby** is falsettotown. with a wicked spare flick of the funk guitar. I like this song, but the title always makes me want to listen to some Bell Biv Devoe. What can I say? I like to do the wild thing.

Prince is not, and has never been a very good rapper. Now, there are going to be some tracks with rapping two albums later in the discography, but rapping will be handled by New Power Generation's Tony M, who is much better at it. The thing is, Prince is a phenomenal singer, but his rapping is completely forgettable. **Irresistable Bitch** is pretty much the only example of his rapping that I can listen to. It is absolutely, in no way, Woke. It is, in fact, super misogynist. But, I like to imagine he's

using “bitch” like a catty 90s homosexual sitcom character. I mean, he sort of is a catty 90s homosexual character. Fun fact: when I heard this song as a kid I thought his muttering of *everybody / everybody* was saying *I farted . I farted*. I thought that was very brave of him.

While we’re in the super misogynist Prince mode, here’s **Scarlet Pussey**, in which the pitching of the narration makes him sound like Anthony Bourdain for some reason. I’m sure someone has already mashed this up with the visuals from that awful trailer for the movie Cats. It syncs up beautifully.

When I was eleven, one of my neighbors was a slightly younger kid who was constantly, literally showing me his ass. A dude who totally grew up to be straight. A straight wrestling fan who hosts gossipy celebrity tv shows and podcasts, and does red carpet interviews where he frequently says “Meeeeeee-ow” (no, he’s not actually famous). TOTALLY STRAIGHT. He used to always sing parts of **Strange Relationship** after exposing himself to me. And I had no context for it. I don’t think I heard the song until the 21st century. But I can’t hear the song without thinking of his face, now, and *Baby I just can’t stand to see you happy / More than that I hate to see you sad*.

**Feel U Up** has a great funk riff. It makes up for the sort of limp sexuality to this song. Like “I want to feel you up” is for eight graders and incels. It should be way beneath Prince, based on all of his other



songs. I think I would like this song more if it were instrumental, but I'll take it as is. But if you sang this to me, sincerely asking *let me feel your body baby / let me feel you up*, the answer is a definitive Hell No.

**Girls & Boys** is another song that features The Revolution, and wildly predates this album, but Prince often went back to the vault for later albums, and the vocals on this have the up-pitch quality, and it's too weird a song for any other of his albums in this discography.

Closing out the album is actually the closing track from the Camille album, **Rockhard In A Funky Place**. It starts pop funky with the up-pitch vocals, and ends with the very appropriate fade out question *What the fuck kind of ending was that?*

One of the comments made, when Scott Woods posed the question: “Would you have wanted The Camille Album released, knowing that if it had been put out, there would have been no Sign O The Times album??” pointed out that, as it stood the Camille album was a complete concept, while Sign O The Times wasn’t really a great album, so much as a collection of amazing, if disconnected, songs. But if you pull out all the Camille songs, are you left with an improved and more focused Sign O The Times? Well, maybe. But not one to want any songs, released or otherwise, to go to waste, I’ve added the songs from the unreleased Black Album into the mix, thus making this another collection of amazing songs that lacks the focus of an album. It’s like Prince’s Greatest Hits from 1987. Because he was (not releasing but....) creating two albums a year worth listening to. Even though he decided not to release The Black Album because it was “evil”, enough bootlegs of it made the rounds that when Rolling Stone asked rockstars of the era what their favorite album of the year was, many of them named The Black Album.

I probably could have split this into two EPs, but I like listening to a full length album, so I’ve interspersed the tracks. Call it Sign O The Times or Princes Greatest Hits From 1997 That Weren’t From The Camille Album, I love the dizzying result. If it has a theme, it’s that Prince can’t seem to balance out his religious life and sex life in a satisfying way, which, let’s be real, was the theme for his entire career.

*Sign O' The Times*

Another slow build start, as an acoustic guitar strums the intro track, **The Cross**, another Jesusy start to an album that's mostly sex. The drums come in, while Prince is still somewhere between a psalm and a croon, they give the occasional snare, and then the grungey guitar fuzzes in and desperate Prince comes to change your religion.

As the religion fades out, the sex breezes right in on **Le Grind**. A dirty dance floor grinder from The Black Album. The lyrics are pretty generic call and response dance music, but the instrumentation and vocals are peak funk Prince.

Now, if you were looking for cool lyrics, **Starfish And Coffee** is the song you were waiting for. I probably heard it on the original album at some point, but my first memory of the song was Prince singing it with a bunch of generic-ass Muppets on "Muppets Tonight". Maybe the named Muppets didn't feel cool enough to be included in the song?

The title track is Prince's hyper-focused "We Didn't Start The Fire" as he goes through a list of 1987 society's ills, and how they're just endemic of 1987. AIDS, drug abuse, The Challenger explosion, the internal struggle between religion and sex (via "Annie Christian"), gang violence, and infanticide. With different music, is this a song worth listening to? Maybe. But the production and spare riffage

make this one of the best songs that came out in 1987, period.

**United In West Compton** opens with conversations over bass drums, and then turns into a spectacular instrumental funk song.

Ask Scott Woods, or most Prince fans, what the best track of Sign O The Times is, and they'll agree, it's **The Ballad Of Dorothy Parker**. A classic funk bassline, a narrative about a waitress, snare, self-examination and deprecation, and a bubble bath. What more could one possibly want?

I have long misremembered Roxette's "The Look" as being a cover of **U Got The Look**. It's not, but Prince definitely should have got some cut of their royalties. This is the song on the album that sounds most like it could have come out during the Revolution era. I love it.

The synth riff of **Superfunkcalifragisexy** waterfalls out of the previous track. This might be the best combination of surreal lyric Prince and funk synth Prince. *The first person that touches you / you want to fuck*. Ok, Prince, we get it, you dropped some E before you went out dancing. You'll be fine. Just don't forget to drink some water.

So ... I don't really want to talk about Lovesexy. It's the first Prince album that bored me. But there are a few tracks worth saving. I've put them all in a row here. First off is **When Two R In Love**. It's a

basic Prince ballad but has some nice echoey chorus parts, and he's got the falsetto / baritone melody mix on point on this track.

**Positivity**, the concept is what killed Lovesexy for me. But the song is catchy, and I enjoy the weird metronomic synth beat and how it balances the screeching background guitars. Someone starts pouring water over the end, and drops a few synth riffs before a warm spacey vibe falls over the track, and the dark riff of **Eye No** briefly falls before Prince announces that he's drug-free, and it's an all sunshine and rainbows song falsettos in, and Prince drops the name of the (not included in this discography) album a few times, while discussing how he's been avoiding The Devil. Mmmmmhmmmm. Right.

The previous song fades out with conversations and religious zealotry before being interrupted by Prince screeching *No* before launching into **Alphabet Street**, which sounds a bit like the theme song to a kid's show about stealing cars, voyeurism, and being sexy, which is a Terrible Idea for a kid's show. Prince Roger's Neighborhood would have definitely been cancelled before the second episode.

Ok, that's more than enough Lovesexy, time to get back to a killer fuzzy funk riff with **Hot Thing**. The vocal blend on this track is fire.

In case you wanted a primer on how Prince thinks people should fuck, I've included **Slow Love** as the penultimate track.

We close the album with Prince claiming **I Could Never Take The Place Of Your Man**. It sounds like Mature Prince is telling someone he's not good enough to be their lover, but it's actually Prince being a cad to some woman whose partner left her. *I may be qualified for a one night stand / But I could never take the place of your man* is an honest sentiment but he's otherwise not very compassionate here. But why end on compassion? This is an album about how his religion and his sex are interfering with each other, so let's end with him doing the morally proper thing, while still being kind of a jerk, and not getting any.





For most of us, our favorite albums by our favorite bands came out when we were teenagers. I'm no exception. I can look back, and say something academically bullshit, like "Given the politics of the time, and the wide-ranging influence amongst his peers at the time, Prince's most important albums are inarguably blah blah blah who cares?" My favorite albums? Diamonds And Pearls and Love Symbol. Not only did they both come out when I was most musically impressionable, they're two very, very different albums.

I was at a middle school Halloween dance when I first heard "Cream". Somewhere, there is a photo of me, dressed as a monkey, my date dressed as Debbie Gibson, and my best friend at the time (who would start dating my date in a few days) dressed a bougie piece of shit in boat shoes (so, no costume). The song "Cream" is not playing in the background, but it will be soon. It will make dancing uncomfortable. Not because of any sitcom shenanigans, no one gets their first boner or period during the song, merely because none of us are cool enough to dance to this song. Or, really, any song, but this song in particular. Will we be someday? Probably not.

This is the first album with his new band, New Power Generation. And to celebrate it, I've mixed in NPG's first side album, Gold---a, as well as included a couple of tracks from Graffiti Bridge, which I consider Prince's first boring album. People like to separate the bomb of a movie from the soundtrack,

and claim that where the former fails, the latter is genius. They're entitled to that opinion. For me, the soundtrack sounds like Prince and some other talented artists inadvertently making a Rocky Horror Picture Show era musical. Everything sounds dated, and kind of the same. And it sounded dated as soon as they recorded it. That it came out between Sign O The Times and Diamonds & Pearls baffles me.

But enough of the negativity. This album is a celebration of sex and decent hip hop (early 90s NPG was amazing).



A robot counts us down to our opening track, **Live For Love**, and doesn't even get to finish it before the drums kick in. There is obviously a new band on this album. But here's Prince in all of his Princeness with grungey guitar riffs, and an almost metal synth in the background. Prince performs the first two rap verses of the song, and it's better than his previous attempts, partly because it doesn't sound highly derivative of better 80s lyricists. The third rap is our real introduction to Tony M, the all-star collaborator of the New Power Generation. He is a revelation, and his voice is a great counterpoint to His Purpleness.

After a little segue about how much NPG hates record companies, it's time to get filthy. Screechy Prince is here to help you **Gett Off**. Prince's rap here ... is fine, but helped by Tony M and Rosie Gaines's vocals, and a flute. This song is a rescue of several lackluster songs from Graffiti Bridge and Lovesexy. And damn is it an improvement.

After some tinkling, it's time to get to Tony M's first moment to shine, as he explains the concept behind **Gold---a** in the eponymous track. The funk behind this song is stunning. It's a blaxpotation theme song that Isaac Hayes probably envied. There is no Prince in the vocals of this song. It's fine. Tony M kills it here.

We get a little drum and synth breaking through the funk, and Prince is back for **Thieves In The Temple**. That's right, Prince, you better sing your ass off or Tony M is going to steal this album away from you! (Tony is low in the mix of this very early NPG song.)

A quick instrumental funk song to cleanse the palate, **Oilcan** is a goddamned national treasure. And it leads into the 1950s nostalgic **Strollin**. Falsetto Prince reminisces about roller skating and ice cream, but does so in the present tense, as though he were still an obstreperous youth, and not a thirty-something year old mega rock star looking back at a time he didn't even live through. This is the 90s song most possible for Prince to have actually recorded on one of his 1970s albums. It's a nice throwback.

Here it comes. Orgasm Prince is here to shoot his **Cream** all over the 90s. Funk guitar riff with a little Bonnie Raitt twang. Filthy lyrics and innuendo. Prince claims he wrote this song while masturbating. Oh, that silly, silly, purple pervert (not for masturbating, but for writing about his guitar while masturbating). The background vocals are also a fundamental part of why this song slays. I wish I could have done it justice on the dance floor when I first heard it. But if I could, I probably would have been expelled. Also, nice work, DJ, for playing this, as opposed to the Bryan Adams we obviously requested.

“Cream” segues into one of the four Prince songs I most often get stuck in my head, **Diamonds And Pearls**. If Tony M is the breakout star of the NPG, Rosie Gaines is the underrated superstar. *D to the I to the A to the M / O to the N to the D to the pearls of love*. This is another Prince talking about being too poor for the person he’s in love with. But, unlike his earlier work, he never actually says it. He just infers it since he can’t give her diamonds and pearls, *all he can do / is offer* them his *lo-ove*.

From here, we get Mavis Staples intro-ing her own song from Graffiti Bridge, **Melody Cool**. Look, the movie is a mess, the soundtrack is underwhelming, but Mavis fucken Staples is the highlight reel of both. This definitely sounds more like a high school theater production than a track from a movie in the late 80s, but Mavis Staples sings as much hell as she can into it. The horns are fine. She also shouts out The New Power Generation. The scratching records and drum machine sound like an afterthought. The less said about the lyrics, the better.

Oh good, Tony M is back for **Jughead**. Honestly, this song really sounds like it would fit better on Love Symbol but this album needs it more. Some of the best funk rap hybrid of the 1990s, and it’s from 1990. Prince, Kirk Jackson, and Rosie Gaines on background vocals, and Prince’s rap verses are also excellent. The Tony M vs. a manager from the music industry intro is a hilarious precursor to Prince’s future battle with Warner Brothers.

Tony M keeps it going on **Deuce & A Quarter** compares waiting for your music royalties to *sucking a glass dick*. O....k. The class warfare in the verses is sadly relevant right now.

The funk and Tony M move from money issues to love and lust issues for **Part 2** of Gold----a. Seriously, you should get your hands on the full album. It's amazing.

Prince comes back, like he's walking through a beaded curtain, to ask **The Question Of U**. Luckily, he's brought his guitar with him, and has an almost metal 90s guitar solo. This might be Slash's favorite song on the album. It smokes. And the guitar should definitely have been wearing sunglasses for this track. How the hand claps work on this song is a mystery, but they do.

Drums and twangy bass lead us into **Insatiable** where falsetto Prince croons to his latest love, one of my favorite Doctor Who companions. How did he know, fifteen minutes before she appeared, how amazing Martha Jones would be? The outro is creepy sex to the max.

**Thunder** is straight fire from beginning to end. It certainly brings to mind ACDC before it steals some moves from more Eastern music. We're back to religious quandries, but this song is all about syncopation and the chorus. And thunder guitar.

Time for a soft funk ballad. Toni M takes lead vocals on **2gether**. According to lore, this was the final song Prince wrote before changing his name to an unpronouncable love symbol. It's a love song about getting out of the street life.

Prince is **Willing And Able** to have a gospel background to this song about playing cards, which sounds nothing like any of his other songs, and yet is unmistakably Prince.

Our last funk track from this album is Toni M and Rosie Gaines sampling vocals for **Goldie's Parade** under immaculate horns and a bassline so sick, hospitals would straight up rule it a lost cause.

The final track for the album is Prince explaining how **Money Don't Matter 2nite**. It's also about playing cards (blackjack), and about lust, and the music industry. Shit, Prince, what a great way to tie a bow on this whole album, as it lets the synth fade it out.





The first time I took a swing at a reimagined Prince discography was last year. I got Purple Rain right, but I really didn't know enough Prince to make any other well-informed decisions. I knew that I loved Diamonds & Pearls and Lovesymbol, so I combined them, and threw on some other later tracks that I enjoyed. It was fun to listen to, but not a great album, or a cohesive idea.

As much as I love them, and as much as they came out in rapid succession, Diamonds & Pearls and Lovesymbol are two vastly different albums. Forcing them together is unnecessary, as they both stand on their own. Sure, you can give them some additional support from the unreleased albums that bumper them, but even those are more for flair than anything. So I paired the original Lovesxy album with Undertaker, which has a couple of tracks that made me wish Prince released an entire blues album because these tracks will singe the hairs off of places you didn't want hair anyway.

This is the album I'm most upset that I shouldn't play at the store while working.



There is no reason in the world why this album should ever start with anything other than **My Name Is Prince**. We're back to a slow intro build that erupts into the introduction of the band, drums, erotic staccato, drums, and some very 80s scratching. There are even samples from previous Prince songs! He *did not come to funk around / Until he has your daughter*, he won't *leave this town*. Your daughter? How old was he when this came out? 34? Let's hope the daddy he's talking to is at least 50. This is his greatest intro track for any album. It's a statement of thesis. It's an intro to him and his band, it's got some killer guitar screeching, and you kind of have to dance to it when you hear it.

The track one / track two punch of "My Name Is Prince" and **Sexy M.F.** needed to be upheld, too. It's probably the best sex funk song since James Brown took a hiatus from having any idea how to produce music so that he could host "Future Shock". I cheated a little bit in bridging the two songs with the minute plus long climax of the unreleased album Come but it absolutely belongs between these two wonderfully filthy songs. Rosie Gaines is superior to Meg Ryan's diner performance in When Harry Met Sally in every way. But once the actual track starts, it's all about Prince's best rap performance, the smooth title riff, and those horns. THOSE HORNS. Best since the JB's. Hands down.

We cool down again for just a moment before the synth beat of **The Max** crunches in. More great background performances by Rosie Gaines and Tony M. There are also some wonderful keyboard

riffs repeated throughout the song. It's not a classic because the first two tracks from the album exist. But if they didn't, this could have been a standout song from the album.

**The Undertaker**, the eponymous track from the unreleased album is a masterclass in blues guitar. I don't understand why this track hasn't been used in so many westerns that it's become a cliché. It would be totally worth it. I imagine Mark Callaway fucks to this song at least twice a week. It should have at least been the theme song to his Wrestlemania Streak. This song is ten minutes of utter perfection.

The first song that feels like it would have been at home on Diamonds & Pearls is **Eye Melt With U**. I probably should have put it there. It's a little too dance track Prince for the funk on this album. It's got the right quantity of sex for either album.

Another track from Come, Solo starts acapella, throws in some harp strumming and weathery effects and ends up being just a haunting fucken masterpiece.

Then the drums of **The Ride** crash in, and we're back in blues rock. Clocking in at a minute longer than "The Undertaker", this could also fit in any well-produced, modern western. The guitar scorches through this song. It's up there with his performance of "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" at The

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

There's a soft segue into another dancey ballad, **Love 2 The 9s**, which seems to come from every era of Prince. This really could be from any album, and yet it doesn't feel as generic as some of his near future "that song could have been on any album" output. I think the drums are the star of this falsetto to baritone track. It ends with a snapping outro.

**And God Created Woman** brings the synths back to the forefront, as soft rock Prince croons and whisper talks his desires at you, yes you, baby. There is an interesting, if not perfect, gospel choral attempt about halfway through the song. Prince continues his evolution of being less creepy as *if he never sees you again / it's alright*. No more hanging out in the parking lot, waiting for you to leave work, or sitting on the trunk of the car until you leave your house.

"And God Created Woman" flows perfectly into another falsetto soft rock track, **3 Chains Of Gold**. They were back to back on the original album for a reason. I love the Sgt. Peppersesque use of effects on this track. Poor Prince has no cream or dreams in this track. Luckily, he has kickass vocals (and he references The Undertaker track, which totally wasn't on the original album ... shhhh). The drums spiral us to the whooey-climax, and straight into the gong of

7. This song is super-Prince without sounding much like anything else he's done. It would have felt comfortable on Purple Rain, I think, even though the laughing effects are all Batman Soundtrack. Prince narrating the apocalypse caused by the seven deadly sins is my kind of popcorn flick. I really wish that had been the video instead of sort-of-blindfolded bondage-light Prince does some sci-effects while macking on hot women. We get it, Prince, you're short, and you fuck a lot, and you think you're magic. But, like, I want more.

Ok. I hadn't noticed, nor heard before that the videos from this album mostly revolved around his wife being an Egyptian Princess who Prince meets during "3 Chains Of Gold", and then sees her father assassinated by "7" assassins. It's an accident that I linked them together in this order. It must be at least subliminally genius Prince that the story ... concludes ? in **The Morning Papers**.

**Blue Light** is really as close to reggae as Prince gets. He really does *always take a simple thing and push it way too far*. But that's how he stayed so famous for so long, even though he's on the cusp of falling into his Undertaker / Dirty Work phase of his career. But let us go out on this perfectly affable track. It's not as perfect an ending as most of the other albums, but I think it's ok for this to land soft since it started so perfectly h...you know.

There is a perfectly good Prince album titled The Vault, which Warner Brothers released at the end of Prince's contract to mess with his Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic release. That album is not represented here. This is a collection from an era of Prince that, as a whole, I'm not a fan of, but which did produce some excellent times.

In order to both fill out the aforementioned contract, as well as kickstart his new contract, Prince put out a TON of material. Every release was two discs, three discs, a box set he found inside a box of Cap'n Crunch. And a lot of it is ... fine. It's not that this was a terrible time for Prince, it's just that his perfectly good material was drowning amongst his perfectly adequate material.

I remember being in Madison, Wisconsin, hanging out with some new friends to hide from a creepy ex (who had done some creepy thing to my new friends, as well), and seeing they had the full Prince discography. There were so many albums I hadn't heard. I spent the week devouring them, and ... I got super burnt out on Prince, and for a few months, imagined I was just Over Prince. I imagine actual fans felt even more oversaturated in this era. It's not so much an embarrassment of riches, as an embarrassment of adequacy. How do you even slog through this to find the gems? Take your time. Listen to things a bunch of times, and try and figure out the shape of an album. And when that doesn't work, and it won't, make a Greatest Hits album of the era that has the feel of a few albums interacting with each other. The Vault. Imagine it's a double album, because it's a bit long.





I find Prince's more Message Songs not to be to my taste. I agree with them, but his lyrics are better suited for sex than peace. I like his politics when they come out of nowhere, like in "1999". Jarring Prince is such a better lyricist than straightforward political Prince. **We March** is an exception to that rule for me. It's orchestrated so well that the simplistic nature of the lyrics doesn't at all bother me.

**The Jam Of The Year** practically falls out of "We March". Similarly to my feelings about political messages, are the vast songs about being a singer that Prince has. It's like he and Bono went to the same content seminar in 1986. But "The Jam Of The Year", if not THE Jam Of The Year, was at least a contender. It's super dancey, and very Prince.

*All that glitters ain't **Gold***, but this track would have felt perfect on Diamonds And Pearls. *Everyone wants a tale that's already been told* is sort of true here. I love this song because it reminds me of an era of Prince that I preferred to what was, at the time, the current Prince era. Is it his best song? Hell, no. But it is a glittery anthemic reminder of 80s into 1990 Prince.

The *na na nas* of "Gold" fade naturally into the **Da Da Das** of the next New Power Generation track. Scrap D does the rap duties, and it definitely feels like mid-90s rap before Prince comes in with his "we should all love one another" verse and then the killer crunch of his guitars followed by a very percussive outro.

Time to get back to the funk with **New Powersoul**. An almost instrumental track that just fucken cooks. I've avoided all of Prince's instrumental albums in this discography, not because they're bad, but because I don't have the language to discuss why I like certain instrumental tracks and not others. If there aren't lyrics involved, my opinions are mostly varied to "instruments good, RHYTHM BAD", which isn't very helpful. Also, a couple of Prince's instrumental albums are like yoga music for expectant hippie mothers, and I have a problem even reckoning how those are Prince albums. But this is perfect background funk with just a touch of lyrics as the NPS sings the title every once in a while, and then some old man stumbles in to talk over the ending.

Croony Prince enters over some weathery effects for **Curious Child**. It's a sweet song that your mom (whether she's doing pregnant yoga or not) would like. It's soft, and has some cheesy trilling pianos, but for a soft, cheesy Prince song, it's great. It could also be baby's first Prince song.

And while we're being childlike, I'm a HUGE fan of Joan Osborne's first album, Relish. I saw her perform most of the tracks before its release, at a festival headlined by the P-Funk All-Stars. It was an amazing show. **One Of Us** is one of the weakest tracks on her album. I much prefer Prince's cover. It's still soft and juvenile (he switches out the word *slob* for *slave*, in case you couldn't read his forehead) but his performance of the track is perfect album filler for me, you can idly sing along to it without having to actually rock out.

A clap of thunder. Some rain. Snarey drums. Scatty vocals. **Somebody Somebody** is a little on-the-nose effect heavy with the ticking clock, when he mentions time, and the weather whenever he mentions weather. But, y'all Prince is LONELY, and he just wants someone to cuddle with. But he's gonna get screechy about it. And there's not enough screech in this era of Prince, so this is a welcome sound.

Horny Prince now wants to change the narrative. He wasn't lonely, YOU were lonely. But he can help you, baby. He has something *every girl should know*, and he's gonna give it you **One Kiss At A Time**.

While he's dispensing knowledge, Prince would like to dip out of his falsetto and get religiosexy with you. **The Love We Make** is a rare Bumper-Stickery track where Prince gives you little kernels of knowledge you might see on a passing Prius. His delivery is impeccable though. We'll call this the end of disc one of the double disc album.

**The Same December** is a very different Prince from the previous track. I don't mean that it's way more upbeat and Prince's vocals are up about an octave, though both of those things are true. But here, he's telling you not to listen to the type of narrator he just was! Everything's gonna be the same, y'all forget those stupid wisdom dispensers, *you only know what you know*! He also gets kind of

Rocky Horror near the end.

Here comes some bass to the rescue, though, with some very 90s background samples as the New Power Generation goes **Joint 2 Joint**. Whatever you do, though, don't give Prince a picture of your mother. I don't care what he says. Ninety-9 drops the rare female MC verse in a male dominated song, and then ... Savion Glover ... tap dances .. the percussion ? because Prince enjoyed Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk. Sure. Then there's a narration break where Prince tries to convince some poor woman that he's ready to settle down. THEN HE HANGS UP ON HER to hop on

**My Computer**. His songs about technology are awful, But this one feels deliberately fuddy-duddy. As Prince *scans his computer looking for a site* so he can talk to someone. Guys, he's still So Lonely. If you were on AOL in the 90s, the sound effects might make you nostalgic.

Sonny T tackles the vocals on **Hallucination Rain**, after ingesting some funny tasting soup. The electric violin on this track, playing against the funk synth tones is perfection.

Rising out of the hallucination is Prince going back and forth between his narration voice and his all-over-the-place-climbing-ivy vocals in **Dreamin About You**. A nice little guitar strummy ballad with flower images.

The guitar continues strumming right into the summertime jam **Count The Days**. I just want to drink some lemonade while rockin' chairing it on a porch, singing *Here's a muthatfucka I gotta blow away*.

At the end of those days, sits **The Most Beautiful Girl In The World**. By far, Prince's most radio friendly hit song of the mid-90s. Maybe of the entire 90s. It sounds much more engineered by a studio executive than a musical genius. But it totally works.

Let the syrupy pop continue! Prince takes the Stylistics' **Betcha By Golly Wow** and Princifies it only a bit. As covers go, it's not very imaginative, it's just a surprise that he covered it at all. This was the only track I heard from the album before the Madison trip. I still enjoy it.

**Soul Sanctuary** has a bit of a Caribbean flavor. But only a bit. It's still falsettotown balladville for Prince. This time he's totally not telling the person he's in love with that he's in love with them. Shhhhhh.

Then he *Hey girls* his way into The Delfonics' **La La La La Means I Love You**, which is right on par with "Betcha By Golly Wow". It's not inventive but it works. And I'm not sure how many 90s kids were listening to 1940s soul hits.

Prince pretty much does what he wants on this album because he's got **Style**. And on this track he tells you, in his narrator-almost-rap voice, what style is. Without the background *you got it* vocals, I'm not sure I would have included this track. It's braggadocio feels pretty limp. But, like, he *\*does\** have style.

**Cherry Cherry** sounds like the third part of the 1940s cover trio on this disc, but it's a Prince original with guest vocals by Sonny T again. It's a fun throwback riff with the occasional modern lyrics about watching a basketball game.

Closing out the album is another cover. This time one of my favorite Bonnie Raitt songs, **Eye Can't Make U Love Me**. It's a nice simmering ending to the double album. Unlike "One Of Us", I do prefer the original to Prince's cover but I have enough love for both versions.

Thus ends the Greatest Hits Of An Era album. The next reimagined album is much more cohesive.

Prince made several double and triple albums. Occasionally, like with Lotusflow3r, one of the discs is noticeably different from the others (in that case, a different vocalist is featured on disc one), but for the most part, they just sounded like long, disjointed albums, or, more often than not, a series of tracks he didn't feel like thematically linking.

An Honest Man Vs. The Truth is intended as a single album, but more a record or cassette than a CD or modern non-physical album. There is a Side A and a Side B.

As a whole, this album is more guitar oriented than effect or pop oriented, the pop and effect elements are here, but they're not the focus. Side A has a very traditional Prince sound, but it strips away some of the layers he's been building on the albums that lead up to this. Side B, which is all from his sort of unreleased album, The Truth. (All of Prince's unreleased albums were eventually released in some format, otherwise I wouldn't have access to them.) The Truth is an "acoustic album", in that the emphasis is on acoustic instrumentation, but it also has engineering effects and other instruments added because that's what Prince wanted to do.

This album also feels like the most Beatlesque of Prince's work, which I love. And maybe a little Peter Frampton by the end.



A piece of purple paper with a rectangular hole torn out of its center. The edges of the paper are rough and frayed. The word "TRUTH" is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font within the white rectangular opening.

**TRUTH**

I've done this several times, and I'll do it again here. The album starts with acapella Prince. A chorus effect. A religious lovey lyrical chorus. Then instruments swell in beneath the vocals. **An Honest Man** isn't his finest work, but it's a sweet, brief, Princey intro.

**What's My Name** creeps in under the opening track with Prince doing a gravelly, pondering voice over a filthy bass, and some exquisite drum breaks. I love the table tennis between the vocal sections, and then the instrumentation. I'm talking, I'm talking, the drums come in, the music goes crazy while I shut the fuck up, I'm talking, I'm talking. I love it.

From gravel we swoop up into falsettotown with **Crucial**, which could have come off of any Revolution-era album. It also could have come out of the 1940s, or been slapped on the B-side of "Betcha By Golly Wow". I love this style of Prince falsetto (he is one of the few artists who has more than one falsetto style).

The drums pound out of the previous track and then we go all Beatle-synth for **Strays Of The World**, oh, we are still in falsettotown. It's clearer here, though. And Prince sprinkles the lyrics with some la-la-las. It ends with a very 1970s epic space guitar solo that would be perfect to fade "Purple Rain" into.

Instead we've got Prince rapping through the close with **New Power Soul**, not to be confused with the nearly instrumental funk song "New Powersoul", this is a silly Prince sing-speaking over some poppy effects. The lyrics are silly and about loving one another, coming together, and getting freaky. But this song is less about lyrics and more about horns blending into a cheery song to make you smile. Macy Gray could be the vocalist on this track.

You'll be shocked to learn that **Shoo-Bed-Ooh** is also not a lyrical masterpiece. And it also sounds like a Macy Gray song. But, like, a really good one.

Some scat singing, howling, and horns, takes us into **When You Love Somebody**. Apart from the second track, this album has been pure joy, although *with every sun shower there's pain*. We also have one of Prince's clearest discussions of his polyamory, as he mentions how *All my partners say that I need to dismiss ya / Until they see you smile / (Such a pretty smile) / All them fools are buggin' 'cause they just want your lovin' / In the backseat, huh, for a little while / (But I don't care)*. Then a break hits, Prince begins rapping. Suddenly we're back in the philosophical funk of "What's My Name", but there's horns.

We're staying heavy and haunted now as Prince implores that body to **Get Loose**. It's just a heavy dance number that ends with a screech.

Closing out Side A, (An Honest Man) Prince counts us into a funk jam, **Calhoun Square**. Prince no longer cares what you look like, just as long as you're freaky. It is almost definitely the best song ever written about a shopping district in Minneapolis.

Side B starts us off with **Fascination**, which has a decidedly folk song feel. But it's the guitars that make this sound like a completely different artist than we've heard so far. Prince is, and always has been, a phenomenal guitarist. It's sometimes easy to forget when he plays the same style of guitar with the same style of effects, you just get used to it. But when he mixes it up, like he does on this Side B (The Truth), and when he did on The Undertaker, you get a whole new appreciation for his genius.

You can almost see Prince, standing in a sold out stadium, with just this acoustic guitar, the entire audience silenced by **The Truth**. He barely even plays the instrument while he's singing. He doesn't have to. My one complaint is the stupid ticking clock element before he talks about time. I should have edited it out. His screeching comes out of pretty much nowhere, and yet, is a perfect counterpoint

to the rest of his spare, whispery vocals on this track.

A wave of rain sound and animal noises tide us into **Animal Kingdom**. It's interesting to hear the acoustic guitar mixed with the engineered into fuzziness vocals. The effects floating around the acoustic guitar give it a very haunted feel, especially when the fucken dolphins show up and start chattering.

In my sophomore year English class, another student wrote a poem about **The Other Side Of The Pillow**. It was not as good as this song. Croony Prince and the doo-woppy background vocals of this track make it an absolute treasure.

**Dionne** keeps the pluckfest going, as well as the 1940s vocal feel. As for the inspiration of this love song? *"Dionne lives in London and knows quite well the heart she broke. All Dionnes r heartbreakers!"*

A bass drum and some effects take us into the follow-up, **One Of Your Tears**, which according to Dionne Farris, the alleged inspiration for the previous track, is a factual account of a mail exchange where he sent her a copy of an early version of "Dionne", and she sent him back a used condom. I guess Dionne doesn't fuck around, either.

**Comeback** sounds so incredibly mid-90s alternative acoustic that it could have been recorded by any recently hair-chopped feel-good rock band. They definitely used the footage from their Unplugged episode as the video. This track would make zero sense on any other Prince album.

**Circle Of Amour** is a happy, acoustic song about the power of loving high school friendships as only Prince could imagine them. We go from *circle of friends* to *circle of sex* because Prince.

The only super serious song on this Side B is **Don't Play Me** and it is the musical equivalent of that gif where Prince rolls his eyes in exasperation. Like, who would bother to mess with Prince, anyhow? Besides Dionne. And maybe Charlie Murphy.

The album ends with **Welcome To The Dawn**, a mystical acoustic song with some Yoga Prince effects in the background, and more of his religious-focused lyrics. But also with occasional talk boxing. A sweet way to use effects to close out the acoustic-focused (Truth).

On the border of the 21st century, I lost my love of Prince music. It wasn't his fault. Sure, he had oversaturated the market with a series of multiple disc collections of varying qualities, and his production sound changed radically when he left Warner Brothers, but I was also moving around with my five 100 Case Logic CD booklets, and not buying a ton of new music. I had done my time working in record stores, and had moved full time into the restaurant industry, where I got most of my music through their terrible licensed retail stations.

Being inundated with pop, and also moving to and living in a variety of hipster areas, I drowned myself in grunge, modern British rock, and whatever the hell that one popular Moby album was.

It wasn't until 2004 that I saw a video for "Muse 2 The Pharoah" and thought "Wait, what's Prince doing now?" But I didn't follow up for a couple of years. And by then, there were a hundred and fifty new Prince albums of varying quality, and I only knew one song from the whole bunch. So I arbitrarily concluded that I only liked 20th century Prince.

Now, I do *\*prefer\** 20th century Prince. Like most artists fear, he was at his peak in his 20s and 30s, but there are still a few albums worth of good material from The Purple Yoda. Like my version of The Vault, there are a few covers on this album, but they're not better than his original 1999-2003ish

songs. This collection is mostly from Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic (and the remixed Rave In2 The Joy Fantastic), The Vault (the actual Prince album, not my reimagined version), and The Rainbow Children.





I really didn't know until I was mixing, and editing, and relistening to, and reordering this album, how much I love the title track **Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic**. That intro draws me right in, and then falsettotown Prince getting his screech on, like it was the 80s again, matched with the spare guitar riffing, keeps me there for the whole track. Even the deliberately wonky horns and the mostly forgettable lyrics work together for a classic Prince track.

I've used the remix of **Undisputed** from the in2 album instead of the un2 album. Even though it's only been a couple of weeks since I put the album together, I can't remember why I disliked the original so much, but I did. The remix was a pleasant surprise. The opening *get freeeeeeeeeeeeeeee* drags us into a funk dance party with robotic vocals. *How you gonna get my back when you frontin'* might be my favorite individual line from this album. Chuck D's verse is a decade and a half late, but it's a nice nostalgic trip.

Next up is the perfect groove of **Muse 2 The Pharaoh**. Some of the best latter-day Prince harmonies over a jazz drum and piano. It's ending drums lead right into

**Man O War**. This is a weirdly bullshit premise wherein Prince acts shocked that his partner has accused him of infidelity. Like, have you heard your own music, Prince. You clearly have wandering

penis syndrome. And you just said that loving your partner is *a waste of time*. Oooof. I will throw this song in my catalogue of I Weirdly Know A Bunch Of Stuff About Lenny Kravitz, as he and his song “Fly Away” get namechecked here.

Now, in a stunning 180, Prince is always going to be supportive of his partner, no matter what, as ***Wherever U Go, Whatever U Do*** / (he) *will always be there for you*. Always being there for you is a tired musical trope that I never believe. Has Jon Bon Jovi really always been there for me? Mariah Carey? The Rembrandts? The Jackson Five? Nah. And neither has Prince. I mean, they’re always somewhere, but for me? Nah.

There aren’t enough Prince piano ballads. **Eye Love U But I Don’t Trust U** is an utterly gorgeous 1970s style falsettoto town croon. It almost sounds like a remixed track from his first album. The breathy echoes at the end of certain lines are a vocal trick I don’t remember him employing on any other track, and it works really well.

Effects swallow the piano notes as we enter **The Digital Garden**, a harder drumbeat than we’ve heard for a while, but mixed with soft pop rock effects and more falsetto. This is one of the few tracks that I saved from [The Rainbow Children](#). Most of the album has a low pitch corrected narration from Prince that I just don’t enjoy. But this is a brief, oddly paced soft rock song that really works.

*It takes **Five Women*** to take us to the next track. This is a smokey bar, saxophoned night club jam. Joe Cocker released his cover about a decade before Prince released the original, and it's ... fine. It does sound like a Joe Cocker song, but it doesn't deviate too much. The only part of the cover that I wish Prince had employed was the focus on piano.

**Mellow Mellow** is a synth punctuated conversation between Prince and yet another person he's totally into right now. But in a mellow way. This is one of the many songs where he mentions eating (no, not like that). Offering a spot to go grab dinner. Usually, he's going on about breakfast, and the occasional noticing of what someone else has for lunch. It flows perfectly into

**She Loves Me 4 Me**. No, not because I look like Leonardo. It's great that there's someone to love Prince who isn't as judgey as Prince has been on pretty much every album.

An orchestral swell leads us into **Old Friends 4 Sale**, which sounds like something from a late 80s / early 90s noir film. Not an actually serious noir, something like Dick Tracy or Who Framed Roger Rabbit. Something that's an homage to the 1940s but it's all wrong, but in the most entertaining ways.

But cutting through the ending is the clear winner for best single from this album **The Greatest Romance That's Ever Been Sold**. The lyrics are generic Prince love lyrics but the hook is sharp, and the breathy echoes are back.

*Don't hate me because I'm beautiful* begins the first classic Prince funk song on this album, **Prettyman**. It is, remarkably, the first song I can think of where Prince admits to kissing his mirror and smelling himself. It's remarkable that we're this far into the discography and hearing this info for the first time. I also enjoy the James Browns-esque calling out of Maceo Parker.

**The Rest Of My Life** takes the mood from "Prettyman" and makes it softer, but still containing all the joy. And the saxophone.

The slow, low-pitched narration of **The Rainbow Children** album is not my favorite, but I needed it to bridge into that title track. Slow funk keeps the trite religious discussion of women that threads throughout his discography in the background. This is definitely a music, and not a lyric song for me. I love the intermittent guitar riffs and breakdowns. I just pretend the lyrics don't exist.

Closing out the album is one of Prince's perfect "credits start to roll" songs. The piano is back in full balladry force for **How Come You Don't Call Me No More**. A song that would feel at home on any of his albums. But always as the closer.

If you were to rank my Reimagined Discography from least favorite to favorite, Musicology would be on the bottom rung. Prince was throwing a lot of pasta at the wall, and it stuck. And contrary to 80s movies about Italians, that's a terrible way to test pasta. Any pasta that sticks to the wall is overdone. And the Musicology era is Overdone.

It's mixed to death. The production turns some otherwise perfectly listenable music into what sounds like the original material from a mediocre Prince cover band. Even many of the vocals fall flat.

There are at least three albums of instrumental tracks from this era, and two of them are great, and one of them is Yoga Prince bad. I probably could have switched Musicology out with Shut The Funk Up: The Best Of Instrumental Prince, but it isn't the path I chose.

So here's the songs from the early 2000s that I enjoy more than the other songs.



A plane lands. A guitar wammies. The vocals hit. I really loved **Supercute** when I first heard it, and for years afterward. It was an automatic choice for a first cut on this album. But when I was listening to it for editing purposes, it sounded muddy. This is the first Prince song that doesn't sound good on headphones. It sounds great on my computer, or over the sound system at work, but it just sounds ... swampy on headphones, and not in a deliberately creative awesome way. So take your headphones off and blast this perfectly fine, happy, catchy song about how much Prince is totally into someone.

Prince screeches his way into **Daisy Chain** next. It's synth-funky, and a perfect follow-up track. It's like a popular B-side to "Supercute" that you wish was on the actual album. The creepy effect laugh leads us right into

**The Word.** The vocals on this album so far have had a particular campfire sing along chorus effect. In this song Prince employs the people listening to *let's get saved*, which, unfortunately isn't a euphemism for sex. The lyrics are all Creepy Preacher Prince. Instead of a laugh, we go back to a screech.

Confession: I had already mixed this album before I heard of **When Will We B Paid**, but Prince's reparations B-side is, by a landslide, his best B-side from this era, and is better than a bunch of tracks



on his actual albums. The lyrics are pretty basic. But it's not a topic Prince usually addresses as head-on as he does here. And the vocal mix on this track is A+.

A dance groove with a super irritating wheezing sound introduce us to **Black Sweat**. The wheeze drops as the lyrics hit, and the rest of the track is hand-clappy dance nonsense. But in a good way. If you've seen the video for the supposed Black Sweat dance, you know it's uninspired.

*Turn off your cell phone*, ladies. Now that the minimal "Black Sweat" has been perspired out of you, Prince is gonna get you **Satisfied** *real soon*. This has elements of Revolution-era Prince. A constant rising funk swell with an almost-falsetto vocal, and an occasional break that has him actually going falsetto. At 2:43, I don't think he got her very satisfied before he quit.

**Te Amo Carazon** is smokey, club, jazz number. It hits all the right notes, but it lacks Prince's usual vocal passion. I would love to hear a version recorded ten years earlier, or five years later. It's nearly a great song. Focusing more on his vocals and piano would have put it over the top.

People who only knew Prince from his hits might, mistakenly, assume **Incense And Candles** had pitch-corrected vocals because Prince was being trendy. Nah, if you've been listening to this discography, you know he had almost an entire album with pitched-up vocals in the mid-80s. But this

track is the most pop-radio friendly / on-trend usage of the technology Prince has ever pulled off. He also has a decent rap about halfway through.

Perfect pop falsettotown and drums break through in the beginning of the timeless funk ballad, **Call My Name**. This is another track that could be on any Prince album, and would always be a highlight. This might be Prince's best 21st century song.

**The Dance** is Prince at his James Bondiest. The synth riff screams spy flick while Prince *doesn't want to fall in love again*. I'm sure that will stick. It gets more and more Eastern as the song goes on but never loses that espionage feeling.

A guitar lick and a phasing church organ. Prince is finally being sent to sleep **On The Couch**. This has been a long time coming. I do enjoy that he references everyone's favorite movie featuring Regie Gibson, Love Jones, while he tries to convince his partner that he shouldn't be punished. Prince, you DEFINITELY cheated on whoever has you on punishment. You are guilty. Even if they're wrong about this specific time. Grab some purple throw pillows and fetal-position it up, Mr. Falsetto.

Happier days abound in **U Make My Sun Shine**. Angie Stone is co-lead singer on this gospelly funk track.

**Reflection** jams like a late 90s Prince track with a generic 70s vocal. You can almost see two forty somethings falling in love, montage style, with this song playing in the background. A TV movie, not a film. A film would have had an actual 1970s jam. It's interesting to end this album with Prince finally acknowledging his ass (and most of the rest of him) is getting old.

The end of this discography is nigh. This is the final full-length album, filling out his 2005-2011 music. It's less boring than Musicology, but it's still lacking a lot of early Prince flair.

Still, I wouldn't want to lose any of these songs, particularly "Breakfast Can Wait", from which this fictional album takes its name.



We start dark and effect heavy as the uncredited background vocalists tell you *You need to **Lay It Down***. This is a futurefunk track. Like people from the 70s might have imagined funk would sound in the 90s. The reference to being the *purple yoda* is cute, but would have been more powerful if he'd only said the line once.

**The Guitar** is aptly named. It sounds 100% Revolution-era Prince with an added guitar track from the 2000s. It's silly, fun, and danceable. If Prince has ever sounded more like Richard O'Brien (Riffraf / the playwright who wrote The Rocky Horror Show), I don't remember it.

The channels change on an old fashioned TV set, and the soft rock synths rain down with occasional piano trills as Prince extolls the virtues of *a kiss on the neck, when she doesn't expect* in the lyrically all-over-the-place **Clouds**, which Prince doesn't need. This is also the first time we hear Lianne La Havas as the future-voice guiding Prince out of his time being cryogenically frozen.

Charlie Murphy had a hilarious story about Prince on the Chappelle Show in 2001ish. Prince loved Chappelle's portrayal of him so much that he returned the satirical favor as he writes this goofy-ass love song about fucking instead of breakfast. **Breakfast Can Wait**. Parts of it legit sounds like Chappelle's Prince impersonation more than it sounds like Prince. Not the super up-pitch portions.

Le Havas is back for the affirmation intro to **My Way Back Home**. Here, Prince sings about how he never wanted a normal life, but, he, uh didn't want to be famous, he just wanted to be treated like he was famous? I think that's a pretty common desire.

**All The Midnights In The World** is a short, Christmas caroly sounding happy Prince song.

The future-funk comes back with **Future Baby Mama**, which has a riff and a vocal pattern that always makes me think of "Tomorrow" from Annie. The tracks flows right into

**Sea Of Everything**. The vocals are back in falsettotown, as Prince wonders what one of his old loves is up to without him. He makes a pun on his name in the chorus, which feels about thirty years late. Maybe he thinks the joke

gets **Better With Time**. Falsettotown Prince continues his journey of looking back, this time focusing on a relationship that's going well. So, maybe his marriage? Wouldn't that be nice.

Who is **Chelsea Rogers**? An unknown Prince lovechild? An ex? A current mistress? A fictional creation from Nelson's head? Whoever she is, Prince wrote a banger about her. Once again, the background vocals lift this up from a good song to a great one. *Still got butt like a leather seat* may be my favorite wtf lyric from 21st century Prince. The horns and bass on this track are on-point.

There's no mystery that Prince calls himself **Mister Goodnight** in this slow jam about his lovers' inability to keep secrets because he is So Good At Sex. His outro rap is ... not his best, but also not his worst.

**Love Like Jazz** sounds like head bopping 70s elevator fodder. So not the amazing jazz you might have been hoping for. The background vocals seem slightly off, but I think it's intentional. "Off, but intentionally" being a decent description of most 1970s soft rock.

And then we bring the disco in for 1970s dancin' (definitely no "g" here) to **Lavaux**, as Prince jams about ... using international vacations to get over the disappointing race relations in the US ? Maybe. It's a nice uptempo bass-funk song.

**The One U Wanna C** is almost a 1990s Sheryl Crow song. (Crow doesn't appear in this reimagined discography, but she does pop up at least twice in the real world discography.) Prince *ain't tryin to be a hater* here but he wants to remind you that his penis is still available. Ladies.

**U're Gonna C Me** seems to be the anti-"On The Couch" song, as Prince bought a bed for his main honey, and he spends this song lamenting that she's not in it with him. He's so sad and so in love that he references It's A Wonderful Life, or maybe this is a secret shout out to Scott Woods.



Another slow jam serves as the final track. **This Could B Us** is neither Prince's finest closing track, nor his most inspired jam. But it's definitely a windy encapsulation of his 2005-2011 output.

All good things must come to an end. Ok, terrible things end as well. And *mediocre* things feel like they're going on forever and ever, but they also end.

This is the end of the discography that represents the music that Prince intended for release before he passed. There have been a couple of posthumous releases, and more are on the way. Some day, I might sit down and make a 14th entry called Posthumous.

HITnRUN was a series of albums Prince released with his final band, 3rdeyegirl. Only two were released, and they're ... of variable quality. But I've put together an EP length collection.

PRINCE



HIT RUN

phase one

It's a summer day. For some reason we're on a boat. A voice we haven't heard before, Hannah Welton-Ford, is singing about the weather. A guitar kicks in. So Prince is somewhere on this boat. With a guitar. The thing is, we're not here for another protoge, even though this one is very talented. She has a clear voice that you don't often hear in a Prince song. The **Whitecaps** slap the boat, as the guitar breezes over the deck. Then, somewhere in the vocal mix of the second chorus. It might be Prince. He's still under the deck, maybe, somewhere?

We get off the boat, and on to a train. Prince is Definitely part of the vocal mix now, playing the guiding track to Hannah Welton-Ford's leads. Look, Prince, I'm going to **Stopthistrain** if you don't get on vocals. These slowjams are nice, and definitely have your fingers all over them, but we're not here for your fingers, Prince. As the last line echoes out, we're waiting for you to hit the spotlight. One more ... ohhhh ...there.

The lick of a bass. Prince shows up. Talking about his old days, *taking the stage in our underwear*. Who can help but **Stare** at Prince when he's on stage? And now that we've put the proper funk into the music, we're in familiar territory. He even pulls out the "Kiss" lick to remind us who he was. Ok. But who are you now, Mr. Nelson?

The drums hit. The ... is that an accordion in the background ? The fuck kind of 70s slow jam is this? Oh, there's the falsetto. **When She Comes** could have come off of Come or maybe Lovesexy, something that's not one of my favorites. But this would have been one of my favorite tracks if it fell between two absolute bangers. But there's no bangers yet, so this weird respite feels unearned. But damn it's nice to hear that falsetto.

Here we go, Prince wants to *make this woman scream* in **Hardrocklover** which is half slow jam, half rock track. All Prince. This is the first production that sounds 2010s. It could be a Frank Ocean track. Beyonce could be on vocals here.

**Fixurlifeup** sounds like a Foo Fighters track. A really good one. The lyrics are generic *fixyourlifeup* bumper sticker wisdom. But the guitar is a buzzing wasp, killing everything in its path.

**Another Love** has a riff and vocal pattern that screams turn of the millenium rock. Incubus is the strongest contender. It's interesting to hear this musician who was such an influence on modern music evolve to sound more like the people he influenced than the people who influenced him. And while it's not his best material, he pulls it off much better than most musicians trying to sound like younger bands.

The drums bang in, and suddenly the riff from Rage Against The Machine's "Revolver" is in a Prince song. **Plectrumelectrum** was originally released by 3rdeyegirl member, Donna Gratis. Prince has funk'd it up a bit with a Very Prince guitar solo but this is 100% Donna's instrumental song (minus the heavy RatM influence).

I got a little worried when mixing the album that the last track was **Revelation**. I thought, didn't I already use this on Musicology? Turns out, that was "Reflection". This smooth jazz piano is a little bit too Kenny G for me. I wish there was something stronger from these albums to go out on. But at least we have a falsetto goodbye. I just can't get into the 90s brass, or the soft cymbals. It just screams vaselined camera shooting white curtains flowing in the breeze. I want a better final bow. But I guess I'm part of the *army of haters* for this album. Only, I don't hate it. I just want more from it. I appreciate the eventual fuzzy guitar. I just wanted more of it. But I guess that's the trick. To leave us wanting more.

Making the decisions for the U2 discography was simple. I've heard all of their albums, apart from the most recent two, hundreds of times. I've heard their two most recent albums enough times to make educated decisions about them. I consider myself an expert on U2.

I'm an amateur Prince fan.

I've owned most of his albums, but apart from Purple Rain and Sign O The Times, I didn't really sit down and listen to any of the albums straight through on a regular basis. There were four albums of his that I hadn't even heard of until I started this discography.

I can't say I learned anything from making the Reimagined U2 Discography. It was fun, and I enjoyed sharing some of the albums with people, but I didn't come out of it with a new appreciation for their music. I already liked what I liked, and was familiar with what I didn't enjoy.

I had forgotten that I have a bootleg of Prince and Bono singing "The Cross" from Sign O The Times, but recorded two years before the release of Sign O The Times. I'm almost afraid to listen to it, even though it's from a time when everyone involved in the performance was at their peak. I'm hoping the reason I don't remember it is not that it sucks, but that I was unfamiliar with the song, and stopped listening as soon as it got Jesusy.

What I learned from listening through Prince's discography and then condensing it, and remixing parts of it is that I'm a much bigger Prince fan than I thought. I once believed that the only Prince that mattered was the one producing music between 1985 and 1995. That everything after that was forgettable, and everything before it was inferior. I was very wrong.

Here's my ranking of the Reimagined Prince Discography from Least Favorite to Favorite. (Please note, I like All Of The Albums, That's Why They're On The Reimagined Discography, I just like some more than others.)

13: [Musicology](#)

12: [The HITnRUN EP](#)

11: [Prince](#)

10: [An Honest Man Vs The Truth](#)

9: [The Breakfast Album](#)

8. [Diamonds & Pearls](#)

7. [Rave](#)

6. [Lovesymbol](#)

5. [Revolution](#)

4. [The Vault](#)

3. [Purple](#)

2. [Controversy](#)

1. [Sign O The Times](#)



The top 10 Prince songs, based purely on how often they get stuck in my head:

10. "Count The Days"

9. "Purple Rain"

8. "Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic"

7. "Little Red Corvette"

6. "Scandalous"

5. "Diamonds & Pearls"

4. "Starfish & Coffee"

3. "Kiss"

2. "Sexy M.F."

1. "Crystal Ball"

I've been playing the remagined albums in the store, and have had several conversations with people about them. I had a pair of women around my age talking about how they were trying to get more familiar with the mid-90s Prince, and they wanted to get their hands on my version of The Vault. I

also had someone say how much they liked Purple because it was better than Purple Rain, his friend was quick to tell him he was wrong. Their discussion got more intense, so I hung back and nodded, rather than try and change anyone's opinion on what is, essentially, the same tracks in a different order, with a couple of additions.

Looking at the entirety of Prince's Discography, album to album, I'm not going to try and rank them all, but I will put them into categories. I'm not including any Greatest Hits collections, live albums, or any posthumous releases.

**Nah, You Can Keep That Trash Outta My House:** Chaos & Disorder, Kamasutra, Lotusflow3r, MPLSound

**I'm Not Going To Send The Whole Meal Back, I'll Just Eat Around The Parts I Don't Like:** Lovesexy, Graffiti Bridge, Crystal Ball, The Rainbow Children, Musicology, The Slaughterhouse, HITnRUN Phase One, HITnRUN Phase Two

**Not My Cup Of Tea, But I Understand The Appeal:** C-Note, NEWS, X-pectations  
**Cool:** For You, Prince, Dirty Mind, The Batman Soundtrack, Come, The Gold Experience, The Vault, Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic/Rave In2 The Joy Fantastic, 20ten, The Chocolate Invasion, Plectrumelectrum

**Hell Yes, I Need More Of That:** 1999, Parade, The Undertaker, Emancipation, Planet Earth, Art Official Age

**I Will Play This On Repeat Until My Friends Love It, Too:** Controversy, Around The World In A Day, Diamonds & Pearls, Emancipation, The Truth, 3121

**Truly, The Best Of The Best:** Purple Rain, Camille, The Black Album, Sign O The Times, Love Symbol, Goldn----a

I plan on coming back to this discography much later, and adding in a live album, a Best Of, and a posthumous album. But, for now, I'm pleased with where this journey took me. I am nowhere near tired of listening to the reimagined albums, even though I've been futzing around with them for about six weeks, listening to at least one album every day.

If you're looking for more writing about Prince from an actual expert on the subject, you should check out [www.ScottWoodsMakesLists.wordpress.com](http://www.ScottWoodsMakesLists.wordpress.com) , and buy his book [Prince and Little Weird Black Boy Gods: Prince Essays By Scott Woods](#) on Brick Cave Media.

cant hear  
the haters

