



Jeffrey Osborne *Worth It All*

Jeffrey Osborne is a drum beater, a heart beater and an odds beater. From his early days percussively propelling the band L.T.D. to its highest heights to spinning off as a solo artist when too few knew his name (but very soon would as the singer of “On the Wings of Love”), Jeffrey Osborne has defiantly marched to the rhythm of his own fiery spirit and come up a winner every time. He’s about to do it again with the release of ***Worth It All***, his first R&B album in over a decade besides his acclaimed 2013 Jazz CD, *A Time For Love*. This is Osborne’s first album for multi-award-winning Aristry/Mack Avenue Records. Jeffrey and his return to his R&B roots CD will feel right home.

Worth It All is a spirited and highly diversified 12-song collection of material all written, produced and sung by Jeffrey Osborne. All of the songs were written within the last several years and, for the most part, lovingly laser-focused on relationships and romance – subjects near and dear to his heart as he has been happily married for over three decades. Osborne – who made the milestone of 70-years-young on March 9, 2018 – proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that he can still “woo-woo-woo” with the greatest singers still on the planet. With ***Worth It All***, he is working overtime in his original realm of Soul.

“I wanted to do an old school R&B album this time,” Jeffrey explains. “Get back to my roots and do one of those good ol’ ‘Grown Folks’ records. I approached it thinking about songs I listened to in the past that influenced me then wrote my versions of them.” Asked why he felt the need to do an R&B album as his first project for a record company that has made its mark in the realm of Jazz, Jeffrey hypothesized, “I’ve been performing at all these so-called ‘Jazz festivals’ for the last 10 years only to find its mostly R&B artists or instrumental artists doing R&B-leaning music now. All these ‘smooth jazz’ guys and gals are playing R&B, so, I figured this is a good place to do an old school R&B album.”

Worth It All opens with the slinky, sexy mid-tempo techno groove “Let A Brotha Know” on which he decrees that all his woman needs do is let him know she desires him, and he will take over from there. Then the storybook romancin’ begins with the tastefully orchestrated early summer blossoming of love song “Greatest Night.” The calienté season of Verano is reprised for the laidback Henney-sippin’ house party groove of “Summer Nights,” lending a New Orleans feel by the trumpet of special guest **Rick Braun**. The infectious aforementioned Motown vibe rears its joyful head on the bouncy “Can’t Help Myself” that would make the Four Tops proud. Then there’s the serene lilt of the aching song of longing “Saving My Love” that recalls the mellow Island Pop vibration of Lionel Richie. Equally dreamy is the acoustic guitar and piano ballad “Your Lover” (as in “I will always be”) featuring Jeffrey’s old friend **Gerald Albright** on alto sax.

The centerpiece of ***Worth It All*** is its tutorial title track, a song that speaks to the challenges of weathering the storms of a long-term/long-run relationship to reach the sweeter rewards once the clouds have been chased away. Sung to electric piano accompaniment only, this is an instant classic that compels all who hear it to stop whatever they are doing and listen. “I believe people actually become closer working through trials and tribulations,” Jeffrey muses. “It’s about communication and not allowing that fire to slip away. Within the lyric are the lines, ‘The king and queen of hearts / Even they can be torn apart...’ The bliss we think we see on the outside of a relationship could be wracked with turmoil on the inside behind closed doors. A lot of people go through that...not realizing it’s so much better if you can work things out. Starting over with someone new is usually just an introduction to a whole new set of problems. Love is worth going through the little fires you have to put out from time to time. Of all the songs on the album, I believe this is the one with the most longevity.”

Jeffrey takes a few minor risks on other material from **Worth It All** including the techno dance track “Just Can’t Stand It,” the rock guitar-driven “Stay The Way You Are” (on which he praises his woman’s charms even if it takes her *for-e-ver* to get ready to go out sometimes...), the midnight love scenario of “I Want You” (NOT a cover of the Marvin Gaye/Leon Ware classic but an original blessed with both lead and background vocal hooks), and the rainy night sex down of “Work It” which he co-wrote with his son, Jeffrey Osborne, Jr., a skilled sound engineer who also kicks the mid-song rap. Dad is so proud he looks forward to bigger things from him. “‘Work It’ is the most different sounding song of the album,” Jeffrey states. “My son is 28 but this is one of the oldest sounding songs. He came up with the track, and I did melody and lyrics. He went old school on me!”

Worth It All comes to a close with “That Man.” Jeffrey relays, “This track was inspired by the oh-so-many musicians and singers that we have all encountered along the way who felt that they never got the shot that they deserved. Kinda like the character that Denzel Washington played in the movie, *Fences*, carrying around this bitterness that everyone else has to pay for.”

Jeffrey Osborne was born in Providence, Rhode Island, the youngest of 12 children – five brothers and six sisters, several also in possession of musical gifts. Jeffrey gravitated toward drums. When a black soul band called Love Men Ltd. came to a small club in primarily white Rhode Island, Jeffrey came to check them out. Turns out their drummer had been busted for possession of a small amount of marijuana – an offense so minor today but a big deal in 1970. Jeffrey slid into the R&B revue’s lineup seamlessly and they eventually shortened their name to L.T.D. In 1973, the band was signed to A&M Records in Hollywood (championed by Jerry Moss – the ‘M’ of A&M), relocated to the west coast and released its first album the following year. After a round of minor releases, L.T.D. broke big in the summer of ‘76 with the dynamically arranged “Love Ballad,” a song written by the late, great Clarence “Skip” Scarborough originally intended for Maurice White to sing leading Earth Wind & Fire. When “Reese” turned it down, it became the song that not only put 11-member L.T.D. on the map (topping Billboard’s R&B Singles chart for two weeks as the second single off their third album, *Love To The World*), it launched Jeffrey Osborne as a powerful lead singer, forcing him to come from behind the drums and step up into a full-fledged front man. This led to a string of radio hits and album cut classics that includes “(Every Time I Turn Around) Back in Love Again,” “Holding On (When Love is Gone),” “We Both Deserve Each Other’s Love,” “Where Did We Go Wrong” and “Shine On.”

After a 1970-1980 decade of service, Jeffrey made the bold decision to go solo – bold because though he was the lead singer on some phenomenal crossover hits, the democratic band had done as little as possible to promote his name. After taking a year off, Jeffrey first tested his solo wings singing the bouncy movie theme “I Just Want To Be Your Friend” for the Richard Pryor family film “The Toy,” then dropped his self-titled debut solo album on A&M which yielded a club hit with the slickly funky “I Really Don’t Need No Light” (which he co-wrote with Rufus member David “Hawk” Wolinski) and the adult contemporary crossover smash “On The Wings of Love” (which he co-wrote with Peter Schless). His sophomore album, *Stay With Me Tonight*, became a Platinum-seller on the strength of the four hit singles “We’re Going All The Way” (from the pens of Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil) “Don’t You Get So Mad,” “Plane Love” and the title track. Three more albums (two Gold-sellers) for A&M followed including the hits “The Last Time I Made Love” (a duet with Joyce “Baby Jean” Kennedy of Black Rock band Mother’s Finest), “Love Power” (a duet with Dionne Warwick), “You Should Be Mine (The Woo Woo Song)” [his biggest solo pop charter] and “She’s On The Left” (his last R&B #1). A switch to Clive Davis’ Arista Records yielded one album, *Only Human* in 1990, the title track peaking at #3 R&B. Jeffrey was also the lyricist of the Whitney Houston classic “All At Once” (music: Michael Masser).

The end of the ‘90s and the new millennium saw the indie releases *Something Warm For Christmas* (Modern Records – 1997), *That’s For Sure* (Private Music – 1999), the self-produced *Music Is Life*

(Koch – 2003) and *From The Soul* (Koch – 2005). Following an 8-year break from recording during which he sporadically toured, Jeffrey realized the dream of recording a Jazz album, *A Time For Love* (Saguaro Road Records – 2013), reuniting with his long-time producer – the late, great **George Duke** – who'd been at the helm of many of his greatest hits. Reflecting on Duke, Osborne shares, "The beauty of working with George was that he allowed you to learn and valued your input. I learned that simplicity is beauty. He was the first producer who could suggest things for me to try as a vocalist. Everybody before him was kind of intimidated."

Now proudly perched in the producer's chair utilizing all of the lessons and experiences he's garnered working with master of the craft ranging from Rod Temperton, Raymond Jones, Sam Dees and Michael Sembello to Hamish Stuart, Bruce Roberts, Ross Vannelli and Larry & Fonce Mizell, Jeffrey Osborne is balancing the rewards and the responsibilities of being the captain of his own ship.

"I produced all of this album," he states. "I did that once before on *Music Is Life*, only this time I wrote everything, too. Lyrics are usually the last thing I finish. I write from melody. I'll structure something and, somewhere in that melody, a few words will pop out. For me, those words are supposed to be there. From that point, I write around those phrases to express precisely what I am feeling."

"My album title, **Worth It All**, is also a double entendre that means it was worth it all for me to do my first R&B album *in thirteen years*," Jeffrey concludes. "I still believe that there's an audience for what my generation has to offer. As artists, we must maintain the integrity of our music. We've done it all our lives. Why should we have to depart from that today to be accepted? And where would we be departing to? I'm playing to my audience, not 19-year-old kids. Still...I think I'll take even a few more chances on my next record."

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