

"Heal the World"

Date range confirmed in Mike Smallcombe's "Making Michael" ("In the fall of 1989, Michael and his team began working on another environmental awareness anthem, 'Heal the World'")

Michael Jackson. "The Museum of HIStory" website (July 4, 1995). song commentary audio transcripts ([mirror](#)) ([archived mirror](#))

"Heal the World" is one of my favorites of anything I've ever recorded, because it's a public awareness song, and it's something that I think that will live in the hearts of people for a long time, because it's about something that's very special and something that's very innocent, and something that's very important. Literally healing our planet of its wounds and its suffering, and I think it's--it's one of my favorite things to do when we're on tour. Because, on stage, we blow up this giant inflatable planet Earth right on stage, and we have all these children from different countries, and they dress in their different national attire, and we sing the song. And it's amazing to look out in the audience, and you'll literally see, like, 200,000 people holding up candles and seeing the song. It's a very spiritual experience, and I really enjoy it.

Teddy Riley. producer (not for this song)

This has strong global issues – it was a big song. I didn't produce it though, all I did to that song was complement it. Heal The World had a lot more instrumentation on it before I got to it. I thought it needed different things that would really appeal. I did quite a lot of the percussion on there. I did that on there to bring something extra to the mix.

[TheBoombox interview](#)

I've been there when they did "Heal The World," and they had the whole full orchestra and when I saw that I said man, "I want that too Michael. Which song can we do that for?" And we wound up doing that for the song that we did called "Someone Put Your Hand Out."

["Hip-Hop Wired" \(July 8, 2009\) \(archived\)](#)

Michael Jackson's "Heal The World" [session] was a month. Matter of fact, I think longer than that 'cause they did it in days like with a string session.

Jane Goodall. primatologist. ["CNN" \(October 9, 2009\) \(archived\)](#)

Michael Jackson loved chimpanzees, said Jane Goodall: "They made him smile."

But the theme and the lyrics of ["Heal the World"] turned out to be about a better world for humanity.

"He wrote what he told me he thought was his most powerful song ever, but it didn't end up for animals," Jane Goodall said in a CNN interview Thursday night.

Goodall spoke exclusively to CNN in a Panamanian rainforest where she is exploring a partnership on behalf of Roots & Shoots, her global youth education program.

The interview comes as a new version of the song, first released on Jackson's 1991

"Dangerous" album, is being recorded by a collection of artists for release in late October.

Goodall became friends with Jackson about 20 years ago when he invited her to his Neverland Ranch, where "he talked about his dreams for the place to have animals running, looking free like they would in the wild. ... It was just a very charming day, very low key, nobody else was there," she said.

Goodall, famous for her 50 years of groundbreaking research on chimpanzees in Africa, said Jackson invited her because "he loved what I did."

"He loved chimpanzees," she said. "He loved to watch them feeding. He liked their faces. They made him smile."

Years later, she met Jackson's chimp, Bubbles, and has visited him at his retirement refuge in Florida, she said.

..."In some ways, he was like a child, and a very sweet and gentle child, and he wanted me to tell him many, many stories," she said. "Stories about the chimpanzees, the forests, animals, anything. He told me he liked the way I told stories."

Goodall, who travels the world to promote protection of endangered chimps, said she had hoped Jackson would help get her message out.

"I said to him, 'You know, Michael, if you want to help, you could do a concert and give us a percentage. Or much better, write a song,' " she said.

Jackson asked her for tapes of animals in distress because "he wanted to be angry and cry" as he wrote the song, which became "Heal the World," she said.

The original CD cover notes credited Goodall for inspiring the song, she said.

John Bähler, vocal arrangement and choir director. Christina Chaffin interview (May 31, 2011) ([archived](#))

[John Bähler] said Michael noted "Heal the World" as one of his favorite tracks. Knowing how highly Michael thought of the song, John said he takes pride in the fact that he wrote the vocal arrangement and directed the choir.

Michael's song "Heal the World" – the seventh song off his 1991 album *Dangerous* – was originally titled "Feed the World." Keyboardist David Paich first presented the song idea to John over the phone. John said he then went to Paich's home and recorded the chart arrangement. Though the song wasn't finished, he said Michael heard some of it and called him saying, "I did it again. I fell on my knees and wept."

When finalizing the arrangement and choir of the song, John said Michael was supposed to be present, but was sick with a cold and unavailable. According to John, they recorded the finished piece to play to Michael over the phone. "He flipped," John said. "[Michael] was in tears." John said without working on it every day, writing, arranging and finalizing the song took 6-7 months. He said from the time the song was originally titled "Feed the World," and then later changed to "Heal the World," several demos were recorded.