

= A Rush of Blood to the Head =

A Rush of Blood to the Head is the second studio album by the British alternative rock band Coldplay . Released on 26 August 2002 in the UK through the label Parlophone , the album was produced by the band and British record producer Ken Nelson . Recording started after the band became popular worldwide with the release of their debut album , Parachutes , and one of its singles in particular , " Yellow " . The album makes greater use of electric guitar and piano than its predecessor .

The album was made available in August 2002 , two months after its original planned release date . It was released on 27 August in the United States through Capitol Records . Capitol released a remastered version of the album in 2008 on a 180 @-@ gram vinyl record as part of the " From the Capitol Vaults " series . The album debuted and continued their huge commercial legacy , an ongoing pattern that began with Parachutes which made Coldplay one of the best @-@ selling bands worldwide . It topped the UK Albums Chart upon its first week of release in the United Kingdom , and became the eighth biggest @-@ selling album of the 21st century in the UK . The British Phonographic Industry has since certified the album 9 × Platinum for its accumulated sales of over 2 @.@ 8 million units in the UK and this album sold 20 million worldwide . The album spawned the hit singles " In My Place " , " The Scientist " , and " Clocks " . " God Put a Smile upon Your Face " was also released , but was significantly less successful .

A Rush of Blood to the Head has been critically acclaimed , and the band won the 2003 Grammy for Best Alternative Album for the second year in a row , and the 2004 Grammy for Record of the Year for the song " Clocks " . In 2012 it was ranked number 466 on Rolling Stone 's 500 Greatest Albums of All Time . It was also voted the best album of all time by the listeners of BBC Radio 2 in a poll conducted in 2013 .

= = Background = =

= = = Recording = = =

The band started recording the album in London a week after the September 11 attacks in the United States , during which their " poignant songs ... garnered larger audiences " . Coldplay had never stayed in London for an extended period before and were bombarded by problems focusing on the production process . They decided to relocate to Liverpool , where they had recorded some of the songs on Parachutes . Vocalist Chris Martin said that once there they " became obsessed with recording " . " In My Place " was the first song recorded for the album and the one that the band released as the album 's lead single " because it was the song that made us want to do a second album . It kept us going and made us think we could still write songs " , following " a strange period of not really knowing what we were doing " three months after the success of Parachutes .

The band wrote more than 20 songs for the album and some of those new tracks , including " In My Place " and " Animals " , were performed live during the tours promoting Parachutes . The album 's title was revealed through a post on the band 's official website .

During initial recording sessions in Liverpool , vocalist Chris Martin and guitarist Jonny Buckland worked alone , and only on weekends . Each Monday , they would present the song ideas that they had developed to their bandmates . With A Rush of Blood to the Head nearly completed , Martin went into the studio late one night and wrote a piano riff that he has stated " just came out " . The band recognised that this early version of the song , that would become " Clocks " , was special the first time Martin played it to them . Reasoning that it was too late to include the song on the album , they recorded a demo version and included it on a CD marked " Songs for # 3 " , featuring unfinished tracks they intended to work on for their third studio album .

By June 2002 , the band had completed A Rush of Blood to the Head , but thought their output sounded " rubbish " and reached an agreement with the label to postpone the release of the album until they were completely satisfied . Subsequently , many songs were discarded because they

sounded like they could have been on Parachutes . Martin has claimed that it would have been uninteresting : " It would have shown that we 're happy to sit back on what we 'd done , and we 're not . For us , it was important to progress and try to improve upon our abilities as musicians . " Such ambitions put the band under strain : " sometimes practice sessions ended abruptly with one or more members of Coldplay threatening to quit " .

After headlining the 2002 Glastonbury Festival , Coldplay returned to the studio and worked on some tracks from the " Songs for # 3 " they had produced earlier . Phil Harvey , the band 's manager , heard " Clocks " and urged them to rework it immediately : " No , you must do that song now ' cause you 're going on [in the lyrics] about urgency , and you 're talking about keeping this song back . That doesn 't make sense . "

= = = Cover art = = =

The album cover for A Rush of Blood to the Head was designed by photographer Sølve Sundsbø . Sundsbø had been hired by fashion magazine Dazed & Confused in the late 1990s to produce something with a " technological feel , something all white " . As an artist , he tried to do " stuff that hasn 't been done before , which is virtually impossible " ; he suggested taking shots using a three @-@ dimensional scanning machine .

The model for the shot wore an all @-@ white makeup because it produces the " best results " ; for the image , the model wore a twill @-@ coloured cape . The computer could not read the colours so it was replaced with spikes , and the head in the image was chopped because the machine only scanned 30 centimetres . The editor of the magazine liked the image and eventually featured it in one of their publications . Martin saw the image in the magazine and approached Sundsbø for permission to use the image as the cover of A Rush of Blood to the Head . For the album 's singles , Martin asked Sundsbø what he could do ; the latter suggested scanning the head of each member of the band (Sundsbø also did artwork duties for the Live 2003 home video) .

The booklet contains only two photos ; One with Coldplay in a location that was rumoured to be a forest , and one with the same band in the studio . The album cover was among the ten chosen by the Royal Mail for a set of " Classic Album Cover " postage stamps issued in January 2010 .

= = Composition = =

Recording the album after 11 September attacks gave the band a fresh perspective : " The new songs are reflective of new attitudes . [They tell listeners] not to be frightened . Anybody can achieve whatever they want to . " Most of the song lyrics are about urgency . Martin has commented that previous songs were more relaxed since they were in a comfortable state of mind : " Perhaps there 's a bit more urgency on some of these songs . And that 's born from all the places we 've been and the things we 've experienced . " Martin has explained , in relation to the theme of urgency , that the album 's title means " doing something on impulse " . Several songs on the album are about relationships . These tracks are based on reality , but according to Martin , they were written with a fictional twist : " Songs are like fairy tales : they have a beginning and an end and you can make it all work perfectly . Real life doesn 't work like that " .

The album includes ballads and acoustic songs featuring extensive use of guitar and piano . The U2 @-@ esque " epic rock " of the album 's opening track " Politik " , the piano @-@ driven " Clocks " , the loud guitars of " A Whisper " and the Crowded House @-@ inspired guitar in " Warning Sign " were seen as an extension of the band 's musical range . Chris Martin has stated that the album 's title track is an homage to American singer @-@ songwriter Johnny Cash , whom he considered one of " the greatest ... men with just guitars " .

The song " Green Eyes " was written by Chris Martin for two people : an " American friend " and bandmate , Jonny Buckland .

= = Reception = =

== Critical response ==

Upon release , A Rush of Blood to the Head received universal acclaim from contemporary critics . Review aggregating website Metacritic reports a normalised score of 80 % based on 25 reviews . Many felt that it built upon their previous album , Parachutes . Alexis Petridis of the newspaper The Guardian wrote that the band 's " new assurance is everywhere ... the timidity of Parachutes is nowhere to be found " . He concludes , " It sounds like an album ready to take on the world , and win . "

Kelefa Sanneh of The New York Times praised the album , commenting that it is " one of the year 's best albums " and describing it as " sparser , stranger and even catchier than its predecessor " . Rolling Stone magazine 's Rob Sheffield , said that " A Rush of Blood to the Head is a nervier , edgier , thoroughly surprising album " , adding , " where Parachutes was the clumsy diary of a high @-@ strung kid , A Rush of Blood sounds more like a band with the confidence to test its own limits . " Ted Kessler of NME lauded the album , calling it " an album of outstanding natural beauty , an organic , wholesome work . " MacKenzie Wilson of AllMusic echoed the above comments , saying that it is a " strong album " . Wilson , who compliments Martin for his " sharpened " falsetto and refined " haunting delivery " and Buckland for his " riveting guitar work " , notes that " regardless of the band still being in their mid @-@ twenties , they 've made an amazing record " . Emma Pearse of the American newspaper The Village Voice has the same sentiments , stating that it is " a little edgier , trancier , and more conversational " compared to Parachutes . Robert Christgau gave the album a one @-@ star honourable mention () and quipped , " Let Green Eyes dump him for real and we 'll see how long he hums in the void . "

== Commercial performance ==

A Rush of Blood to the Head made an entrance into the UK Albums Chart upon its debut week , entering at number 1 and moving 273 @,@ 924 copies . The British Phonographic Industry has since certified the album eight times platinum for its accumulated sales of over 2 @.@ 4 million copies . With the subsequent release of " Clocks " and " The Scientist " , the album spent over one year on the chart . A Rush of Blood to the Head has been placed at number seven on the list of United Kingdom 's 20 biggest @-@ selling albums of the 21st century , published by the British trade paper Music Week . In July 2011 , A Rush of Blood to the Head climbed from No. 176 back to No. 44 in the album 's 250th charting week there . As of May 2014 , the album had sold 2 @,@ 875 @,@ 980 copies in the UK , making it Coldplay 's best @-@ selling album . As of March 2015 , it is the tenth best @-@ selling album of the 21st century .

In the United States , A Rush of Blood was Coldplay 's first venture into the top 5 with 144 @,@ 000 copies sold initially , stronger than its predecessor , Parachutes , which debuted at number 189 in December 2000 . It has since been certified four times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America , and it has sold sales 4 @,@ 925 @,@ 000 copies as of July 2014 . It has been certified seven times platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association , having accumulated shipments of over 490 @,@ 000 units , and four times platinum by the Canadian Recording Industry Association for shipments of over 400 @,@ 000 .

== Awards and accolades ==

A Rush of Blood to the Head has earned the band several awards from both the domestic and international music press . In 2002 it was awarded Best Album at the Q Awards . In the same year , the band won two Grammy Awards : Best Alternative Music Album and Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for the song " In My Place " . In 2003 A Rush of Blood to the Head won Best British Album at the BRIT Awards , and the following year the band earned their first Grammy Award for Record of the Year for the song " Clocks " for a total of 3 Grammys for this album . The band won 3 VMAS at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards for Best Group Video , Breakthrough

Video and Best Direction in a Video for " The Scientist " and its music video on YouTube has over 90 million views . The same year , they won the awards best NME album of the year , and best album of the year at the NME awards .

The album was chosen in 2002 as Billboard magazine 's Critics ' Choice . Kludge included it on their list of best albums of 2002 . In 2012 , it was ranked number 466 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time . It was also ranked 21st on Rolling Stone 's list of top 100 albums of the 2000s . In 2007 The National Association of Recording Merchandisers and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame released a list of what they term " The Definitive 200 Albums of All Time " ; A Rush of Blood to the Head ranks at number 65 on the list . The album was nominated for the BRITs Album of 30 Years at the 2010 BRIT Awards .

In a BBC Radio poll in 2013 , the album topped the list ahead of Hopes and Fears by Keane , Rio by Duran Duran and The Dark Side of the Moon by Pink Floyd .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Chris Martin , Jonny Buckland , Guy Berryman , and Will Champion .

= = Personnel = =

= = Charts and certifications = =