= Diamonds (Rihanna song) =

" Diamonds " is a song recorded by Barbadian singer Rihanna for her seventh studio album , Unapologetic (2012) . It was written by Sia Furler together with its producers , Benny Blanco and StarGate . The song premiered on September 26 , 2012 , during the Elvis Duran and the Morning Show and was digitally released the following day as the lead single from Unapologetic . Def Jam Recordings serviced the single to contemporary hit radio in the United States on October 2 . " Diamonds " is a mid @-@ tempo electronic and pop ballad that features heavy synthesizers , orchestral sounds and electronic rhythms . The song 's lyrics serve as a departure from the themes of unhealthy relationships that were on Rihanna 's previous singles and contain a prominent concept of love .

"Diamonds" was well received by most critics, some of whom complimented Rihanna 's different musical direction, while others criticized the song 's production. The single topped music charts in over twenty countries, including the United States, where it became Rihanna 's twelfth number one single on the Billboard Hot 100 and tied her with Madonna and The Supremes for the fifth @-@ most number one singles in the chart 's history." Diamonds " was certified five @-@ times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and sold over 3 @.@ 5 million digital copies in the country. By May 2013, it had sold over 7 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide and became one of the best @-@ selling singles of all @-@ time.

The song 's music video was shot by director Anthony Mandler , a frequent collaborator of Rihanna 's , and depicts her in four environments that represent the elements of earth , air , water and fire . The video received positive reviews and was praised for its imagery . Some critics believe that the heavily tattooed man intertwined with Rihanna 's arm in the video resembles Chris Brown . The singer performed " Diamonds " on television shows such as Saturday Night Live and The X Factor and included it on the 777 , Diamonds and The Monster Tour set lists . The American Society of Composers , Authors , and Publishers (ASCAP) recognized it as one of the most performed songs of 2013 and 2014 . The official remix of " Diamonds " featured rapper Kanye West and was released on November 16 , 2012 . The song has been covered by various recording artists , including Josef Salvat , who released his own cover of " Diamonds " as a single .

= = Writing and production = =

In 2012 , American songwriter and record producer Benny Blanco met with Norwegian production duo StarGate at a recording studio in New York City to write new songs , including one for Rihanna . StarGate had previously produced her singles " Don 't Stop the Music " (2007) and " Only Girl (In the World) " (2010) . According to Blanco , he and StarGate wanted to deviate from Rihanna 's usual sound and produce as though the song would be for a rapper such as Kanye West : " It 's the one that we weren 't thinking Rihanna ... that turned into the Rihanna record ... But that 's how it always happens like with me " . They produced the song 's drum machine beat after the other instrumental music was recorded .

StarGate 's Mikkel Eriksen told The New York Times that Blanco took a recorded snippet of Eriksen 's singing , altered it electronically , and made it sound " dirtier " . He then applied timbre and used audio software to create ghostly accompaniment lines . Eriksen described Blanco 's style as " unorthodox , as he almost never plays the keyboards but throws in weird samples and alters them to the right pitch to go with the song . " Australian singer @-@ songwriter Sia later joined them and wrote the lyrics for " Diamonds " in 14 minutes .

After the song was completed, they wanted to play it to Rihanna, but Blanco was skeptical about the reaction towards the song because of its slow sound. After StarGate played it to her, they called Blanco from London and told him that she liked the song: "She 's flippin' out. She played it like seven times in a row. It 's her favorite song. "Phil Tan and the assistant Daniela Rivera, mixed and mastered "Diamonds". Recalling it, in an interview with The Huffington Post, Blanco commented, "we needed to have it recorded, the beat finished, mixed and mastered in 24 hours. She was recording in a separate part of the world, sending back the files, we 're finishing the music

and then we 're mixing and mastering it, and then it was out in a few days. It 's fucking amazing and incredible." Kuk Harrell produced Rihanna 's vocals on the song and recorded them together with Marcos Tovar.

= = Release and artwork = =

On September 12 , 2012 , Def Jam France announced via Twitter that Rihanna would release a new single the following week and that her seventh studio album will be released in November . However , the tweet was shortly deleted and replaced with another clarifying that more information will be given on September 13 . In an interview with iHeartRadio at their annual music festival in September , Rihanna confirmed " Diamonds " as her new single and said that it would first be played on American radio beginning September 26 . She described it as an easy @-@ going , but optimistic song that is " happy and hippy " rather than dance @-@ oriented and said that the song " gives me such a great feeling when I listen to it . The lyrics are very hopeful and positive , but it 's about love . "

The single 's cover artwork was revealed on September 24 and depicted Rihanna rolling diamonds in a manner suggestive of joint rolling . On September 26 , Rihanna posted the full lyrics of the song in a PDF on her official website Rihanna7.com. " Diamonds " premiered the same day on the Elvis Duran and the Morning Show , and on the following day , it was released as a digital download on the 7 Digital store . In the United Kingdom , the song was released to 7 Digital on September 28 . Def Jam Recordings solicited the single to contemporary hit radio in the United States on October 2 . On November 5 , it was released in Germany as a CD single , which it also contained the song 's Bimbo Jones Vocal Remix . On December 18 , eight digital remixes of the single were digitally released .

= = Composition and lyrical interpretation = =

" Diamonds " has a length of three minutes and forty @-@ five seconds . Allmusic critic Andy Kellman said that it is a mid @-@ tempo pop ballad , while Michael Baggs of Gigwise characterized it as a mid @-@ tempo electronic song . It features heavy synthesizers , orchestral sounds and electronic rhythms accompanied with Rihanna 's vocal performance . Rolling Stone magazine wrote that " the track 's production mainly stays out of Rihanna 's way , letting the pop star build hooks with layers of her voice . " In a review of Unapologetic , Stacy @-@ Ann Ellis of Vibe noted that an improvement in the singer 's singing is evinced by ballads such as " Diamonds " and Stay " . According to EMI Music Publishing 's digital sheet music for the song , " Diamonds " is composed in the key of B minor and set in common time signature , and has a moderately slow groove of 92 beats per minute . Rihanna 's vocals span from the low note of F ? 3 to the high note of F ? 5 . Lyrically , " Diamonds " is a departure from Rihanna 's recurring themes of unhealthy relationships

Lyrically , " Diamonds " is a departure from Rihanna 's recurring themes of unhealthy relationships on her other songs , and contains a prominent concept of love . The first verse introduces the song 's concept : " Find light in the beautiful sea / I choose to be happy / You and I , you and I / We 're like diamonds in the sky . " The hook continues this metaphor : " So shine bright , tonight , you and I / We 're beautiful like diamonds in the sky / Eye to eye , so alive . " According to Glenn Yoder of The Boston Globe , the song shows Rihanna differently than how she is viewed by the public because of lyrics such as " I choose to be happy " and " We 're like diamonds in the sky " . James Montgomery of MTV News commented that she embraces the positivity and fulfillment of a realized relationship , particularly with the line " When you hold me , I 'm alive " , and admits " I knew that we 'd become one right away " . Lindsay DiMattina of Hollywood.com interpreted that Rihanna is crying out for her lover when she sings lines such as , " When you hold me , I 'm alive , " and " At first sight I felt the energy of sun rays / I saw the life inside your eyes . " The Herald Sun asserted that the lyrics were most likely inspired by Rihanna 's private life .

"Diamonds" was well received by most critics . In a positive review of the song , Robert Copsey of Digital Spy gave it four out of five stars and praised Rihanna 's direction towards a " softer and more prolific edge " . Brittany Lewis of GlobalGrind called " Diamonds " a catchy song and felt that it had the potential to be another hit for Rihanna . Glenn Gamboa of Newsday said that , although it does not sound like an emphatic hit , the lyrical content of the song depicts a " personal shift " for Rihanna . According to James Montgomery of MTV News , " Diamonds " is more positive than previous singles such as " We Found Love " and " Where Have You Been " , despite its moderate tempo . Lindsey DiMattina of Hollywood.com said that Rihanna 's singing is stronger than ever . Contactmusic 's reviewer described it as a " laid @-@ back track " , and suggested that the lyrical content is related to her former boyfriend Chris Brown . In a track @-@ by @-@ track review of Unapologetic , Andrew Hampp of Billboard found the song inspiring and commented that it " finds Rihanna doing one of her throatiest , most impassioned vocals to date " . Andy Kellman of Allmusic cited the song as one of the highlights on Unapologetic , and gave it three and a half stars .

In a less enthusiastic critique, Jon Caramanica of The New York Times likened "Diamonds" to a James Bond movie theme song, but with "insipid lyrics". Jim Farber of the New York Daily News felt that the song is not as evocative as it attempts to be and lacks the sense of mystery and engaging production found on "We Found Love". Kevin Blair of the Irish Independent 's, Independent Woman, was critical of the song for deviating from Rihanna 's previous dance and R & B songs and dismissed it as a "chugging, faintly misty @-@ eyed, middle of the road pop song". Chris Richards of The Washington Post panned the song as a "power ballad without much power".

= = Recognition and accolades = =

Ernest Baker and Lauren Nostro of Complex ranked "Diamonds "atop their list of The 10 Best Guilty Pleasure Songs of 2012 and wrote that , although the song is unlike Rihanna 's louder , more anthemic songs , "apparently the world loves to see a softer side of her , too . "Black Entertainment Television placed the single at number six on their 50 Best Songs of 2012 list and called it one of Rihanna 's most emotive performances . UK E! Online 's reviewer named it the fifth best song of the year and said that Rihanna 's vocal performance on the song validates the attention she had received since her breakthrough with "Umbrella ". Irish Independent 's Jim Hayes ranked it as the year 's tenth @-@ best song and described it as "a laid back slow burner that invades and refuses to leave ". A reviewer from The Huffington Post named "Diamonds " one of The 12 Best Songs by Women in 2012 .

At the ASCAP Pop Music Awards , the American Society of Composers , Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) recognized it as one of the most performed songs of 2013 and 2014 respectively . " Diamonds " received the Billboard accolade for Top R & B Song at the 2013 award ceremony held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas . At the 2013 BET Awards , the song was nominated for the Coca @-@ Cola Viewer 's Choice accolade , however , it lost to " Started from the Bottom " by Drake . It also received nominations for Best International Song at the NRJ Music Awards of 2013 in France and for Hit of the Year at the 2013 Echo Awards in Germany . " Diamonds " received a nomination for Best Song at the 2013 MTV Europe Music Awards .

= = Commercial performance = =

= = = North America = = =

In the US, "Diamonds "debuted at number 16 on the Billboard Hot 100 and sold 133 @,@ 000 copies in its first week. In its fourth week, it climbed to number eight on the chart and became Rihanna 's twenty @-@ third top @-@ ten single. For the week ending December 1, 2012, the song became Rihanna 's twelfth number @-@ one on the chart, which ended the nine @-@ week reign of Maroon 5 's "One More Night". With the feat, Rihanna tied Madonna and Supremes as

the artists with the fifth @-@ most number ones in the chart 's history . Rihanna also passed Mariah Carey as the female artist to mark 12 number @-@ one songs the fastest on the chart by achieving the feat in six years and seven months , which bested Carey 's stretch of seven years , one month , and two weeks . " Diamonds " charted for a second consecutive week atop the Hot 100 , while her album Unapologetic topped the Billboard 200 . As a result , Rihanna became only the second artist of 2012 to top both the Billboard singles and albums charts simultaneously ; the first to do so was English singer Adele .

On the Radio Songs chart, " Diamonds " debuted at number 28. In its fourth week, it climbed to number ten, becoming Rihanna 's 19th top ten, breaking a tie with Lil Wayne for the second @-@ best sum in the list 's 22 @-@ year history; only Mariah Carey (23) has more. For the issue dated December 15, the song topped the chart, becoming Rihanna 's tenth number one and placing second for female artists with the most chart toppers, only behind Mariah Carey (11). On the Pop Songs chart, "Diamonds "debuted at number 29, extending Rihanna's lead as the artist with the most appearances on the chart. On October 11, 2012, Billboard unveiled new methodology for the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart, newly factoring digital download sales and streaming data into the 50 @-@ position rankings, along with existing radio airplay data monitored by Nielsen BDS . Due to this, " Diamonds " saw a huge leap from number 66 to number one, marking Rihanna 's second single as a lead artist to top the chart; it topped the chart for fourteen consecutive weeks. " Diamonds "topped the Hot Dance / Club Songs chart, becoming Rihanna's nineteenth number one , tying her with Janet Jackson for the second @-@ most number ones in the chart 's 36 @-@ year history . Only Madonna has more (43). "Diamonds "was certified five @-@ times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and sold over 3 @.@ 52 million copies in the country.

In Canada, the song debuted at number nine on the Canadian Hot 100 for the issue dated October 13, 2012. The song peaked at number one on the issue dated November 24, 2012, becoming Rihanna 's sixth single to reach number one on the chart. It remained atop of it for four consecutive weeks. It was certified platinum by Music Canada denoting sales of over 80 @,@ 000 copies.

= = = Europe and Oceania = = =

" Diamonds " made its first chart appearance in Ireland on September 27 , 2012 , where it debuted at number 17 . It reached its peak of number two on October 25 , 2012 . The single debuted at number one on both the United Kingdom 's pop and R & B singles charts on October 7 , 2012 , with over 105 @,@ 000 copies sold . This gave Rihanna her seventh number @-@ one single in the country . After nine weeks on the pop chart , " Diamonds " rose from number ten to three , following Rihanna 's performance of the song on The X Factor the previous week . From its debut , the song remained atop the R & B chart for three consecutive weeks before being deposed of the top spot by Labrinth and Emeli Sandé 's " Beneath Your Beautiful " . As of March 2014 , " Diamonds " has sold over one million copies in the UK , and became Rihanna 's fourth single to achieve that feat . With that , the singer became only the second artist to have most million selling singles in the country , only behind The Beatles . The single is the 30th best @-@ selling song of all time by a female artist in the country .

"Diamonds " debuted at number one in France , becoming Rihanna 's fourth number @-@ one single in the country and remaining at the top spot for three consecutive weeks . " Diamonds " also peaked at number one in Germany for ten consecutive weeks , becoming Rihanna 's fifth number @-@ one single in the country and surpassing " Umbrella " (2007) as her longest @-@ running German number @-@ one single . The song was placed at number seven on the German 2012 Year @-@ End singles chart and was certified platinum , denoting sales of 300 @,@ 000 copies in the country . " Diamonds " remained number one in Norway for eleven consecutive weeks , the Czech Republic for eight , Denmark for six , Switzerland for five , Austria for four , Finland for three weeks and Scotland one .

" Diamonds " entered the New Zealand Singles Chart at number five on October 8, 2012. After eight weeks in the top ten, the song peaked at number two. The single has received a double @-@

platinum certification from the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand , denoting sales of 30 @,@ 000 copies . " Diamonds " debuted at number eight on the Australian Singles Chart on October 14 , 2012 . The song reached a peak of number six on November 4 , 2012 . The song has been certified five @-@ times platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association , denoting sales of 350 @,@ 000 copies . By May 2013 , it had sold over 7 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide and became one of the best @-@ selling singles of all @-@ time .

= = Music video = =

= = = Background and concept = = =

Rihanna began to film the music video for "Diamonds " on October 21, 2012, at the Mojave Desert in Lancaster, California. It was directed by her regular collaborator Anthony Mandler, who previously directed her videos for "Russian Roulette "(2009) and "Man Down "(2011). Photographs of the production leaked to the press the same day and showed Rihanna in a white and black dress in front of a fire. Ethan Sacks of the New York Daily News remarked that she " looked like a gem on the set of her video shoot . " Rihanna said that she wanted the video 's abstract scenes to capture the appropriate emotion for the audience. Mandler sought to create a " wider landscape "by suggesting and transfiguring ideas for viewers through the video: "[T] hey needed to feel like dream vignettes, like, when you wake up from a dream, you realize what you were dreaming about is not really what it was about, it was about something else. " He also tried to relate the video 's concept to Rihanna 's personal life: " What 's truth or fiction? You know ' Is she drowning, or is she in complete ecstasy? Are those hands coming apart, or are they finding each other? ' ... we tried to bring up these deeper questions that relate to song and her life and finding beauty in chaos and finding beauty in pain and finding pain in beauty. " On November 7, a behind @-@ the @-@ scenes video was posted on MTV 's official website . It featured Rihanna in a " leopard @-@ print " robe as she emerged from a trailer and headed to the shooting set . The scenes were intercut with police officers who chase armed fighters. Rihanna stands in a deserted landscape in the video 's other scenes . The music video for " Diamonds " premiered November 8 on MTV. The video was also made available for streaming at Rihanna.MTV.com. It was digitally released on November 14 via the iTunes Store.

= = = Synopsis = = =

The music video opens with a view of Rihanna lying in open waters , as other scenes of diamonds being rolled in a manner suggestive of making a joint are intercut? a scene reminiscent of the single 's artwork . As the video progresses Rihanna is shown running on a highway . In a black @-@ and @-@ white scene , Rihanna licks the joint and begins smoking it . The image fades to black as the song begins . Rihanna performs in the same black @-@ and @-@ white setting while in a black corset . Images of Rihanna on a bed in a room while singing are shown , with objects breaking , curtains falling and roses burning in reverse effect . Rihanna is shown again on the highway , running away from what appears to be the headlights of a chasing car . She then stops as she looks up to the night sky at an aurora view . Throughout the video , Rihanna 's hand is shown intertwined with that of a heavily tattooed man , whose face is not shown in the video . As the second verse starts , Rihanna is shown in a desert where horses run freely . Scenes of a street battle are later shown , depicting burning cars and broken glass around the environment . As the video continues , the singer and her lover 's hands are shown slowly slipping apart , with only their fingertips touching towards the conclusion of the video . The video ends with Rihanna once again floating alone in the open waters .

= = = Reception = = =

Upon its release , the video received positive response from critics . James Montgomery of MTV News called it visually striking and observed a great deal of " evocative imagery (glamorous black @-@ and @-@ white close @-@ ups , thick plumes of translucent smoke , oversaturated hill @-@ scapes , artfully silhouetted stallions) " . He said that , like the song , the video is by turns garish and very intimate . The website 's Jocelyn Vena thought that it had dreamlike and surrealistic images of Rihanna , who moves through set @-@ ups that are occasionally exceptional . E ! Online 's Bruna Nessif said that the video shows an abundance of elaborate imagery , narratives , and especially a " mysterious and sexy " Rihanna . Additionally , she found it obvious that the body of a heavily tattooed man 's arm , which Rihanna clings to desperately , is a reference to Chris Brown . NME magazine observed Rihanna being shown in four environments that represent the four elements of the earth , air , water and fire . Billy Johnson Jr. of Yahoo ! Canada felt the video had failed to capture the song 's vivid celebration of a love affair and stated , " It seems as though [Rihanna is] in chaos , reflecting on happier times . " Marc Hogan of Spin concluded that the video was a " confirmation of Rihanna 's awkward segue into adult @-@ contemporary @-@ dom . " The video for " Diamonds " was Vevo 's fourth most @-@ viewed visual of 2013 .

= = Live performances = =

Rihanna first performed " Diamonds " on November 7 , 2012 , at the Victoria 's Secret Fashion Show , where she wore black lingerie with black thigh high stockings and ankle boots ; the show was aired by CBS on December 4 . On November 10 , Rihanna performed the song on Saturday Night Live . New York magazine 's Joe Reid said that her performance was the highlight of the show 's episode and favored the digitized background in particular , which he described as " overt weirdness " that was ultimately " pretty endearing " . Tess Lynch of Gratland was impressed by Rihanna 's " exceptional singing " and wrote that the background imagery was a " powerful " and " crazy spectacle that astonished viewers " . Lynch agreed with episode host Anne Hathaway , who had said that Rihanna was " a goddess . "

"Diamonds" was included on the set list for Rihanna 's 2012 promotional tour , the 777 Tour . On November 25 , the singer performed the song on series 9 of The X Factor in the UK . The performance featured the singer dressed in a black gown on a square platform . As the chorus began , water effects poured down around her on the outside of the stage . By the final chorus , the water centered into the platform and wet the singer . Hayes of Irish Independent praised the performance and stated that it " put everything ? and everybody ? else to shame . " On December 8 , Rihanna performed the song on Wetten , dass .. ? (" Wanna bet that .. ? ") in Germany . She wore futuristic sunglasses , a white top , and leather pants . She also performed " Diamonds " on La Chanson de I 'année (" The song of the Year ") in France , on December 10 , 2012 , which was broadcast on December 29 , 2012 . She performed the song also on the season three finale of the American television series The Voice , where she wore long metallic talons . The single was included as the closing song on the set list of Rihanna 's fifth worldwide tour titled the Diamonds World Tour (2013) .

Rihanna performed "Diamonds " at the 2013 American Music Awards on November 24, 2013, during the acceptance of the Icon Award. The performance featured the singer wearing a long black dress plunged down to her navel and diamond adornments in her hair. She was joined by an orchestra that included a conductor which accompanied her as a rock band produced the beat. Kory Grow of Rolling Stone magazine labeled the performance as "stunning". Additionally, out of a total sixteen performances at the ceremony, he placed Rihanna 's rendition of "Diamonds" at number one writing, "she gave a performance that showed she could live up to the honor ". Los Angeles Times' Mikael Wood stated that during the performance Rihanna dominated the stage pointing that she looked like a young version of Grace Jones. The single was included on the set list of Rihanna 's joint 2014 tour with rapper Eminem, The Monster Tour. Rihanna performed "Diamonds" on November 11, 2014 during the Concert for Valor held in Washington, D.C.

On BBC Radio 1 's live lounge , Jessie Ware performed a slightly jazzy version of the song , which Spin magazine 's Marc Hogan said was musically reminiscent of the xx and vocally similar to D 'Angelo . Sia Furler , who co @-@ wrote " Diamonds " , performed it with a keyboard accompaniment at the Norwegian @-@ American Achievement Ceremony on November 18 . On November 15 , American singer @-@ songwriter Zola Jesus recorded a cover version of " Diamonds " . " Diamonds " was used in the promotional video of Istanbul 's bid for the 2020 Summer Olympics . Coaches Ricky Martin , Delta Goodrem , Joel Madden and Seal during the second season of The Voice Australia . In 2015 , coaches Jennifer Lopez , Keith Urban and Harry Connick , Jr. covered the song in a mash @-@ up with Bruno Mars ' 2013 single , " Locked Out of Heaven " during the final show of the fourteenth season of American Idol .

"Diamonds" was remixed by rapper Flo Rida, whose version was premiered on November 12 by American magazine Rap @-@ Up. He had previously performed on unofficial remixes of Rihanna 's "We Found Love" and "Where Have You Been". The official remix of "Diamonds", which featured rapper Kanye West, was released on November 16 as a digital download via SoundCloud and iTunes. West 's verse starts at the beginning of the remix, as he raps lines such as "We the cause of all the commotion / Your mouth runnin 'by where is you goin?". He also quotes the theme song from The Fresh Prince of Bel @-@ Air, while proclaiming to be "on his Brad Pitt". MTV News 'James Montgomery wrote that "there 's certainly no shortage of Kanye 's patented swagger, and the new remix also adds some clubby wallop to the laid @-@ back track." Henna Kathiya of MTV Rapfix remarked that West adds "some classic Ye flavor" to the original song. On December 4, a new remix leaked online. It featured Eve, who rapped lines such as, "You glisten so beautiful, priceless / Listen to me, I need you to know / How you can change my whole world."

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= = = Josef Salvat version = = =
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Australian artist Josef Salvat covered " Diamonds " in his EP In Your Prime (2014) . The track became popular after Sony used it in its ad " Ice Bubbles " for its new 4K Ultra HD television screen . The Sony ad was filmed in Mount Whisler , Nunavut , Canada using Salvat 's version of " Diamonds " . Josef Salvat 's version has reached number 2 on French SNEP Official Singles Charts also making it to number 11 on the German Singles Chart and number 18 on the Belgian Ultratop charts .

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= = = = Track list = = = = 

CD single (RCA) (Sony Music) 

" Diamonds " (4:07) 

" Diamonds " (Live) (3:51) 

= = = Charts = = = 

= = Formats and track listing = = 

= = Credits and personnel = =
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Credits adapted from the liner notes of Unapologetic .

Locations

Recorded at Roc the Mic Studios, New York City, New York; Westlake Recording Studios, Los Angeles, California

Mixed at Ninja Club Studios , Atlanta , Georgia .

Personnel

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

Since May 9 , 2013 RIAA certifications for digital singles include on @-@ demand audio and / or video song streams in addition to downloads .

= = Radio and release history = =