

= Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes =

Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes is the second solo album by Thom Yorke of the English alternative rock band Radiohead , released on 26 September 2014 . It was produced by Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich , with artwork by Radiohead artist Stanley Donwood . The album blends Yorke 's vocals and piano playing with electronic beats and textures .

Yorke first released Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes independently via a paid @-@ for BitTorrent bundle . He and Godrich expressed their wish to find " an effective way of handing some control of internet commerce back to people who are creating the work " . The album was downloaded over a million times within six days of release , and became the most @-@ downloaded legal torrent of 2014 ; by February 2015 , it had been downloaded over 4 @.@ 5 million times .

A vinyl edition was also sold from the official site , and in August 2015 a CD edition was released in Japan by Hostess Entertainment . On 26 December 2014 , Yorke released Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes on the online music shop Bandcamp alongside a new song , " Youwouldn'tlikemewhenI'mangry " . The album received generally positive reviews and Rolling Stone named it one of the best of 2014 .

= = Background = =

In 2007 , Radiohead released their album In Rainbows independently as a pay @-@ what @-@ you @-@ want download . Matt Mason , chief content officer at BitTorrent Inc , said the release was the " gold standard for how to do something direct @-@ to @-@ fan on the internet " , and began talks with Radiohead 's managers about the future of online music distribution . Radiohead singer Yorke and Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich had expressed concern about how the internet has affected the music business , and accused the music streaming service Spotify of not compensating new artists fairly . In 2013 , Godrich stated : " [Streaming] cannot work as a way of supporting new artists ' work . Spotify and the like either have to address that fact and change the model for new releases or else all new music producers should be bold and vote with their feet . " Mason told The Guardian that Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes was " born out of these conversations we had on how the internet should work for artists : the vision we both share , which is that at present we don 't have a sustainable business model for artists on the internet . "

In 2013 , Yorke contributed music to The UK Gold , a documentary about tax avoidance in the UK ; the soundtrack includes an early version of the Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes track " A Brain in a Bottle " . The following year , elements of Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes were used in the soundtrack for the second version of the Polyfauna app , released on 1 September 2014 , before the album 's announcement . The app , for Android and iOS phones , is an " experimental collaboration " between Radiohead and the British digital arts studio Universal Everything . Later that month , Yorke posted a photo of an unidentified vinyl record on Tumblr , prompting media speculation about a new album release .

= = Release = =

Yorke and producer Nigel Godrich announced Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes on 26 September 2014 . It was released the same day via the peer @-@ to @-@ peer file sharing protocol BitTorrent using BitTorrent Inc 's " bundles " initiative , whereby creators distribute their work in packaged torrent files . It was the first album to use BitTorrent 's " pay @-@ gate " feature ; customers pay US \$ 6 (£ 3 @.@ 69) to download the Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes torrent bundle containing eight MP3 files , cover artwork by Stanley Donwood , and a music video for " A Brain in a Bottle " featuring Yorke in boxing gloves . Users can also download a free torrent bundle containing only the " Brain in a Bottle " MP3 and video , or order a " deluxe " vinyl edition of the album packaged in a bespoke antistatic bag .

In a press release announcing the album , Yorke and Godrich wrote :

== Other formats ==

On 26 December 2014 , Yorke released *Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes* in MP3 and FLAC formats for £ 3 @. @ 86 on the online music shop Bandcamp . He also released a free new song , " Youwouldn'tlikemewhenI'mangry " , which Godrich described as a " complimentary addendum " to the album . On 30 June 2015 , the album was made available to stream with the launch of Apple Music , Apple 's streaming service . In August 2015 , a CD version was released in Japan by Hostess Entertainment .

== Music ==

Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes blends Yorke 's vocals and piano playing with electronic beats and textures . Critics described it as " eerie " and " neurotic " , with " a quiet , restrained sense of dread " . The AV Club likened its music to the Radiohead tracks " Like Spinning Plates " (from 2001 's *Amnesiac*) and " The Gloaming " (2003 's *Hail to the Thief*) .

The opening track , " A Brain in a Bottle " , combines Yorke 's falsetto with a stuttering beat and " old @-@ school " oscillator effects . Radiohead bassist Colin Greenwood is credited for beat programming on " Guess Again ! " , which features " decaying " piano and " crunchy " backbeats . " Interference " is a minimal " mumbled love song " with " chilly " synth pads . Slant Magazine described " The Mother Lode " as melodic and dubstep @-@ inspired , with an " intoxicating " house beat . The album 's second half features a ten @-@ minute ambient suite led by the " percussive " looping track " There is No Ice (For My Drink) " . Rolling Stone described the final track , " Nose Grows Some " , as a " dread @-@ soaked hymn of emotional defeat " , likening it to Radiohead finales such as " Motion Picture Soundtrack " from *Kid A* (2000) .

== Reception ==

== Commercial ==

Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes was downloaded over 100 @, @ 000 times in the first 24 hours of release and over a million times in its first six days . Excluding internet piracy , it was the most torrented album of 2014 . By February 2015 , it had been downloaded over 4 @. @ 5 million times . These figures include downloads of the free torrent bundle containing only the " Brain in a Bottle " MP3 and music video ; sales figures for the full album bundle have not been released .

Stereogum and Gigaom estimated that Yorke may have made \$ 20 million from the release , more than he would likely have made through a traditional album release . Stereogum wrote that " this sort of album @-@ release strategy only works for artists who are already astronomically famous , but salute Thom Yorke for figuring out ways to keep stacking cash while keeping his artistic autonomy . " However , Billboard argued that , assuming the ratio of people who paid for the full album was comparable to subscription numbers of Spotify and Pandora Radio , earnings between \$ 1 and 6 million were more likely : " not bad showing for a self @-@ released , direct @-@ to @-@ fan album that allowed Yorke to circumvent major download stores and gather customer information ? but it 's no Hollywood starring role , either . "

In November 2015 , asked if the BitTorrent release had been a success , Yorke said : " No , not exactly . But I wanted it to be an experiment ... I wanted to show that , in theory , today one could follow the entire chain of record production , from start to finish , on his own . But in practice it is very different . We cannot be burdened with all of the responsibilities of the record label . But I 'm glad I did it , for having tried to . "

== Critical ==

At Metacritic , which assigns a weighted mean rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics ,

Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes has an average score of 72 based on 29 reviews , indicating " generally favorable reviews " .

AllMusic critic Stephen Thomas Erlewine described the album as " deliberately underwhelming , an old @-@ fashioned grower that doesn 't startle upon first listen but rather slowly unfolds ... instead of wallowing in alienation , Yorke has found comfort within it on Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes and the difference is palpable . " Rob Sheffield of Rolling Stone wrote that Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes " demands deep listening " and praised " Nose Grows Some " as the strongest track . Slant Magazine critic Franklin Jones wrote : " This is paranoia with a soul , and occasionally a heart ... Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes maintains the trademark elements of a Thom Yorke release while injecting subtle moments of fresh invention . " Barry Nicholson of the NME wrote : " It 's hardly love at first listen ? Yet across repeat plays , the album 's charms begin to unfurl . " Rolling Stone ranked the album number 30 in its list of the best albums of 2014 .

The A.V. Club gave the album a positive review , but wrote : " Flashes of brilliance aside , the result sounds an awful lot like something Yorke dashed off to pass the time before delving into the new Radiohead album . " Mark Beaumont of The Guardian called it " deviously understated " , but found that its unconventional release was " more impactful than the product . " Larry Fitzmaurice of Pitchfork wrote : " There 's precious little to grab on to in terms of melody and feeling , and you won 't find yourself humming along to anything here . That said , certain elements of Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes , if given the right amount of attention , can be enjoyable to luxuriate in . " Chris Barton of the Los Angeles Times found the album too similar to Yorke 's previous solo album The Eraser (2006) and his work with Atoms for Peace , writing that " it ? s just a bit disappointing that Yorke 's path seems short on new directions . "

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Thom Yorke except " Guess Again ! " by Thom Yorke and Colin Greenwood .

= = Personnel = =

Adapted from the Tomorrow 's Modern Boxes vinyl packaging .

Stanley Donwood ? artwork

Nigel Godrich ? production and editing

Colin Greenwood ? beat programming on " Guess Again ! "

Bob Ludwig ? mastering

Thom Yorke ? artwork (credited as " Tchocky ") , music and vocals

= = Chart positions = =