

= Merry Christmas ( Mariah Carey album ) =

Merry Christmas is the first Christmas album , and the fourth studio album , by American singer and songwriter Mariah Carey . Released by Columbia Records on November 1 , 1994 , the album features cover versions of popular Christmas tunes and original material . Carey worked with Walter Afanasieff , with whom she wrote all of the original tracks , as well as producing Carey 's interpretations of the covered material . The album contains a contemporary holiday theme , and featured " authentic , gospel flavored background vocals " . The album received generally positive reviews and became a worldwide success . Critics praised Carey 's uplifting and flavored vocals , as well as her skilled songwriting alongside Afanasieff . Three singles were released from the album , of which All I Want for Christmas Is You went on to become one of the best @-@ selling singles of all time .

Merry Christmas was released at the peak of the initial stretch of Carey 's career , between Music Box ( 1993 ) and Daydream ( 1995 ) . The album produced the worldwide classic single , " All I Want for Christmas Is You " , which became the best @-@ selling holiday ringtone in the US . The album has sold 5 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 copies in the United States as of December 2015 according to Nielsen SoundScan , and has been certified five @-@ times Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) for shipment of five million copies in the United States . In Japan , Merry Christmas has sold 2 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 copies and is the fourth best @-@ selling album of all time by a non @-@ Asian solo artist , behind Carey 's other release # 1 's ( 1998 ) , Whitney Houston 's The Bodyguard and Carey 's Daydream . Merry Christmas has sold 15 million copies worldwide and is the best @-@ selling Christmas album of all time .

A Deluxe Anniversary Edition was released on October 23 , 2015 .

= = Background = =

Carey has expressed her belief in God and her connection between music and spirituality , and felt the album was finally a way to portray her mysticism into music . After the success of Carey 's previous effort , Music Box , there was speculation of a new project in the works ; however it was not until October 1994 , only one month before the album 's release , that Billboard announced Carey would be releasing a holiday album for the Christmas season . Initially , critics were shocked ; they did not know how Carey would fare as an entertainer , as she had previously only been viewed as a pop star . Nevertheless , Carey , unaffected by the speculation , continued working on , and promoting the album in high spirits , confident in her work . The idea proved to be wise , earning Carey recognition in various markets including Christian radio and contemporary R & B stations , as well as extended her fame in Japan , where the album experienced much of its success .

= = Writing and development = =

Throughout the album 's development , Carey worked extensively with Walter Afanasieff , with whom she collaborated extensively on Emotions ( 1991 ) and Music Box ( 1993 ) . Together , they wrote all three of the album 's original songs , as well as producing most of the traditional tracks . " All I Want for Christmas Is You " , the album 's debut single , was written by Carey and Afanasieff , which was sent to top @-@ forty and adult contemporary stations , with the video having been filmed the year before . Another track they wrote , " Miss You Most ( At Christmas Time ) " , was sent to R & B stations , with " Jesus Born on This Day " , another original song , being sent to Christian and gospel radio stations around the world .

Additionally , Carey recorded a cover of " Christmas ( Baby Please Come Home ) " by Darlene Love , as well as classics such as " Silent Night " , " O Holy Night " and " Joy to the World " . The latter song , which was used as a promotional single , was remixed several times and sent to various clubs ; adding to the album 's range of listeners . Record producer and composer , Loris Holland , co @-@ produced some of the albums gospel flavored tracks , including " Silent Night " , where he arranged the backing vocals and synthesizers . Carey 's rendition of " Santa Claus Is Coming to

Town " , was deemed as " one of the more playful tracks on the album " , alongside " Christmas ( Baby Please Come Home ) " .

= = Composition = =

Merry Christmas boasted a variety of musical arrangements , sounds and genres . Carey 's goal was to provide an album that would have a " Christmas feel " , providing a mixture of soulful tracks , as well as fun and joyous holiday treats . The song " Jesus , Oh What a Wonderful Child " , was described as an original track that " really took flight " . The song was recorded in a church , with many live back @-@ up singers and children playing tambourines and other melodious instruments . The goal was to produce a " real church flavored song " , in which Afanasieff played the keyboards and allowed Carey 's voice to " cut loose " . According to Chris Nickson , Carey 's love of gospel music came through on the track , writing , " [ she ] led the band without pushing herself forward , letting the song develop and work out , trading lines with the chorus until , after the crescendo , the musicians moved into a fast double time to the end . "

The album 's lead track , " All I Want for Christmas Is You " , was described as an " up @-@ tempo love song , one that could have easily been written for Tommy Mottola . " Another one of the album 's original tracks was , " Miss You Most ( At Christmas Time ) " , which was very different from its whimsical predecessor . The song was described as a " sad ballad " , in line with many of Carey 's previous hit singles . The song featured a synthesized orchestra , including keyboard notes courtesy of Afanasieff , during which Carey would sing to her " long @-@ gone lover , crystallizing the way that Christmas brought memories of the past into focus . " According to Nickson , it was " Jesus Born on This Day " , that was the most impressive original track on the album . It was described as a " full @-@ blown production number " , which again featured synthesized orchestra , as well as a live children 's choir . The song 's tune was described as " solemn and hymn @-@ like , but the arrangement , oddly , made it less religious and rather more glitzy , behind the lyrics that overtly praised Jesus . "

= = Critical reception = =

The album garnered generally positive reviews from music critics . Barry Schwartz , editor of Stylus Magazine , gave the album a very positive review , praising Carey 's vocals , the album 's authenticity and songwriting . Aside from the album , Schwartz lauded " All I Want for Christmas Is You " : " To say this song is an instant classic somehow doesn 't capture its amazingicity ; it 's a modern standard : joyous , exhilarating , and loud , with even a hint of longing ( ooh longing ! ) . She sings , ' I don 't want a lot for Christmas / I won 't even wish for snow , ' such a beautiful phrase delivered with full sincerity over rolling pianos , spine @-@ squashing tympanis , philharmonic strings , and a quasi @-@ wall of sound ? and Mariah 's gorgeous voice bursts through it all . Rats , why haven 't I been celebrating Christmas ? ! " J.D. Considine from The Baltimore Sun said that the album " may look like just another attempt to cash in on Christmas cheer , but is actually the work of someone who genuinely loves this music . Granted , Carey 's gospel inclinations come through a lot stronger than might be expected on traditional tunes like ' Silent Night ' , but that hardly diminishes the effect of her performance ; in fact , her soulful ornamentation adds oomph to the reading of ' O Holy Night ' . But the album 's real strength is the conviction she brings to otherwise corny fare like ' Santa Claus Is Comin ' to Town ' , while the way she augments ' Joy to the World ' with a bit of the Three Dog Night hit is pure genius . "

The album received a less enthusiastic review from Roch Parisien of AllMusic , who praised " All I Want for Christmas Is You " , writing , " On the positive side , her co @-@ penned ( one of three ) ' All I Want for Christmas Is You ' is a well @-@ crafted Phil Spector tribute , with Beach Boys @-@ style harmonies , jangling bells , and a sleigh @-@ ride pace , injecting one of the few bits of exuberant fun in this otherwise vanilla set . " However , he was more critical of Carey 's take on " O Holy Night " and " Joy to the World " , writing , " Pretensions to high opera on ' O Holy Night ' and a horrid dance club take on ' Joy to the World ' . " Steve Morse from The Boston Globe commented "

Her early albums were often polished to a fault , but she cuts loose with unbridled soul on the new Christmas disc . Oddly enough , it may be her best album . She blends original songs ( such as ' All I Want for Christmas Is You ' , which debuted in video form on MTV [ at the time ] ) with traditional carols ( ' Silent Night ' and ' Joy to the World ' ) and even Phil Spector 's Yuletide classic , ' Christmas ( Baby Please Come Home ) ' . " Jon Pareles of The New York Times wrote " There are gospelly versions of familiar carols like ' Silent Night ' , dramatic ballads like her own ' Miss You Most ( At Christmas Time ) ' , and uptempo imitations , with chimes , of Phil Spector 's 1963 Christmas album , like ' Santa Claus Is Comin ' to Town ' . Regardless of backup , Ms. Carey oversings , glutting songs with her vocal tics ? like sliding down from the note above the melody note ? and turning expressions of devotion into narcissistic displays . "

= = Chart performance = =

Merry Christmas debuted at number thirty on the US Billboard 200 with 45 @, @ 000 copies sold in its first week . In its fifth week , the album peaked at number three , with sales of 208 @, @ 000 copies , but experienced its highest sales in its sixth week ( when it was at number six ) , with another 500 @, @ 000 copies sold . The album was the second best @-@ selling holiday album that year with a total of 1 @, @ 859 @, @ 000 copies sold . It remained in the top twenty for eight weeks and on the Billboard 200 for thirteen weeks , re @-@ entering the chart three times ; peaking at number 149 the first time , 115 the second and at 61 the third ( it has spent a total of fifty @-@ five weeks on the chart ) . On January 30 , 2003 , Merry Christmas was certified five @-@ times Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) for shipment of five million copies in the US . As of December 2015 , the album has sold 5 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 copies in the US and is one of the best @-@ selling holiday albums in the United States . In Europe , Merry Christmas experienced success , being certified gold in Austria , Germany , Switzerland and United Kingdom . In Australia , the album was certified six @-@ times platinum , denoting shipments of 420 @, @ 000 copies and finishing 11th on the Australian Recording Industry Association ( ARIA ) 1994 End of Year Chart .

Outside the United States , the album experienced its highest sales in Japan , where it sold 2 @. @ 5 million copies and became the fourth best @-@ selling album by a non @-@ Asian solo artist . Additionally , the album 's lead single " All I Want for Christmas Is You " was certified the " Million " award , The single achieved similar success around the world , where it reached the top @-@ five position in most countries , as well as re @-@ entering many times throughout the years . In the US , " All I Want for Christmas Is You " is one of the few songs in recent years to be considered a classic and is the only holiday song and ringtone to reach multi @-@ platinum status in the US . Merry Christmas has sold 15 million copies worldwide , and is the best @-@ selling Christmas album of all time .

= = Film adaptation = =

Carey is currently developing a musical film based on Merry Christmas . The plot revolves around a small town ? perhaps not unlike Carey 's hometown of Huntington , New York ? where a ruthless developer wants to turn the land into a large shopping plaza . " Mariah doesn 't want to let that happen , " says her producing partner Benny Medina . " Her character uses song and love to keep the Christmas spirit alive . "

According to Carey , the script will be written by High School Musical writer Peter Barsocchini , but is still in its early stages of production . However , Carey gave Daily News a few more details regarding the project , saying , " Since I recorded the Christmas album , I 've always wanted to make a movie to go with it , something that people could watch and hear and enjoy every year . I 'm into it . I 'm all about the holiday season . "

= = Track listing = =

== Personnel ==

Credits adapted from AllMusic .

== Charts ==

== Certifications ==