

= I Want You ( Marvin Gaye album ) =

I Want You is the fourteenth studio album by American soul musician Marvin Gaye , released March 16 , 1976 , on Motown @-@ subsidiary label Tamla Records . Recording sessions for the album took place throughout 1975 and 1976 at Motown Recording Studios , also known as Hitsville West , and Gaye 's personal studio Marvin 's Room in Los Angeles , California . The album has often been noted by critics for producer Leon Ware 's exotic , low @-@ key production and the erotic , sexual themes in his and Gaye 's songwriting . The album 's cover artwork adapts neo @-@ mannerist artist Ernie Barnes 's famous painting The Sugar Shack ( 1971 ) .

I Want You consisted of Gaye 's first recorded studio material since his highly successful and well @-@ received album Let 's Get It On ( 1973 ) . While it marked a change in musical direction for Gaye , departing from his trademark Motown and doo @-@ wop @-@ influenced sound for funky , light @-@ disco soul , the album maintained and expanded on his previous work 's sexual themes . Following a mixed response from critics at the time of its release , I Want You has earned retrospective recognition from writers and music critics as one of Gaye 's most controversial works and influential to such musical styles as disco , quiet storm , R & B , and neo soul .

= = Background = =

By 1975 , Marvin Gaye had come off of the commercial and critical success of his landmark studio album Let 's Get It On ( 1973 ) , its successful supporting tour following the album 's release , and Diana & Marvin ( 1973 ) , a duet project with Diana Ross . However , similar to the conception and recording of Let 's Get It On , Gaye had struggled to come up with an album as an appropriate follow @-@ up . And much like Let 's Get It On Gaye reached for outside help , this time seeking the assistance of Leon Ware , a singer and songwriter who had found previous success writing hits for fellow Motown alum , including pop singer Michael Jackson and the rhythm and blues group The Miracles . Ware had been working on songs for his own album which he would later issue under the title Musical Massage , a collection of erotic singles Ware had composed with a variety of writers , including Jacqueline Hillard and Arthur " T @-@ Boy " Ross , brother of Diana Ross . When Motown CEO Berry Gordy paid a visit to Ware , the songwriter was more than happy to play Gordy his selection of tracks . After hearing a preliminary mix of the songs however , Gordy figured that Ware should let Gaye handle his material .

While the majority of the album 's songs were conceived by Ware , I Want You was transformed into a biographical centerpiece for Gaye , who was then in a volatile marriage with Anna Gordy , sister to Berry Gordy , and also in a long @-@ standing affair with Janis Hunter , who would later become the mother of his two youngest children . Gaye and Hunter were introduced to each other by producer Ed Townsend in 1973 at Hitsville West , while Townsend and Gaye were recording Let 's Get It On . In his book Mercy , Mercy Me : The Art , Loves , and Demons of Marvin Gaye , the author and music writer Michael Eric Dyson elaborated on the relationship between I Want You and Gaye 's affair with Hunter : " I Want You is unmistakably a work of romantic and erotic tribute to the woman he deeply loved and would marry shortly , Janis Hunter . Gaye 's obsession with the woman in her late teens is nearly palpable in the sensual textures that are the album 's aural and lyrical signature . Their relationship was relentlessly passionate and emotionally rough @-@ hewn ; they played up each other 's strengths , and played off each other 's weaknesses . "

Though it was often hinted that Let 's Get It On was the album Gaye had dedicated to her , Marvin has stated that this album was dedicated to Hunter , who is believed to have been in the studio when he recorded it . According to music critics , her presence may have increased the emotion in Ware 's and Gaye 's conception of I Want You .

= = Recording and production = =

Gaye and Ware recorded and mixed the album at Gaye 's newly christened " Marvin 's Room Studio " , located on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles , and at Motown Recording Studios . The

recording sessions took place throughout 1975 and 1976 . Much like Gaye 's previous studio effort Let 's Get It On , I Want You featured Gaye 's contribution of background vocals and heavy multi @-@ tracking . Gaye 's vocalizing style was in classic doo @-@ wop tradition accompanied by the low tempo of string arrangements and other instrumentation was provided by The Funk Brothers .

Gaye 's albums , and especially I Want You , have been influential on modern soul music and contemporary R & B. EMI Artists and Repertoire executive Gary Harris , who later assisted neo soul singer D 'Angelo in recording his debut album Brown Sugar ( 1995 ) , later commented on Gaye 's significant artistry on I Want You and its opening title track . In an interview with writer Michael Eric Dyson , Harris said :

Another significant feature of the recording sessions for I Want You was Gaye 's use of the synthesizer in his music . During the time of recording , the instrument had entered its modern period of use and had been included in the music of such popular acts as Stevie Wonder and Led Zeppelin . For the instrumental version of " After the Dance " , Gaye implemented it for a more spacey sound than his previous recordings had featured . Other recordings from these sessions to feature Gaye 's synthesizer were later featured on the deluxe edition re @-@ release of I Want You .

= = Artwork = =

The original Sugar Shack painting , which was later used for the front album cover of I Want You , was painted and released by neo @-@ mannerist artist Ernie Barnes in 1971 . In 1974 , Barnes redesigned the painting for use by television producer Norman Lear for the opening credits of Good Times , his hit CBS sitcom that ran from 1974 to 1979 . The Sugar Shack portrays a cultural image of a shack full of black people dancing . The Sugar Shack was painted by Barnes in his signature post @-@ mannerist style , using serpentine lines , elongation of the human figure , clarity of line , unusual spatial relationships , painted frames , and distinctive color palettes . This style of technique and composition is similar to the mannerist style of 16th @-@ century artists such as Michelangelo and Raphael , which has led Barnes to be credited as the founder of the Neo @-@ Mannerism movement . Art critic Frank Getlein later called The Sugar Shack a " stunning demonstration of the fusion of Neo @-@ Mannerism and Genre painting that Barnes alone has perfected and practices " , and went on to say :

The Sugar Shack has been known to art critics for embodying the style of art composition known as " Black Romantic " , which , according to Natalie Hopkinson of The Washington Post , is the " visual @-@ art equivalent of the Chitlin ' circuit . " According to Barnes , he created the original version after reflecting upon his childhood , during which he was not " able to go to a dance . " In an interview with SoulMuseum.net , Barnes was asked whether there were any messages he was attempting to express through the painting . He stated " ' Sugar Shack ' is a recall of a childhood experience . It was the first time my innocence met with the sins of dance . The painting transmits rhythm so the experience is re @-@ created in the person viewing it . To show that African @-@ Americans utilize rhythm as a way of resolving physical tension "

Gaye was introduced to Barnes by colleague Barbara Hunter , which led to him buying eight Barnes originals , including The Sugar Shack . After Gaye asked him for permission to use the painting as an album cover , Barnes then augmented the painting by adding references to Gaye 's album , including banners hanging from the ceiling of the shack promoting the album 's singles . Since the initial wide acclaim for The Sugar Shack , Barnes has gained further recognition from art critics as one of the best black painters of his time and was cited by the Oakland Tribune as the " Picasso of the black art world . "

= = Release and reception = =

I Want You was released March 16 , 1976 in the United States on the Motown @-@ subsidiary label Tamla Records . While not as successful sales @-@ wise as Gaye 's previous landmark albums What 's Going On and Let 's Get It On , I Want You sold in excess of 1 million copies in the

United States with help mostly coming from its first single " I Want You " . The single topped the Billboard Soul Singles chart , quickly becoming Marvin Gaye 's eleventh number one hit on that chart , while peaking at number fifteen on the Billboard Pop Singles chart .

The album 's second single , the quiet storm track " After the Dance ( Vocal ) " , charted modestly , peaking at # 14 on the Soul Singles chart and # 74 on the Pop Singles chart , while another single release version of the song , a double A sided vinyl record for dance clubs and discothèques , hit the top ten of the Billboard Disco Singles chart . The song became a staple of dance clubs and discothèques during the late 1970s . " After the Dance " was hailed as one of Gaye 's signature songs during the late 1970s and was later described by Gaye 's biographer David Ritz as " emblematic for the final chapter of his career . " I Want You became his fourth album to reach the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart and his fifth number one album on the Soul Albums chart .

Despite its chart success , I Want You received mixed reviews from music critics at the time of its release . It has been noted by music writers that the critical reception of disco music in general had been poor and ill considered , which may have caused the slightly disco styled I Want You to suffer critically , in comparison to Gaye 's previous albums . Los Angeles Times writer Dennis Hunt called the album " disappointing " and " only partially commendable " . Rolling Stone 's Vince Aletti criticized Leon Ware 's production for being too low key , and perceived that Gaye lacks the certain passion in his lyricism and singing from his previous records . Aletti compared the album to Gaye 's previous work , writing that " Gaye seems determined to take over as soul 's master philosopher in the bedroom , a position that requires little but an affectation of constant , rather jaded horniness . The pose has already been established in Let 's Get It On , on which Gaye was hot , tender , aggressive , soothing and casually raunchy ? the modern lover with all his contradictions . I Want You continues in the same vein but with only the faintest traces of the robust passion that shot through and sustained the earlier album ... one expects something with a little more substance and spirit . But there 's no fire here , only a well concealed pilot light . "

Cliff White of NME called the album " almost a voyeur 's delight " , and was not favorable of Gaye 's sensual themes , stating " Although getting down , getting mellow , and getting it on are paramount considerations in the privacy of my own home , I don 't particularly want to be party to someone else 's night life . Not on record anyway ... Like peeking through the windows of the Gaye residence in the wee wee hours . Perhaps that 's your kick , but personally I find it a mite frustrating . " White also criticized the album 's sound , describing the songs as " all expressions of the same mood . Sensual , satisfied , and spaced out " , and calling I Want You " simply the explorative aftermath of Let 's Get It On . The sweet nuthin 's of a drowsy , sweat streaked lover . " Robert Christgau of The Village Voice wrote favorably of the album 's sound quality . However , he criticized the lyrical content , as well as Ware 's involvement in songwriting , stating " was it Ware who instructed Marvin to eliminate all depth and power from his voice ? I mean , if you 're into insisting on sex it 's in bad taste to whine about it . "

= = Legacy and influence = =

After critical re examination of the album , I Want You has been recognized by writers and music writers as one of Marvin Gaye 's most controversial and influential works and , much like its predecessor Let 's Get It On , has served as a major influence on the quiet storm and contemporary R & B genres . Its standing has also improved among critics following an expanded edition release of the album on July 29 , 2003 , which featured extensive liner notes and photography by Ryan Null . Following that release , Allmusic praised Gaye 's different direction in music and the eroticism portrayed in Leon Ware 's smooth tempo production and Gaye 's intimate lyricism . Reviewer Thom Jurek wrote :

Such musicians as Todd Rundgren , Robert Palmer and Madonna have stated they were influenced by I Want You , while songs from the album have been sampled by such hip hop artists as EPMD to Mary J. Blige , who sampled the title track for her hit song " Be Happy " . The careers of neo soul and R & B musicians including D 'Angelo , Musiq Soulchild , R. Kelly , Maxwell ( particularly on Urban Hang Suite ) , Sade , and Prince show the influence of the soulful sound and

equally romantic and erotic lyrics of I Want You , Let 's Get It On and Leon Ware 's Musical Massage . According to one critic , Ware 's arrangements " solidified the suite @-@ like theme for the album . " Much like Let 's Get It On , slow jam music , as well as modern soul and the quiet storm genre , are now viewed by critics to have been engendered by I Want You and by Gaye .

Following the release of I Want You , Ware released Musical Massage ( 1976 ) , which received little mainstream notice . Despite this , Musical Massage , Ware 's second studio album , became a cult hit among soul music fans who were intrigued by I Want You and songs from that album 's producer . Critical recognition of Ware 's album later improved , being cited by Allmusic as " the perfect mix of soul , light funk , jazz , and what was about to become the rhythmic foundation for disco . "

= = Track listing = =

= = = Deluxe edition = = =

On July 29 , 2003 , I Want You was reissued by Motown as a two @-@ disc expanded edition release , featuring 24 @-@ bit digital remastering of the original album 's recordings , previously unissued material , and a 24 @-@ page booklet , which contains the original LP liner notes by Marvin Gaye , as well as comprehensive essays by writers including David Ritz .

= = = 2002 remaster bonus tracks = = =

= = Personnel = =

Artwork by : Ernie Barnes , Frank Mulvey

Arranged by ( Strings , Horns ) : Coleridge @-@ Taylor Perkinson

Bass : Chuck Rainey , Henry Davis , Ron Brown , Wilton Felder

Bongos , Congas : Bobbye Hall Porter , Eddie " Bongo " Brown

Drums : James Gadson

Electric Piano ( Fender Rhodes ) , Piano : Jerry Peters , John Barnes , Sonny Burke

Engineer : Fred Ross , Art Stewart

Executive Producer : Berry Gordy , Marvin Gaye

Guitar : David T. Walker , Dennis Coffey , Jay Graydon , Melvin " Wah Wah " Watson , Ray Parker , Jr .

Percussion : Gary Coleman , Jack Arnold

Producer : Leon Ware , Marvin Gaye , Arthur " T @-@ Boy " Ross ( co @-@ produced tracks : A1 , A3 , B1 , B2 , B4 @-@ B6 )

Vocals : Marvin Gaye

= = Charts = =

= = = Album = = =

= = = Singles = = =

= = Sample use = =

The information regarding sampling of songs from I Want You is adapted from TheBreaks.com

" I Want You ( intro jam ) "

" HaHa Tysons " by DJ Harrison produced at Jellowstone Records