

= X & Y =

X & Y is the third studio album by the British alternative rock band Coldplay , released on 6 June 2005 in the United Kingdom by the record label Parlophone . The album , which features influences of electronic music , was produced by the band and British record producer Danton Supple . Development of the album was often troubled ; the album 's original producer , British record producer Ken Nelson , was supposed to produce much of the album , however , many songs written during their sessions were ditched due to the band 's dissatisfaction . The album 's cover art is a combination of colours and blocks , which is a representation of the Baudot code .

The album contains twelve tracks and an additional hidden track , " Til Kingdom Come " . It is omitted from the track listing on the album sleeve , but listed as " + " on the disc label and inside the album booklet . It was originally planned for American singer @-@ songwriter Johnny Cash to record it with lead singer Chris Martin , but Cash died before he was able to do so . The song " Talk " appeared on the main track listing , although it was thought to have been downgraded to a B @-@ side for the album 's subsequent single releases , after it leaked online in early 2005 .

X & Y was released after a considerable amount of hype and was a significant commercial success , reaching the top spot of many charts worldwide , including the United Kingdom and United States , the latter being their first . With accumulated sales of 8 @.@ 3 million units in 2005 alone , X & Y was the best @-@ selling album released in 2005 worldwide . By 2011 , the album had sold over 13 million copies worldwide .

Overall reaction to the album has been generally positive , though some critics cited it as being inferior to its predecessors . The album spawned the singles " Speed of Sound " , " Fix You " , " Talk " , " The Hardest Part " , " What If " and " White Shadows . "

= = Background = =

In March 2004 , Coldplay announced details about " X & Y " while the album was being recorded . Initial plans were to stay out of the public eye throughout the year . Vocalist Chris Martin stated , " We really feel that we have to be away for a while and we certainly won 't release anything this year , because I think people are a bit sick of us . " This plan , however , was not carried out due to the pressure their second album , A Rush of Blood to the Head , had induced but they were trying " to make the best thing that anyone has ever heard " .

Prior to the announcement , Martin , guitarist Jonny Buckland , and British record producer Ken Nelson had started recording demos while in Chicago , Illinois . The band then entered a London studio in January 2004 .

= = Recording = =

The band spent eighteen months working on the album . The released album is the third version which the band had produced during their late sessions , and some have even considered it as their fifth album . The band was not satisfied with the outputs of their initial sessions with Nelson , who produced the band 's previous two albums .

The initial set release date was 2004 , and the band had to delay the album to January 2005 . But as the new target date was approaching , the band again discarded songs , which they deemed " flat " and " passionless " . Sixty songs were written during these sessions , fifty @-@ two of which were ditched . The band started rehearsing the songs for a planned tour , but felt the songs sounded better live compared to their recorded versions : " We realized that we didn 't really have the right songs and some of them were starting to sound better because we were playing them than they did on record , so we thought we better go back and record them again . " Guitarist Jonny Buckland has said that the band had pushed themselves " forward in every direction " in making the album , but they felt it sounded like they were going backwards compared to their earlier works .

In search of perfection , Coldplay had to " step it up a few notches and work hard at it to get it right " . The band chose Danton Supple , who mixed the bulk of A Rush of Blood to the Head , to oversee

the production of X & Y. When January went , the band had to finish the album ; they were conscious of the pressure as " expectations for the record grew larger " and " completing it became tougher and tougher " . Finally , the band was settled with the song " Square One " , which Martin has described as " a call to arms " and a " plea " to each of them " not to be intimidated by anything or anyone else " . Once finished , the band felt like they could do their own songs and not have to think of anyone else 's demands . During this month , the band was into the final weeks of production and had put the finishing touches on the tracks .

Drummer Will Champion later admitted that the band was not in a rush in completing the album " because the prospect of touring again was so daunting that we felt we should take our time , and also we wanted to make sure that it was the best it could possibly be " . The band had no deadline , according to him , which caused them not to feel pressured into finishing something . Once a proper deadline was imposed onto the band , they became more productive than previous sessions . At this juncture , the band had written " about 14 or 15 songs " . Martin added that the reason why they ended up late was that they " ... kept [adding] finishing [touches to] the record until it was way too late ... [they] don 't listen to it at the moment , because [they would] just find something to go back and change . "

= = Composition = =

= = = Music = = =

Coldplay has cited various influences in the album . The German electronic music pioneer Kraftwerk is evident on the song " Talk " , which borrows its synthetic hook from 1981 's " Computer Love " . Also present is 1970s electronic music from the likes of English musician David Bowie and Brian Eno . Eno , who would later produce Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends and Mylo Xyloto , played backing synthesizer on the track " Low " . The first single , " Speed of Sound " , also takes inspiration from the drumbeat of English singer @-@ songwriters Kate Bush 's song " Running Up that Hill " . According to Jon Pareles of The New York Times , the band attempts to " carry the beauty of ' Clocks ' " across the album , borrowing some of its features to songs like " Speed of Sound " . The opening track " Square One " features the famous motif from Also sprach Zarathustra , known better as the title theme of Stanley Kubrick 's 1968 science @-@ fiction film 2001 : A Space Odyssey . The three @-@ note sequence is used as a synthesizer hook , as well as a part of the chorus , showcasing Chris Martin 's trademark falsetto voice .

" Fix You " features an organ and piano sound . The song starts with a hushed electric organ ballad , including Martin 's falsetto . The song then builds with both an acoustic guitar and piano sound . The sound then shifts with a plaintive three @-@ note guitar line , ringing through a bringing rhythm upbeat tempo . Its instrumentation is varied with the sound of church @-@ style organs hovering throughout the background , piano notes , acoustic and electric guitar riffs , drums , and a singalong chorus . " The Hardest Part " features a faster piano ballad sound , and starts with a repeating two @-@ note piano riff , and features an instrumentation of a singsong guitar . It also includes a slow tempo with a drumming rhythm . The track ends with the band playing the repeated instrument riffs . " Talk " is built around a simple guitar lick by Jonny Buckland . The track includes a hypnotic pace , with Will Champion adding a metronomic beat to the drums . The song features a synthesizer hook notable from Kraftwerk 's " Computer Love " . It also adds a chiming note to more abrasive riffs during the breakdown near the end of the song . " Speed of Sound " is a similar song musically based on the piano . The song benefits from an insistently ornate keyboard riff and a busy but less @-@ hummable chorus , in which the song builds into a huge drum beat and a synthesizer @-@ heavy chorus , which also includes an upbeat tempo .

= = = Lyrics = = =

Lyrically , X & Y made an apparent shift from its predecessors . On their previous works , Martin

sang mostly in the first person " I " , but moves to the second person " you " . Accordingly , the songs on the album are reflection of Martin 's " doubts , fears , hopes , and loves " with lyrics that are " earnest and vague " .

The lyrics tend to focus significantly around the idea that everything is broken , out of place or missing ; this is apparent in nearly all songs in the album . Examples include " Fix You " (" When you lose something you can 't replace ") and also in " X & Y " (" When something is broken , and you try to fix it , trying to repair it , any way you can ") and " Talk " (" Are you lost or incomplete ? Do you feel like a puzzle , you can 't find your missing piece ? ") . This theme is also reflective of the random , incomprehensible pattern on the album 's cover (until you " fix " it using the Baudot Code) .

= = Packaging = =

The artwork for X & Y was designed by graphic design duo Tappin Gofton , formed by Mark Tappin and Simon Gofton which Mark Tappin previously work for Coldplay for the Parachutes album cover and the single covers . The image , which is visualized through a combination of colours and blocks , is a graphical representation of the Baudot code , an early form of telegraph communication using a series of ones and zeros to communicate . The code was developed by Frenchman Émile Baudot in the 1870s , and was a widely used method of terrestrial and telegraph communication .

The alphabet of the code is presented in the liner notes of X & Y , but if deciphered , the code actually reveals the characters ' X 9 Y ' , a fact outlined in Marcus du Sautoy 's book ' The Num8er Mys7eries ' . It is unclear whether this is a genuine mistake , as the symbol for ' 9 ' is very similar to the symbol for ' & ' , or whether it was entered to confuse any deciphering fans . The track listing , included on the booklet , CD , and back of the album , uses " X # " on tracks 1 ? 6 , and " Y # " on tracks 7 ? 12 , rather than the conventional track numbering system . This is a reference to the title of the album . Many pages in the booklet include photos of the band working on the album . The final page of the booklet contains the slogan " Make Trade Fair " , the name of the international organization which Chris Martin continues to support . The band dedicates the album to " BWP " that is presented also inside the liner notes ; it stands for Bruce W. Paltrow , the late father of Martin 's wife at the time , Gwyneth Paltrow . All singles released from the album feature their titles in the same code on their respective covers . Martin sometimes wears coloured tape on his hands while on stage , as a reference to the album .

= = Release and promotion = =

X & Y was initially intended for a 2004 release , although early news reported it would not be released until 2005 ; however , because of personal preferences , songs recorded in several sessions were scrapped and had pushed the expected release date to January 2005 . However , the new date went by and the band had to set another schedule . By early 2005 , the album , rumoured to be called Zero Theory , had a target release date between March and May 2005 . By early April , the band had finalized the track listing of the album . Eventually , the album was released on 6 June 2005 in the United Kingdom via record label Parlophone . It was issued on 7 June in the United States by Capitol Records . The album has been released with the Copy Control protection system in some regions . In 2008 , Capitol released a remastered version of the album on two 180 @-@ gram vinyl records as a part of the " From the Capitol Vaults " series .

Around three months prior to the album release , Coldplay began performing several songs from the album during live performances . The band made a headlining performance at public radio station KCRW @-@ FM 's annual A Sounds Eclectic Evening , staging five songs from X & Y and some of their old favourites . For the song " The Scientist " , Martin sang one of its verses backward , a technique he learned in shooting its music video .

The album has four main singles that were released internationally : " Speed of Sound " , " Fix You " , and " Talk " in 2005 , and " The Hardest Part " in 2006 . A fifth single , " What If " , was released in June 2006 to radio stations in France and the French @-@ speaking portions of Belgium and

Switzerland . A commercial CD was also released in Belgium and features the same B @-@ side as " The Hardest Part " (" How You See the World " recorded live at Earls Court) , which was released in other European markets as well as Japan and Australia . This single features the " Tom Lord @-@ Alge Mix " of " What If " as the A @-@ side which differs from the usual album version . Finally , in June 2007 , " White Shadows " was released as a radio @-@ only single in Mexico , to coincide with the band 's 2007 Latin America Tour . This also complemented the special " Tour Edition " of the album that was released in these regions .

The hidden track " ' Til Kingdom Come " is featured in The Shield season 5 premiere and in the superhero film The Amazing Spider @-@ Man (2012) . In addition , Chris Martin performed an acoustic rendition of the track at the funeral of former Attorney General of Delaware Beau Biden .

= = Critical reception = =

X & Y received generally positive reviews from music critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received an average score of 72 , based on 33 reviews . Blender hailed it as Coldplay 's " masterpiece . " NME described it as " confident , bold , ambitious , bunged with singles and impossible to contain , " and added that it reinforces Coldplay as " the band of their time " . Q magazine found it " substantially more visceral and emotionally rewarding experience than both its predecessors . " James Hunter of The Village Voice said that it is remarkably " accomplished , fresh , and emotional " . Uncut assertively called it " an exceptional pop record " . Spin magazine 's Mikael Wood praised Coldplay for " recasting their nerdy @-@ student Britpop as Important Rock Music " without having to compromise Martin 's unpretentious songwriting style . In his review for AllMusic , Stephen Thomas Erlewine praised it as " a good record , crisp , professional , and assured , a sonically satisfying sequel to A Rush of Blood to the Head " , stating it as " impeccable " and " a strong , accomplished album " .

In a less enthusiastic review for Entertainment Weekly , David Browne felt that Coldplay 's attempt at more grandiose music works " only part of the time " , even though he found their effort to mature commendable . Rhyannon Rodriguez from Kludge wrote that the album feels " a little forced " , describing the overall sounds as " overtly weak " . Alexis Petridis , writing in The Guardian , said that some of the songs are " mostly beautifully turned " , but marred by lyrics that are " so devoid of personality that they sound less like song lyrics " . Pitchfork Media 's Joe Tangari called it " bland but never offensive , listenable but not memorable . " Mojo wrote that the album is " awash with cliches , non @-@ sequiturs , and cheap existentialism ; at times it all becomes nigh on unbearable " . In a negative review for The Village Voice , Robert Christgau named X & Y " dud of the month " and called Coldplay a " precise , bland , and banal " band with " predictable melodies and impassive lyrics " . Despite this , he gave it a B.

The band has received some criticism from some music critics for the similarities between the lead single , " Speed of Sound " , and " Clocks " , one of the band 's most popular songs to date . Kelefa Sanneh of Rolling Stone magazine was less contented with X & Y , writing it " is something less exciting " compared to A Rush of Blood to the Head that " was a nervy bid for bigness " . Sanneh notes that the album is " the sound of a blown @-@ up band trying not to deflate " and " a surprising number of songs here just never take flight " . Despite such , he compliments the album for featuring " lovely ballads that sound , well , Coldplay @-@ ish " .

= = = Accolades = = =

The album earned the band several awards . In 2006 , it won the Best British Album accolade at the BRIT Awards , and International Album of the Year at the Juno Awards which Coldplay shared with American hip hop group The Black Eyed Peas . X & Y had scored Coldplay their third consecutive Mercury Prize nomination . It was also nominated for Best Rock Album at the 48th Grammy Awards , but lost to U2 's How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb . X & Y was voted the 32nd best album of the year in The Village Voice 's annual Pazz & Jop critics poll for 2005 .

= = Commercial performance = =

X & Y was a commercial success in Europe . The album debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart (making it Coldplay 's third consecutive number @-@ one debut) with sales totalling 464 @, @ 471 the fourth highest opening sales week in UK history , behind Take That , Oasis and Adele .

To date , the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) has certified the album eight @-@ times platinum . The album placed at number nine on the list of United Kingdom 's 20 biggest @-@ selling albums of the 21st century , published by the British trade paper Music Week . As of February 2012 , the album had sold 2 @, @ 666 @, @ 980 copies in the UK , making it the second best selling Coldplay album behind A Rush of Blood to the Head .

The American press have considered X & Y a landmark achievement of Coldplay . The album debuted at number one on the US Billboard 200 , selling 737 @, @ 000 copies despite the highly competitive retail week . The album gave the band their first US number @-@ one album by debut , and its initial sales surpassed the band 's previous album releases ; Parachutes amassed over 6 @, @ 500 copies in its debut and A Rush of Blood to the Head with sales of under 141 @, @ 000 . X & Y marked the third highest first @-@ week sales in the United States for 2005 , behind American rappers 50 Cent , whose second album , The Massacre , sold over one million units in its first week of release , and Kanye West , who sold over 860 @, @ 000 copies with his album Late Registration . X & Y also emerged as the biggest @-@ selling debut under rock genre . The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) has since certified the album three @-@ times platinum for accumulated shipments of over three million units . In Canada , the album debuted at # 1 and sold 105 @, @ 000 copies in its first week , making it the biggest @-@ selling debut of 2005 in Canada . It ended up being certified 5 x Platinum in December 2008 for shipping of 500 @, @ 000 copies . Altogether , the album emerged as 2005 's best @-@ selling album worldwide , accumulating over 8 @. @ 3 million units despite the aggregate three percent fall of sales . According to EMI , by the end of 2006 it sold 9 @. @ 9 million copies .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by Chris Martin , Jonny Buckland , Guy Berryman , and Will Champion except where noted .

= = = Tour edition DVD = = =

To coincide with Coldplay 's tour of Australia , Southeast Asia , and Latin America , the album was re @-@ released in those territories as a " Tour Edition " , which also includes all the B @-@ side tracks and music videos of X & Y 's singles on a bonus DVD :

= = = Tour edition CD = = =

In addition a rare " Japan Tour Special Edition " (Cat . No . TOCP @-@ 66523) was released in 2006 . This is the only " Tour Edition " which has the bonus disc as a CD (CD extra) (Cat . No . NCD @-@ 3013) , and without Copy Control . All other " Tour Editions " have Copy Control protection . The track listing is exactly the same as in other " Tour Editions " .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =