

# **Coldplay**

**Coldplay** are a British <u>rock</u> band formed in <u>London</u> in 1997, consisting of vocalist and pianist <u>Chris Martin</u>, lead guitarist <u>Jonny Buckland</u>, bassist <u>Guy Berryman</u>, drummer and percussionist <u>Will Champion</u>, and manager <u>Phil Harvey</u>. [a] They are best known for <u>their live performances</u>, lay having also <u>impacted popular culture</u> with <u>their artistry</u>, advocacy and achievements.

The members of the band initially met at University College London, calling themselves Big Fat Noises and changing to Starfish, before settling on the current name. After releasing *Safety* (1998) independently, Coldplay signed with Parlophone in 1999 and wrote their debut album, Parachutes (2000). It featured breakthrough single "Yellow" and received a Brit Award for British Album of the Year and a Grammy Award for Best Alternative Music Album. The group's follow-up, A Rush of Blood to the Head (2002), won the same accolades. X&Y (2005) later saw the completion of what they considered a trilogy, being nominated for Best Rock Album as well. Its successor, Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends (2008), prevailed in the category. Both albums were the bestselling of their years, topping the charts in over 30 countries. Viva la Vida's title track also became the first British act single to lead the Billboard Hot 100 and UK Singles Chart simultaneously in the 21st century.

Coldplay further expanded their repertoire in subsequent albums, with *Mylo Xyloto* (2011), *Ghost Stories* (2014), *A Head Full of Dreams* (2015), *Everyday Life* (2019) and *Music of the Spheres* (2021) exploring sounds like electronica, R&B, ambient, disco, funk, gospel, blues and progressive rock. Additional endeavours for the band include philanthropy, politics and activism, as they donate

### Coldplay



Coldplay at <u>Broadcasting House</u> in 2021. From left to right: Buckland, Martin, Berryman and Champion.

#### **Background information**

9	
Also known as	Starfish (1998)
	Los Unidades (2018)
Origin	London, England
Genres	$\frac{\text{Alternative rock} \cdot \text{pop rock}}{\text{post-Britpop} \cdot \text{pop}}$
Years active	1997-present
Labels	Fierce Panda · Parlophone · Nettwerk · Capitol · Atlantic
Spinoffs	Apparatjik
Members	Chris Martin  Jonny Buckland  Guy Berryman  Will Champion  Phil Harvey <sup>[a]</sup>
Website	coldplay.com (http://coldplay.com)

10% of their profits to charity and endorse various humanitarian organizations. In 2018, <u>a career-spanning film</u> directed by <u>Mat Whitecross</u> was made available in cinemas to commemorate their 20th career anniversary.

With over 100 million albums sold worldwide, Coldplay are among the <u>best-selling music acts of all time</u>. Fuse placed them as the <u>sixth-most awarded group</u> in history, which includes securing the most <u>Brit Award</u> wins by a band. They own three of the 50 <u>best-selling albums in the United Kingdom</u> and the most number-one albums in the region without missing the top (nine), while "My Universe" is the first British group song to ever debut atop *Billboard* Hot 100. Coldplay have two of the 15 <u>highest-grossing tours of all time</u> as well. The <u>British Phonographic Industry</u> hailed the band as one of "most influential and pioneering" artists in the world. Similarly, the <u>Rock and Roll Hall of Fame</u> has *A Rush of Blood to the Head* (2002) on the <u>200 Definitive Albums</u> list and "Yellow" on the <u>Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll exhibit</u>. In 2023, <u>Time</u> stated the group were among the most impactful climate action leaders on the planet. Despite their popularity and recognition, they are considered polarising musicians.

# History

### 1997–1999: Formation and first years

Chris Martin and Jonny Buckland first met during their orientation week at University College London, in September 1996. The pair began to write their first songs together in early 1997 and practised every night. Guy Berryman was the third member to join the band in the following months and they recorded various demos without a drummer, calling themselves Big Fat Noises by November. In 1998, Will Champion completed the line-up.

The final name change came courtesy of close friend and fellow <u>UCL</u> student Tim Crompton. Tim was in the process of putting a band of old schoolmates together (later called Bettina Motive). While killing time waiting for a delayed removal van, he had considered the name after he found a copy of Philip Horky's book, *Child's Reflections*, *Cold Play*. Tim had a list of potential band names but Cold Play was quickly rejected; the future bandmates didn't like it, so they discarded it. Starfish were happy to pick it up.

—Life in Technicolor: A Celebration of Coldplay,  $2018^{[11]}$ 

Buckland and Berryman had come to his house because a roommate had a drum kit and was a good drummer, but he had not turned up, "so I just said [I would] give it a go". [15]

Champion scheduled the band's first performance only a few days after becoming part of it. [16] They had not chosen a proper name yet and called themselves Starfish for the show, which was held on 16 January 1998 at The Laurel Tree, in <u>Camden</u>. [16] Weeks later, the name Coldplay was settled. [16] In May 1998, the band released <u>Safety</u>, an independent <u>EP</u> financed by Martin's lifelong friend, <u>Phil Harvey</u>. [17] 150 out of 500 copies went to open market. [18] Harvey sold the first one to his roommate for £3 and the rest were given away to record labels. [19]

As Martin complained about the "vice-like grip" one of the Camden promoters had on the band, Harvey suggested the group should book their own concert at <u>Dingwalls</u>, where they managed to sell 50 copies of *Safety*. The event is generally considered when the latter officially became Coldplay's manager. He eventually dropped out of his course at <u>Trinity College</u>, <u>Oxford</u> to dedicate himself to the role. More concerts were scheduled throughout the summer. Martin tried to invite <u>Tim Rice-Oxley</u> to play keyboard for the band, but when "[they] discussed it again a couple of weeks later, he said that the rest of

the band weren't keen on adding a member". [20] In September 1998, they performed at Manchester's In the City showcase and got discovered by A&R scout Debs Wild. [21] Safety was followed by a cassette demo with "Ode to Deodorant" and "Brothers & Sisters". [22]

Wild informed BMG Publishing's Caroline Elleray and music lawyer Gavin Maude about the group. [22] Elleray then talked to Dan Keeling at Parlophone, but he had already passed on them. [22] Conversely, Maude talked to Simon Williams from Fierce Panda Records, who in turn contacted Steve Lamacq. [22] On 3 January 1999, Coldplay became the first unsigned act in history to guest on Lamacq's *Evening Session*. [23] A month later, they signed a short-term contract with Fierce Panda and re-recorded "Brothers & Sisters". [24] Six labels offered a contract as the band's popularity grew; but they wanted Parlophone, which led Elleray to meet Keeling again. [24] He changed his mind and the deal was signed at Trafalgar Square in April 1999, the same month in which "Brothers & Sisters" was released. [24] The next days saw them study for UCL's final examinations. [25]

On 27 June 1999, Coldplay made their first appearance at the <u>Glastonbury Festival</u> in the New Bands Tent. They later recorded <u>The Blue Room</u>, which had 5,000 copies pressed and sold to the public. Its sessions were originally meant for <u>Parachutes</u> (2000), but became tumultuous due to Martin having heated discussions regarding Champion's abilities as a drummer. The singer commented that "Three days later, the rest of us were feeling miserable, [...] we asked him to come back. They made me have lots of vodka and cranberry juice in remembrance of what a nasty piece of work I was being". After working out their differences, the band decided to work as a democracy, established a new set of rules, then declared that anyone using <u>hard drugs</u> would be kicked out of the group immediately, a decision inspired by R.E.M. and U2. [30]

#### 2000-2001: *Parachutes*

The band first planned to record their debut album, *Parachutes*, over the span of two weeks. However, due to tours and other live performances, the recording took place between September 1999 and April—May 2000. The album was recorded at <u>Rockfield Studios</u>, Matrix Studios, and <u>Wessex Sound Studios</u> with producer <u>Ken Nelson</u>, although the majority of *Parachutes*' tracks were recorded at <u>Liverpool</u>'s Parr Street Studios (where they used three studio rooms). American engineer <u>Michael Brauer</u> in New York mixed all of the songs for the album. During that time they played on the <u>Carling Tour</u>, which showcased up-and-coming acts. [33]

After releasing two EPs without a hit song, Coldplay had their first Top 40 hit with the lead single from *Parachutes*, "Shiver", which was released in March 2000, the same week Coldplay played The Forum in Tunbridge Wells supporting the band Terris as part of the NME Premier Tour. [34] "Shiver" peaked at the number 35 position on the UK Singles Chart. [35] June 2000 was a pivotal moment in Coldplay's history: the band embarked on their first headlining tour, including a performance at the Glastonbury Festival. The band also released the single "Yellow"; [36] it was Coldplay's first release to reach the top five and rose to number four on the UK Singles Chart. [36] The minimalistic music video for "Yellow" was filmed at Studland Bay in Dorset, and featured Martin singing the song in one continuous shot as he walked along the beach. [37]



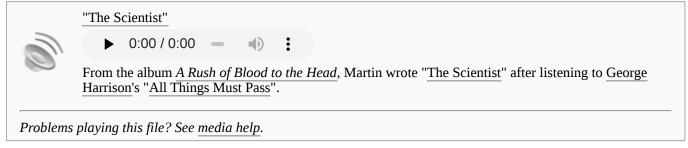
Coldplay performing "<u>Yellow</u>", their breakthrough hit, from the band's 2000 debut album *Parachutes*, in 2005

"Yellow" and "Shiver" were initially released as EPs in the spring of 2000. [38] "Yellow" was released as a single in the United Kingdom on 26 June 2000. In the United States, it was released as the lead single from the then-untitled debut album. In October 2000, the track was sent to US college and alternative radio outlets. [39]

Coldplay released *Parachutes* on 10 July 2000 in the United Kingdom via their record label, <u>Parlophone</u>. The album debuted at number one on the <u>UK Albums Chart</u>. It was released on 7 November 2000 by record label <u>Nettwerk</u> in North America. The album has been made available in various formats since its initial release; both Parlophone and Nettwerk released it as a CD in 2000, and it was also released as a <u>Cassette</u> by US label <u>Capitol</u> in 2001. In the following year, Parlophone issued the album as an <u>LP</u>. Four singles were released from *Parachutes*, including "Shiver" and "Yellow", and enjoyed popularity in the UK and US. The third single was "<u>Trouble</u>", which reached number 10 in the UK charts. It was released more than a year later in the US, and reached number 28 in the <u>Alternative Songs</u> chart. In December 2001, the band released a limited-edition CD, *Mince Spies*, featuring a remix of "Yellow" and the Christmas song "<u>Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas</u>". It was pressed to 1,000 copies, and was issued only to fans and journalists. Also in the UK charts. It was pressed to 1,000 copies, and was issued only to fans and journalists.

Parachutes was nominated for the Mercury Music Prize in September 2000. [46] Having found success in Europe, the band set their sights on North America, [47] by releasing the album there in November 2000, and started the *US Club Tour* in February 2001. [48] At the 2001 Brit Awards in February, Coldplay earned awards for Best British Group, and Best British Album. [49] Although Parachutes was a slow-burning success in the United States, it eventually reached double-platinum status. [50] The album was critically well received and earned a Best Alternative Music Album honours at the 2003 Grammy Awards. [51] Chris Martin said after Parachutes was released that the album's success was meant to elevate the band's status to the "biggest, best band in the world". [52] After single-handedly managing the band until early 2001, Harvey resigned due to the stress of having to perform duties that typically require a team of people. He became the group's creative director and is often referenced as their fifth member; Dave Holmes replaced him as manager. [53]

#### 2002–2004: A Rush of Blood to the Head



After the success of *Parachutes*, Coldplay returned to the studio in September 2001 to begin work on their second album, *A Rush of Blood to the Head*, once again with Ken Nelson producing. They had trouble focusing in London and decided to relocate to Liverpool, where they recorded some of the songs on *Parachutes*. Once there, vocalist Chris Martin said that they became obsessed with recording. "In My Place" was the first song recorded for the album. The band released it as the album's lead single because it was the track that made them want to record a second album, following a "strange period of not really knowing what we were doing" three months after the success of *Parachutes*. According to Martin "one thing kept us going: recording 'In My Place'. Then other songs started coming." [54]

The band wrote more than 20 songs for the album. Some of their new material, including "In My Place" and "Animals", was played live while the band were still touring *Parachutes*. [45][55] The album's title was revealed through a post on the band's official website. [56] The album was released in August 2002 and spawned several successful singles, including "In My Place", "Clocks", and the ballad "The Scientist", which was inspired by George Harrison's 1970 song "All Things Must Pass". [57]

Coldplay toured from 19 June 2002 to 8 September 2003 for the A Rush of Blood to the Head Tour. They visited five continents, including coheadlining festival dates at Glastonbury Festival, [27] V2003 and Rock Werchter. Manv concerts showcased elaborate lighting individualised screens reminiscent of U2's Elevation Tour and Nine Inch Nails' Fragility Tour. [58] During the extended tour, Coldplay recorded a live DVD and CD, *Live 2003*, at Sydney's Hordern Pavilion. [59] At the 2003 Brit Awards held at Earls Court, London, Coldplay received awards for Best British Group, and Best British Album. [49] On 28 August 2003, Coldplay performed "The Scientist" at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City, and won three awards. [60][61]



Martin performing with Coldplay in 2002

In December 2003, readers of *Rolling Stone* magazine chose Coldplay as the best artist and the best band of the year. [62] At that time the band

covered the Pretenders' 1983 song "2000 Miles" (which was made available for download on their official website). "2000 Miles" was the top selling UK download that year, with proceeds from the sales donated to Future Forests and Stop Handgun Violence campaigns. [63] A Rush of Blood to the Head won the Grammy Award for Best Alternative Music Album at the 2003 Grammy Awards. [64] At the 2004 Grammy Awards, Coldplay earned Record of the Year for "Clocks". [65]

#### 2005-2007: X&Y

Coldplay spent most of 2004 out of the spotlight, taking a break from touring and releasing a satire music video of a song from a fictional band titled The Nappies while recording their third album. [66] X&Y was released in June 2005 in UK and Europe. [67] This new, delayed release date had put the album back into the next fiscal year, and the late release was blamed for a drop in EMI's stock. [68][69] It became the best-selling album of 2005 with worldwide sales of 8.3 million. [70] The lead single, "Speed of Sound", [71] made its radio and online music store debut on 18 April and was released as a CD on 23 May 2005. [72] X&Y entered the album charts of 32 countries at the number one position [73] and was the third-fastest-selling album in UK chart history upon release. [74]

Two other singles were released that year: "Fix You" in September and "Talk" in December. Critical reaction to X&Y was mostly positive, though slightly less enthusiastic than that of its predecessor. <u>The New York Times</u> critic Jon Pareles infamously described Coldplay as "the most insufferable band of the decade", whereas NME awarded the album 9/10 calling it "Confident, bold, ambitious, bunged with singles and impossible to contain, X&Y doesn't reinvent the wheel but it does reinforce Coldplay as the band of their time". Comparisons between Coldplay and U2 became commonplace. Martin said the critical review of the album by the *New York Times* made him feel liberated as he "agreed with a lot of the points", adding that "in a way, it was liberating to see that someone else realised that also".

From June 2005 to March 2007, Coldplay went on their <u>Twisted Logic Tour</u>, which included festival dates like <u>Coachella</u>, <u>Isle of Wight Festival</u>, <u>Glastonbury</u> and the <u>Austin City Limits Music Festival</u>. <u>[80]</u> In July 2005, the band appeared at <u>Live 8 in Hyde Park</u>, where they played a rendition of <u>the Verve's "Bitter Sweet Symphony"</u> with <u>Richard Ashcroft</u> on vocals. <u>[81]</u> On 28 August, Coldplay performed "Speed of Sound" at the <u>2005 MTV Video Music Awards</u> in Miami. <u>[82]</u> In September, Coldplay recorded a new version of "How You See the World" with reworked lyrics for <u>War Child's Help!: A Day in the Life</u> charity album. <u>[83]</u> In February 2006, Coldplay earned Best Album and Best Single honours at the <u>Brit Awards</u>. <u>[84]</u> Three more singles were released



Coldplay performing in Barcelona during Twisted Logic Tour in 2005

during 2006 and 2007, "The Hardest Part", "What If" and "White Shadows".

#### 2008–2010: Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends

In October 2006, Coldplay began work on their fourth studio album, *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends*, with producer <u>Brian Eno</u>. [85] Taking a break from recording, the band toured Latin America in early 2007, finishing the Twisted Logic Tour while performing in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. [86] After recording in churches and other venues in Latin America and Spain during their tour, the band said the album would likely reflect <u>Hispanic</u> influence. [87] The group spent the rest of the year recording most of the album with Eno. [88]

Martin described *Viva la Vida* as a new direction for Coldplay; a change from their past three albums, which the band felt was a "trilogy" that they had finished. He said the album featured less of his falsetto as he allowed his voice's lower register to take precedence. Some songs, such as "Violet Hill" contain distorted guitar riffs and bluesy undertones.

"Violet Hill" was confirmed as the first single, with a radio release date of 29 April 2008. [90] After the first play, it was freely obtainable from Coldplay's website from 12:15 pm (GMT +0) for one week until it became commercially available on 6 May. [91][92][93] "Violet Hill" entered the UK Top 10, US Top 40 and charted well in the rest of the world. [94] The title track, "Viva la Vida", was also released exclusively on iTunes, it became the band's first number-one single on both the US *Billboard* Hot 100, [95] and the UK Official Charts. [96] Coldplay performed the song live for the first time at the 2008 MTV Movie Awards on 1 June. [97] "Viva la Vida" became iTunes' best-selling song of 2008. [98]



Coldplay on stage in Dallas, Texas, during the Viva la Vida Tour

Upon release, *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* topped the album charts worldwide and was the world's best-selling album of  $2008.^{\underline{[99]}}$  It hit number one on the UK album chart despite having come on the market only three days previously. In that time, it sold 302,000 copies, being "one of the fastest-selling albums in the country's history". $^{\underline{[100]}}$  By the end of June, it had set a new record for most-downloaded album ever. $^{\underline{[101][102]}}$  In October 2008, Coldplay won two  $\underline{Q}$  Awards for Best Album for  $\underline{Viva}$  la  $\underline{Vida}$  or  $\underline{Death}$  and  $\underline{All}$   $\underline{His}$   $\underline{Friends}$  and  $\underline{Best}$  Act in the World  $\underline{Today}.^{\underline{[103]}}$  On  $\underline{9}$  November, Coldplay

were named the World's Best-selling Act of 2008 at the <u>World Music Awards</u> in Monte Carlo. They also picked up two other awards: World's Best-selling Rock Act and Great Britain's Best-selling Act. The band followed up *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* with the <u>Prospekt's March</u> EP, which was released on 21 November 2008. The extended play features songs from the album sessions and was originally made available on its own, while the album got re-issued with all EP tracks included on a bonus disc. "Life in Technicolor II" was the only single released.



Coldplay performing at New York's Hammerstein Ballroom in 2008

Coldplay began their <u>Viva la Vida Tour</u> in June with a free concert at Brixton Academy in London. This was followed two days later by a 45-minute performance that was broadcast live from outside <u>BBC Television Centre</u>. Released in late 2008, "<u>Lost!</u>" became the third single from the album, featuring a new version with <u>Jay-Z</u> called "Lost+". After performing the opening set on 14 March 2009 for <u>Sound Relief</u> at the <u>Sydney Cricket Ground</u>, Coldplay headlined a sold-out concert later that same night. Sound Relief is a benefit concert for victims of the <u>Victorian Bushfire Crisis</u> and the Queensland <u>Floods</u>. On 4 December 2008, Joe Satriani filed a copyright infringement suit against

Coldplay in the <u>United States District Court for the Central District of California</u>. Satriani's suit asserted that the Coldplay song "Viva la Vida" includes "substantial original portions" of the Satriani song "If I Could Fly" from his 2004 album, <u>Is There Love in Space?</u>. The Coldplay song in question received two <u>Grammy Awards</u> for "Song of the Year". [110] The band denied the allegation. [111][112] An unspecified settlement was ultimately reached between the parties. [113]

Coldplay were nominated for four awards at the 2009 Brit Awards: British Group, British Live Act, British Single ("Viva la Vida") and British Album (Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends). [114] At the 51st Grammy Awards in the same year, Coldplay won three Grammy Awards in the categories for Song of Year for "Viva la Vida", Best Rock Album for Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends, and Best Vocal Pop Performance by a Duo or Group for "Viva la Vida". [115][116] A live album titled LeftRightLeftRightLeft was recorded at various shows during the tour. LeftRightLeftRightLeft, released on 15 May 2009, was to be given away at the remaining concerts of their Viva la Vida Tour. It was released as a free download from their website. [117] Following the Viva la Vida Tour, Coldplay announced another "Latin America tour" to take place in February and March 2010, in which they were to visit Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia. [118] In October 2009, Coldplay won Song of the Year for "Viva la Vida" at The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Awards in London. [119] In December 2009, *Rolling Stone* readers voted the group the fourth best artist of the 2000s, [120] they were also included in *Q*'s list of artists of the century. [121] In December 2010 the band released "Christmas Lights". The song received very positive reviews, and the music video features a cameo from actor Simon Pegg, a close friend of Chris Martin, who plays a violin-playing Elvis impersonator in the background.[122]

# 2011–2012: *Mylo Xyloto*

The band finished recording the new album in mid-2011. When Martin and Champion were interviewed by BBC Radio and asked about the album's lyrical themes, Martin replied "It's about love, addiction, OCD, escape and working for someone you don't like." When asked whether or not their fifth album would be out by the summer, Martin and Champion said that there was plenty of work to be done before

releasing it. They confirmed several festival appearances before its release date, including a headlining spot at the 2011 <u>Glastonbury Festival, [124]</u> T in the Park, <u>Austin City Limits Music Festival, [126]</u> Rock in Rio, <u>[127]</u> and Lollapalooza festival. <u>[128]</u>

In an interview on 13 January 2011, Coldplay mentioned two new songs would be included on their upcoming fifth album, "Princess of China" and "Every Teardrop Is a Waterfall". [129] In a February interview Parlophone president Miles Leonard told HitQuarters that the band were still in the studio working on the album and



Coldplay playing at MuchMusic in Toronto, September 2011

that he expected the final version would appear "towards the autumn of this year". [130] On 31 May 2011, Coldplay announced that "Every Teardrop Is a Waterfall" was the first single for the fifth album. It was released on 3 June 2011. The band presented five new songs at festivals during the summer of 2011, "Charlie Brown", "Hurts Like Heaven", "Us Against the World", "Princess of China" and "Major Minus". [131]

On 12 August 2011, Coldplay announced via their official website that *Mylo Xyloto* was the new album title, and that it would be released on 24 October 2011. [132] On 12 September the band released "Paradise", the second single from their upcoming album *Mylo Xyloto*. On 23 September 2011, tickets for Coldplay's European tour officially went on sale. Demand proved to be very high with most venues selling out in seconds. [133] *Mylo Xyloto* was released on 24 October 2011, it received mixed to positive reviews and topped the charts in over 34 countries. [134][135][136]



The laser and light effects from the group's Mylo Xyloto Tour

On 19 October 2011, Coldplay performed songs at Apple Inc.'s private memorial for Steve Jobs, including "Viva la Vida", "Fix You", "Yellow" and "Every Teardrop Is a Waterfall". [137] On 26 October their "Amex Unstaged" concert at the Plaza de Toros de Las Ventas in Madrid, Spain, was streamed by YouTube as a live webcast directed by Anton Corbijn. [138] On 30 November 2011, Coldplay received three Grammy Award nominations for the 54th Annual Grammy Awards which took place on 12 February 2012 in Los Angeles, and the band performed with Rihanna at the ceremony. [139][140] On 12 January 2012, Coldplay were nominated for two Brit Awards. [141] On 21 February 2012, they were

awarded the Brit Award for Best British Group for the third time. [142] The album was the best-selling rock album in the United Kingdom, selling 908,000 copies. [143] The album's second single, "Paradise", was also the best-selling rock single in the UK, selling 410,000 copies. [143] At the 2012 MTV Video Music Awards, "Paradise" won the Best Rock Video award. [144] Mylo Xyloto has sold over 8 million copies worldwide. [134]

Coldplay headlined the closing ceremony of the London 2012 Paralympic Games on 9 September 2012, where they performed alongside other artists including Rihanna and Jay-Z. To tie in with their performance at the closing ceremony, the group gave permission for bands who were participating in the Bandstand Marathon the opportunity to perform their 2008 single "Viva la Vida" to celebrate the end of the games. [146]

In October 2012, the music video for Coldplay's song "Hurts Like Heaven" was released. The video was based on the story of Mylo Xyloto, a boy who grew up in tyranny ran by Major Minus. The fictional comics titled *Mylo Xyloto* continued on the story portrayed in the music video when the series was released in early 2013. A concert documentary film and live album *Live 2012* chronicles their tour in support of the *Mylo Xyloto* album. The film premiered theatrically for one night only, 13 November 2012, and was released on CD and home video on 19 November 2012.

On 21 November, after a concert in Brisbane, Australia as part on the group's Mylo Xyloto Tour, Coldplay hinted they were set to take a three-year break from touring. Coldplay performed two shows with Jay-Z in the Barclays Center, Brooklyn, New York, on 30 December and New Year's Eve which ended the Mylo Xyloto Tour. The Mylo Xyloto Tour was named the fourth-highest-grossing tour worldwide of 2012 with more than \$171.3 million earned in ticket sales.

### 2013-2014: Ghost Stories

In an interview with Australian radio station <u>2Day FM</u>, Chris Martin revealed that the title for the band's next album would be "much easier to pronounce". <u>[150]</u> Martin debunked speculation that they were taking a break from touring by saying, "This three-year break idea only came about because I said at a gig in Australia that we might not be back there for three years. That's probably true, but that's just how a world tour works. No chance are we taking a three-year break." <u>[151]</u>

On 9 August 2013, Coldplay announced the release of their song "Atlas", which featured on the soundtrack for the film *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. Its release got pushed back to 6 September 2013 (everywhere but the UK) and 8 September (UK). In December 2013, it was announced that future Coldplay releases would be distributed by Atlantic Records in the US due to restructuring within Warner Music Group following the purchase of Parlophone Records from EMI. [153]

On 25 February 2014, the band unveiled "Midnight", a track from their yet-to-be released album. [154] In early March 2014, it was announced that the band's sixth album, *Ghost Stories*, would be released 19 May 2014. [155] *Ghost Stories* is a spiritually driven album that revolves around two major themes mentioned by Chris Martin. The album explores the idea of past actions, and the effects they can have on your future and one's capacity for unconditional love. [156] The band took a different approach for their sixth studio album in contrast to their previous studio albums, with Martin inviting the band to contribute original songwriting material for the album, as opposed to building songs off his ideas as they had done during previous recording sessions. [157]

From April to July, Coldplay embarked on a six-date <u>Ghost Stories Tour</u> in support of the album, playing 'intimate' shows in six cities: the <u>Beacon Theatre</u> in New York City on 5 May, <u>Royce Hall</u> in Los Angeles on 19 May, <u>Casino de Paris</u> in Paris on 28 May, <u>Tokyo Dome City Hall</u> in Tokyo on 12 June, <u>Enmore Theatre</u> in Sydney on 19 June, and closed the tour at the <u>Royal Albert Hall</u> in London on 2 July 2014. <u>[158]</u> The album was made available for pre-order on <u>iTunes</u>, alongside new single "<u>Magic</u>". <u>[159]</u> Two more singles from the album, "<u>A Sky Full of Stars</u>" and "<u>True Love</u>", have since been released. *Ghost Stories* received mixed to positive reviews. <u>[160]</u> The album topped the charts in the UK, the US and most major markets. <u>[161][162]</u> It received a Grammy Award nomination for <u>Best Pop Vocal Album</u>, and "A Sky Full of

Stars" was nominated for <u>Best Pop Duo/Group Performance</u>. In December 2014, <u>Spotify</u> named Coldplay the most-streamed band in the world for 2014, and third most-streamed artist behind <u>Ed</u> Sheeran and Eminem.

#### 2015–2018: A Head Full of Dreams

On 4 December 2014, Chris Martin announced in an interview with Zane Lowe on BBC Radio 1 that Coldplay were in the middle of working on their seventh studio album, A Head Full of Dreams. [165][166] Martin remarked it might be the band's final album and compared it to Harry Potter: "It's our seventh thing, and the way we look at it, it's like the last Harry Potter book or something like that." He added that unlike their promotion efforts for Ghost Stories, the band will tour for the seventh record. In an interview with Jo Whiley on BBC Radio 2, Martin hinted at the style of the album by saying that the band were trying to make something colourful and uplifting, yet not bombastic. He also stated that it will be something to "shuffle your feet" to.

On 11 December 2014, the band unveiled a new song, "Miracles", which was written and recorded for the World War II drama film *Unbroken* directed by Angelina Jolie. [169] At the 2015 Billboard Music Awards on 17 May, *Ghost Stories* was named Top Rock Album. [170] On 26 September, Coldplay performed at the 2015 Global Citizen Festival in Central Park's Great Lawn in New York, an event organised by Chris Martin advocating for an end to extreme global poverty. [171] Coldplay, along with Beyoncé, Ed Sheeran, and Pearl Jam, headlined the festival which was broadcast on NBC in the US on 27 September and the BBC in the UK on 28 September. [171]

Speaking on Nick Grimshaw's Radio 1 Breakfast Show on the BBC on 6 November, Coldplay confirmed 4 December as the release date of A Head Full of Dreams, and a new song from the album, "Adventure of a Lifetime" premiered on the show. The album has guest appearances from Beyoncé, Gwyneth Paltrow, Noel Gallagher, Tove Lo and Barack Obama. The album reached number one in the UK, and number two in the US, Australia and Canada among others where it was kept in second place by Adele's 25. The music video for "Adventure of a Lifetime" featured the band performing as chimpanzees. They were provided consultation with renowned performance capture actor Andy Serkis. [175]

On 27 November 2015, the first dates to their 2016 A Head Full of Dreams Tour were announced. Latin American and European stops were listed, which included three dates at Wembley Stadium, London in June. The North America Tour, an extra Wembley concert, and an Oceania tour were later added. On 5 December, the band headlined the opening day of the 2015 Jingle Bell Ball at London's O<sub>2</sub> Arena. On 7 February 2016 they headlined the Super Bowl 50 halftime show, being joined by Beyoncé and Bruno Mars. In April 2016, the band were named the sixth best-selling artist worldwide in 2015.

On 26 June 2016, Coldplay closed the final day of the <u>Glastonbury Festival</u> in England. Their performance included a duet with <u>Barry Gibb</u>, the last surviving member of the <u>Bee Gees</u>. During the band's second night at <u>MetLife Stadium</u> in New Jersey on 18 July,



The band performing "Adventure of a Lifetime", during their headline setlist at Glastonbury 2016. The performance was their fifth at the festival, and a record-setting fourth as headliners.

Coldplay were joined onstage by <u>Michael J. Fox</u> to recreate a <u>Back to the Future</u> scene. Martin sang "<u>Earth Angel</u>" before introducing Fox onstage to join the band in performing the Chuck Berry classic "Johnny B. Goode". [182]

The band performed a full set in India for the first time as part of the <u>Global Citizen Festival</u> in <u>Mumbai</u> on 19 November 2016. This performance was attended by 80,000 people and also featured many Bollywood stars during the concert. The same month, Coldplay announced in interviews with <u>Absolute Radio</u> and Magic Radio in London that they would be releasing new songs in a new EP called the <u>Kaleidoscope EP</u>. Described as being made from a leftover "bag of ideas" from the recording of *A Head Full of Dreams*, Martin stated that it would be released in "a couple of months". The band officially announced that the EP was released on 14 July 2017. 186



Coldplay playing the second of three sold-out concerts at <u>Stade de</u>
France in Paris, July 2017

On 22 February 2017, the band released a long-awaited and teased collaboration track with EDM duo <u>The Chainsmokers</u> called "<u>Something Just Like This</u>". Reaching number 2 in the UK Singles Chart and number 3 on the US *Billboard* Hot 100, it was the lead single from Coldplay's thirteenth extended play *Kaleidoscope*, released on 14 July 2017. Together, they debuted the song live at the <u>2017 Brit Awards</u> with Chris Martin also performing a tribute song to the late <u>George Michael</u>. On 2 March, Martin's birthday, the band released a track from the EP, "<u>Hypnotised</u>". Its birthday, the band released a track from the EP, "Hypnotised". Its You" and "Aliens", came out on 15 June and 6 July 2017 respectively. On 15 August 2017, Coldplay announced

that a live album covering the A Head Full of Dreams Tour would be released.

On 8 October 2017, Coldplay debuted live their new song called "Life Is Beautiful" at <u>SDCCU Stadium</u> in <u>San Diego</u>, California. It was written in support after the <u>earthquake</u> that affected Mexico on 19 September. Part of the band's show was broadcast at the end of Estamos Unidos Mexicanos, a <u>benefit concert</u> taken place at <u>Mexico City</u>'s <u>Zócalo</u>, which included "Fix You", "Viva la Vida", "Adventure of a Lifetime" and their new song. Martin stated that the proceeds from the song and concert would be donated to relief efforts for Mexico and other countries. [191]

The A Head Full of Dreams Tour was finished in November 2017. Grossing over \$523 million, in 2017 it was listed as the <u>third-highest-grossing concert tour of all time</u>. The promised live album, which is titled <u>Live in Buenos Aires</u>, came out on 7 December 2018. Its footage covers the final concert of the tour in <u>La Plata</u> and a second release named <u>Love in Tokyo</u> was made available at the same time exclusively for the Japanese market. On 30 November 2018, Coldplay released <u>Global Citizen – EP 1</u> under the name Los Unidades. It includes "E-Lo", a song with <u>Pharrell Williams</u> featuring Jozzy. Proceeds from the EP was donated towards efforts to end global poverty. [193]

# 2019–2020: *Everyday Life*

On 26 September 2019, Global Citizen announced that Coldplay would perform at Global Goal Live: The Possible Dream on 26 September 2020. [194] On 18 October 2019, mysterious black-and-white posters began appearing in various countries around the world, with the band in vintage-style clothing and a date showing 22 November 1919. The band also changed their profile pictures on social media to a sun and

moon, making fans speculate an imminent release of new material. [195] On 19 October 2019, a cryptic 5 second teaser was released on social media with orchestral music in the background. [196] On 21 October 2019, in a letter sent to fans, the band announced that their eighth studio album would be titled *Everyday Life* and that it would be a double album, with the first half titled *Sunrise* and the second half titled *Sunset*. [197]

On 23 October 2019, the album tracks were revealed in advertisements in the band members local newspapers in the UK, including north Wales' <u>Daily Post</u> (with whom Jonny Buckland once had a holiday job), and Exeter's <u>Express & Echo</u> (the newspaper of Chris Martin's hometown). <u>[198]</u> "<u>Orphans</u>" and "<u>Arabesque</u>" were released as the lead singles on 24 October 2019 on the <u>Annie Mac</u> show on <u>BBC Radio 1</u>. "Arabesque" was the first Coldplay song to feature <u>profanity</u>. <u>[199]</u> The album was released on 22 November 2019 and marked by a double concert in <u>Amman</u>, Jordan. <u>[200]</u> The concert, which streamed live to <u>YouTube</u>, was performed at sunrise and sunset, corresponding with the subtitles of the album's two halves. <u>[201]</u>



Coldplay performing at the ALTer EGO concert in January 2020

Martin had earlier said that the band would not tour to promote the album until they could work out "how our tour can not only be sustainable (but) how can it be actively beneficial", and hope that it would be entirely carbon-neutral. However, Coldplay performed a one-off show on 25 November 2019 for the charity ClientEarth at London's Natural History Museum. The band played beneath Hope, a giant 128-year-old skeleton of a blue whale in the museum's great hall. The album debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart with 81,000 copies sold, making it the band's eighth consecutive UK number-one album. It was also the third fastest-selling album of 2019, behind No.6 Collaborations Project and Divinely Uninspired to a Hellish Extent. On 24 November 2020, Coldplay received two nominations for the 63rd Annual Grammy Awards, with one of them being Album of the Year, their first nomination in the category since Viva la Vida. On 21 December 2020, "Flags" was released internationally, the song was originally included as a Japanese bonus track of Everyday Life.

# 2021–present: Music of the Spheres and Moon Music

On 29 April 2021, Coldplay announced a new single called "Higher Power" would be released on 7 May 2021 coinciding with a video livestream from the International Space Station. Chris Martin stated in an interview with Zane Lowe that the band would be working with producer Max Martin and his team on both the song and the new album. He said, "Max is our producer right now for everything we do". On 4 May 2021, Coldplay were announced as the opening act for the 2021 Brit Awards, where they performed "Higher Power".

On 22 May 2021, the band participated in the *Live at Worth Farm* broadcast. [211] The band also showcased a new song called "Human Heart", featuring R&B duo We Are King. [212] On 8 June 2021, the "official" music video for "Higher Power", directed by Dave Meyers, premiered on YouTube, following a simpler music video featuring the band performing the song while dancing with CGI alien holograms that premiered on 7 May 2021. [213] On 20 July 2021, Coldplay announced that their new album *Music of the Spheres* would be released on 15 October 2021, and also announced a track titled "Coloratura", which was released on 23 July 2021. [214]

On 13 September 2021, Coldplay announced that the album's second single "My Universe", a collaboration with South Korean pop group BTS, would be released on 24 September 2021. [215] The song debuted at number 3 on the UK Singles Chart, becoming their highest-peaking single since "Something Just Like This", [216] and it debuted at number one on the US *Billboard* Hot 100. [217] A short documentary about the collaboration with BTS was later released on 26 September 2021 on the official BTS YouTube channel. [218]



Coldplay with  $\underline{\text{Ed Sheeran}}$  at the  $\underline{\text{O}_2}$  Shepherd's Bush Empire in 2021



Coldplay performing at Wembley
Stadium in August 2022 during the
Music of the Spheres World Tour

Music of the Spheres debuted at number one the UK Albums Chart, [219] becoming the fastest-selling album in the country since Ed Sheeran's 2019 No.6 Collaborations Project. [220] The album debuted at number four on the US Billboard 200 chart, [221] and reached number one on both the Top Alternative Albums and the Top Rock Albums charts. [222] On 14 October 2021, Coldplay announced their eighth concert tour, the Music of the Spheres World Tour, which began in San José, Costa Rica, in March 2022 and will visit three continents, with more tour dates to be announced in the future. [223] The tour is part of an ongoing effort to reduce the band's carbon footprint; Chris Martin explained in an

interview with BBC that the tour would feature "kinetic flooring" that powers the concerts through the movement of concertgoers, as well as bicycles that do the same thing, meaning that "the whole show is powered from renewable energy". Martin said the band's goal is that they will have "slightly shifted the status quo of how a tour works". [224]

On 23 November 2021, "Higher Power" was nominated for <u>Best Pop Duo/Group Performance</u> at the <u>64th Annual Grammy Awards</u>. [225] In December 2021, Martin said Coldplay would release three more albums until 2025 during an interview for <u>BBC</u>, with one of them being "kind of a musical" while their last will be a "back to the basics" self-titled record. [226] He added, however, that the band will still be active with smaller releases and worldwide touring after 2025. [227] On 23 February 2022, the band released a new stripped-down version of "<u>Let Somebody Go</u>" and a cover of <u>Kid Cudi</u>'s "<u>Day 'n' Nite</u>". Both songs were part of the <u>Spotify Singles</u> series. [228] They later received three nominations at the <u>65th Annual Grammy</u> Awards, including Album of the Year and Best Pop Vocal Album. [229]

On 13 June 2024, the band announced "Feels Like I'm Falling in Love", the lead single for *Moon Music*. The album was revealed through Coldplay's social media profiles, being scheduled for release on 4 October. Two weeks later, they headlined Glastonbury Festival for the fifth time, extending the record established in 2016. Guests included Victoria Canal, Michael J. Fox and Laura Mvula. The group also debuted "We Pray", which features contributions by Little Simz, Burna Boy, Elyanna and Tini. Coldplay later revealed the song would be the



Coldplay performing at <u>Glastonbury</u> Festival 2024

second offering from *Moon Music*. During their visit to Rome at the Music of the Spheres World Tour, they performed "Good Feelings" with Ayra Starr. The album's track list was made public on 16 August.

# **Artistry**

### **Creative process**

During an interview for <u>NME</u>, Berryman explained the band usually have a title and concept in mind before the music arrives, which serves to provide a "framework into which we can work thematically". [238] Martin described their way of writing new songs as "a series of doors". [239] He brings initial ideas to Buckland and the guitarist either disapproves or gives his input; the same happens from Buckland to Berryman, then Champion, allowing all band members to express themselves artistically. [239] However, this process is known to not always be linear, as tracks like "Magic" and "Adventure of a Lifetime" were started through the bass and guitar riffs from Berryman and Buckland, respectively. [240] Coldplay regularly switch instruments while in the studio as well. [241] When questioned about avoiding explicit language in lyrics, Champion affirmed swear words are "extremely useful at times", but overusing them "lessens their impact". [239] Moreover, music critics claim the band have a pattern which alternates between "overt bids for mainstream success and more self-consciously artsy prestige pieces". [242] Buckland stated that knowing the "big [album] is coming allows us to go a lot smaller" and be more "insular about what music we make sense". [238]

### Musical and lyrical style

Coldplay have explored many musical styles throughout their career, with their sound being considered alternative rock, [243] alternative pop, [244] pop rock, [245] post-Britpop, [246] soft rock, [247] and pop. [248] After winning a Grammy Award for Best Rock Album in 2009, Martin jokingly stated in his acceptance speech that they were "limestone rock", in comparison to "hard rock". [249] The extended plays released in 1998 and 1999 have characteristics of dream pop, setting them apart from future releases. [250] Their first studio album, *Parachutes* (2000), was described as melodic pop which combined "bits of distorted guitar riffs and swishing percussion", being "exquisitely dark and artistically abrasive". [251] Berryman called it a "quiet, polite record", [252] while Champion has compared the lyrics to Lou Reed's "Perfect Day", as they are moody but with twists that imply optimism, ultimately making an album defined by the contrast between beautiful and happy messages and notoriously sad sounds. [253]

On the other hand, 2002's  $\underline{A}$   $\underline{Rush}$  of  $\underline{Blood}$  to the  $\underline{Head}$  is full of "plaintive strums, weary arpeggios and pained melodies", along with a sense of urgency and heartbreak.  $\underline{^{[254]}}$  During an interview, Martin affirmed the title means "doing something on impulse".  $\underline{^{[254]}}$  Music critics described it as larger,  $\underline{^{[255]}}$  darker, and colder than its predecessor,  $\underline{^{[256]}}$  praising Coldplay for showing a newfound confidence as well.  $\underline{^{[257]}}$  This style was kept for their third album,  $\underline{X\&Y}$  (2005),  $\underline{^{[258]}}$  although now with the addition of electronic influences and extensive use of  $\underline{^{[259]}}$  having a grander scale in terms of both sound and existential themes.  $\underline{^{[260]}}$  Craig McLean from  $\underline{^{[260]}}$  called it "the work of an increasingly driven, punchier band", describing the melodies as "heartfelt stuff, with thumping guitar lines and

emotive piano". Lyrics have been described as the ruminations on Martin's "doubts, fears, hopes, and loves", with words that "are earnest and vague, so listeners can identify with the underlying concepts in the songs". [261]

With <u>Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends</u> and the subsequent <u>Prospekt's March</u> (both released in 2008), Coldplay further diversified their style and explored new territory following the completion of what they saw as a trilogy of albums. [262] The band experimented with numerous different instruments, including electric violins, tack pianos, santoors and orchestras, all while using more layered productions. [264] They also tried distinct song structures and vocal identities at the suggestion of producer Brian Eno, [265] drawing influences from oriental, <u>Hispanic</u>, African, and <u>Middle Eastern</u> sounds. [262] The title track, "Viva la <u>Vida</u>", is considered <u>baroque</u> pop and fourth single "Strawberry Swing" was described as having psychedelic inspirations. [266]



Champion with the <u>timpani</u> and church bell used in "Viva la Vida"

They dabbled in <u>shoegaze</u> on hidden track "Chinese Sleep Chant" as well. Lyrics are more universal in comparison to previous material, with the subject matter being more collective as the band "delves into love, life, war and death". Martin commented the revolution motifs were inspired by <u>Victor Hugo</u>'s *Les Misérables* (1862).

Those themes, along with some of the oriental influences, remained in 2011's *Mylo Xyloto*, [270] a concept album that follows the story of two characters in the style of a rock opera. [271] It expanded the spectrum of Coldplay's sound by including more electronic elements than before and featuring mostly upbeat tones for the first time, resulting in a pop rock style with modern, urban and dance melodies. [271] According to Champion, the band originally wanted to make an acoustic record, so when "Paradise" started to take shape, they decided to begin a separate electronic album. However, the two of them ultimately became a single body of work, with songs like "Charlie Brown" and "Us Against the World" getting reworked into their current versions. [272] Berryman declared they approached the project with confidence. [271] Lyrically, Martin said he was mostly inspired by old school American graffiti, the White Rose movement, and "being able to speak out or follow your passion, even if everybody seems against it". [273] In 2013, a comic book based on the record's plot was released in partnership with Mark Osborne.

For <u>Ghost Stories</u> (2014), Coldplay adopted a melancholic and somber style considered reminiscent of their debut, [275] while incorporating electronica, [276] R&B, [277] synth-pop and ambient influences. [278] Its melodies are also noticeably darker and more minimalistic than *Mylo Xyloto*, [279] having sparse arrangements that reflect their desire to "keep a sense of space" without "being afraid of silence" or "layering too many sounds". [280] The project is considered a <u>break-up</u> album as well, [281] exploring lyrically how past events in one's life (their ghosts) affect the present. Martin called it a journey of learning about unconditional love after he divorced from <u>Gwyneth Paltrow</u>. [280] A year later, <u>A Head Full of Dreams</u> was released with a similar style, but featuring bright and uplifting tones instead, [282] making contrast with its predecessor while introducing elements of <u>disco</u> and <u>funk</u>, most notably in lead single "Adventure of a Lifetime". [283] In the lyrics, they worked on subjects of unity, dreaming, parenthood, forgiveness, healing, and thankfulness. [282]

In 2017, the band made *Kaleidoscope EP* available as a companion piece to the album. [284] It included a live version of "Something Just Like This", their EDM collaboration with the Chainsmokers, and Brian Eno's returning production in "Aliens". [284] Meanwhile, tracks such as "All I Can Think About Is You" and "Hypnotised" mixed Coldplay's newfound pop style with their alternative rock roots, [285] setting the template for *Everyday Life* (2019), which saw a return to the experimentation and organic sounds of *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* while having new influences from gospel, blues and classical music. [286] Released as the lead single along with "Orphans", the song "Arabesque" drew from jazz fusion and afrobeat inspirations. [287] The band continued their lyrical themes of positivity, equality, hope, legacy and humanity, but added loss, pain and commentaries on issues such as racism, police brutality, gun control and refugee crisis, being their first album to feature profanity. [288]

This multi-style approach was similarly present in 2021's *Music of the Spheres*, although leaning towards pop sounds. [289] According to Berryman, the record "was created with one eye on the live performances" and that "shaped the overall energy levels and song selections" for it. [290] Martin added he was inspired by the *Star Wars* franchise, which made him wonder what other artists could be like across the universe after watching the Mos Eisley Cantina band perform. [291] New musical influences included "Human Heart" (an a cappella collaboration with R&B duo We Are King and Jacob Collier) and "Coloratura" (a progressive rock ballad running at 10 minutes and 18 seconds, making it the longest song the band have ever released). [292] The phrase "Everyone is an alien somewhere" was frequently used to promote the project; Champion stated it is meant to get people to look at what brings them together instead of what keeps them apart, since "from another planet's perspective, we would be the aliens". [293]

### **Influences**

Coldplay's music has been compared to <u>a-ha</u>, <u>U2</u>, <u>Oasis</u>, <u>R.E.M.</u> and <u>Radiohead</u>. <u>[294]</u> They acknowledged Scottish band <u>Travis</u> and American singer <u>Jeff Buckley</u> as major influences on their early material as well, <u>[295]</u> which was mostly produced by <u>Ken Nelson</u>. <u>[296]</u> Martin is known to be a fan of <u>Bruce Springsteen</u>, <u>[297]</u> mentioned "spending three years trying to sound like <u>Eddie Vedder</u>" before Buckley, <u>[265]</u> and commented listening to many hymns when he was young due to his religious upbringing. In 2021, he cited Belgian singer-songwriter <u>Stromae</u> as another influence, affirming "He is one of our heroes you know, he is one of those people that comes along and completely inspires you all over again". <u>[298]</u>



Brian Eno influenced Coldplay's ambient and electronica sound

Buckland, on the other hand, stated the Stone Roses were one of the reasons why he learned to play guitar. In 2020, he shared on social media playlists with some of his favorite tracks and artists from each

decade, including the Velvet Underground, Carole King, Joy Division, Talking Heads, Kate Bush, Donna Summer, Björk, Beastie Boys and many others. He said during an interview in the following year his favorite song of all time is "Teardrop" by Massive Attack. Meanwhile, Berryman is known to be inspired by artists like James Brown, Marvin Gaye, Kool & the Gang and the Funk Brothers. He further added that his musical taste is difficult to condense it down, but could not live without the Beatles or Motown. As for Champion, he commented knowing how to play violin and piano since he was eight years old gave him a different perspective on drums, which he only learned to play after joining the

band. During his youth, he listened to Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Nick Cave and traditional Irish folk music. He has named Ginger Baker, Dave Grohl and John Bonham as some of his favorite drummers.

For *A Rush of Blood to the Head* (2002), they drew inspiration from Echo & the Bunnymen, George Harrison, and Muse. Their third album, X&Y (2005), was particularly influenced by Kraftwerk and Depeche Mode. The song "Til Kingdom Come" was first written as a collaboration with Johnny Cash before he died. Aside from Nelson, Coldplay also worked with Danton Supple during recording sessions. On Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends (2008), the band moved towards art rock sensibilities, with inspirations including My Bloody Valentine, Blur and Arcade Fire. After partnering with Brian Eno and Jon Hopkins, they began to incorporate elements of ambient music and electronica into compositions. Both producers returned for Mylo Xyloto (2011), with Eno having a more direct role in the songwriting process.

In 2014, Paul Epworth contributed to *Ghost Stories*. [315] Producers Tim Bergling and Madeon were involved as well, [316] which resulted in tracks like "A Sky Full of Stars" having a more "danceable flavor". [317] Made available in the following year, *A Head Full of Dreams* (2015) featured producing duo Stargate. [318] Long-time partners of the band include Davide Rossi, [319] Bill Rakho, Rik Simpson and Dan Green. [320] The last three are referred as The Dream Team on *Everyday Life* (2019) and all four have been working with Coldplay since *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends*. [320] For their ninth album, *Music of the Spheres* (2021), the group invited Swedish producer Max Martin. [321] The song "People of the Pride" has an introduction inspired by a Beyoncé performance at the Global Citizen Festival, [322] while promotional single "Coloratura" drew comparisons to Pink Floyd. [214]

### Live performances

Coldplay have been said to "make sure each tour is its own dazzling, light-up spectacular". [324] Their concerts often use fireworks, lasers and confetti cannons. [325] Furthermore, Pollstar stated they were the first artist to include LED wristbands in live performances. [326] The group are widely credited with popularising the feature as well. [327] Writing a review of Live in Buenos Aires (2018), Sam Sodomsky from Pitchfork hailed them as "one of the 21st century's most enduring live acts". [324] Meanwhile, The Guardian's Alexis Petridis commented that the set lists used by the band were "a bullish reminder of how [they] got, and then stayed, huge". [328] Both reviewers also noted how Martin usually interacts with the audience between each song's performance.

Coldplay at Wembley Stadium during the A Head Full of Dreams Tour in 2016. The band also had an additional smaller stage where they performed an acoustic set. [323]

For <u>Ghost Stories Tour</u> (2014), however, they performed intimate sets at venues like Royal Albert Hall and the Beacon

<u>Theatre</u>.<sup>[329]</sup> The concerts made use of new features including a <u>laser harp</u> and the <u>reactable</u>.<sup>[330]</sup> A similar approach was taken for <u>Everyday Life</u> (2019) over their environmental concerns, <sup>[331]</sup> with the band playing small shows for charity and a special livestream at the <u>Amman Citadel</u> in Jordan. <sup>[332]</sup> When reviewing these shows, Dan Stubbs from *NME* stated "on stage is where Coldplay come alive, and where

they make the most sense". [333] In 2022, Champion said the Flaming Lips were instrumental in shaping their idea of how entertaining a concert can be, as the American band's tours have "a sense of wonder and sense of fun which we really respond to". [334]

### Fashion and aesthetic

While members of the band dress casually on their personal lives,  $\frac{[335]}{}$  they have adopted multiple styles and visuals for each album's promotion. [336] Jon O'Brien from the Recording Academy observed Coldplay's fashion sense did not "extend beyond the student staple of hoodies and corduroys" during initial years.[337] Martin often wore Make Trade Fair shirts and had multiple versions of the institution's logo written on the back of his hand. [338] In the marketing campaign for  $X \otimes Y$  (2005), which featured a representation of the Baudot code on its artwork, [339] the group wore black shirts, jackets, suits and pants, accompanied by white shoes. [252] After being questioned about it, the singer commented there was a "great security" in feeling part of a team. [252] In 2007, they began to work with stylist Beth Fenton to make clothes fit the "universe" or the stories being told. [340] They met her through Stella McCartney and Sara Jowett, who helped Coldplay to produce uniforms for *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* (2008).[340] Inspirations cited include the Beatles' Sqt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967) and jackets worn by French Revolution armies. [341] The piece Martin used at Wembley Stadium in 2009 was added to the V&A Museum permanent collection as well. [342] During recording sessions for *Mylo Xyloto* (2011), the band drew influence from graffiti and designed instruments, cover artworks and stages with street artist Paris. [343] Conversely, Mila Fürstová's melancholic etchings were adopted for *Ghost Stories* (2014).[344] Non-customised outfits returned, but with darker tones.[345]

Around the same period, Martin started to wear buttons from Love Button Global Movement, which became his signature accessory. [346] The organization is focused on transforming the world through individual and collaborative "acts of kindness". [347] Clothes made for *A Head Full of Dreams* (2015) then included details based on tie-dye and kaleidoscope visuals reminiscent of the 1970s decade. [348] Berryman's jacket and shirts worn by Buckland and Champion also had the flower of life as a reference to the album cover, [349] while Martin drew media attention for using custom-made Air Jordans. [350] Additionally, instruments were decorated with stickers, some of which featured the names of the band's children. [349] In 2016, Fenton stated Coldplay's pieces



Coldplay's aesthetic for <u>A Head Full</u> <u>of Dreams</u> (2015) reflected the bright, uplifting sounds on the album

are typically sourced from Rag & Bone and Levi's. [350] Three years later, a photograph of Buckland's great-grandfather spawned the old-fashioned imagery of Everyday Life (2019), [351] characterized as "a sepia-tinged 1919 jazz band". [336] Nods to the Arab world were prominently made as well. [351] To promote Music of the Spheres (2021), they incorporated a "cosmic" edge to all items and photoshoots. [336] Moreover, wardrobe pieces were provided by Applied Art Forms, a fashion label Berryman founded in the previous year. [352] He works as its designer and takes inspiration in utilitarian, workwear, and military clothing. [353]

# **Achievements**

Coldplay are considered the most successful band of the 21st century. [354] With over 100 million albums sold globally, they are one of the best-selling artists of all time. [b] *Parachutes* (2000), *A Rush of Blood to* the Head (2002) and X&Y (2005) have all been listed among the 50 best-selling albums in the United Kingdom, marking the most appearances by a group in the ranking. [355] The latter was also the thirdfastest-selling album in the country's history upon release. [356] In 2008, "Viva la Vida" became the first song by a British act to top the UK Singles Chart and Billboard Hot 100 simultaneously since Rod Stewart's "Maggie May" (1971). [357] Moreover, its namesake album was the best-selling digital record of the 2000s decade. [358] In 2013, Coldplay were cited as the most influential British celebrities in the world on *Forbes*' power list, [359] while 2014 saw them become the first band ever to surpass a billion streams on Spotify. [360] Their performance at the Super Bowl 50 halftime show earned the biggest audience in history for a group and helped to make them the most googled band of 2016. [361] During the same year, Coldplay headlined Glastonbury Festival for the fourth time, a record for any musician. [c] In 2021, "My Universe" became the first song by a British group to debut atop *Billboard* Hot 100. [363] They surpassed \$1 billion earned from touring in 2022, being the fifth group to achieve the milestone, after Bon Jovi, the Eagles, the Rolling Stones and U2. [364] A Head Full of Dreams Tour (2016–17) and the Music of the Spheres World Tour (2022–24) are both ranked among the highest-grossing concert tours of all time. [7] The latter is also the most attended run in history and the first by a male act to gross \$1 billion. [365]

The band have received numerous accolades throughout their career as well, becoming the most awarded and nominated group of all time at the Brit Awards (nine victories from 30 nominations). [366] They are the first act to ever win British Album of the Year three times and British Group four times, scoring the most nominations for both categories. [367] Coldplay have also won seven Grammy Awards from 39 nominations, receiving Song of the Year and Record of the Year once, while being nominated for the Album of the Year category three times. [368] In January 2009, they received a NRJ Award of Honour in recognition of their career accomplishments and impact. [369] The band were then named Songwriters of the Year at the <u>ASCAP London Music Awards</u> in the following year, [370] having previously received the same honor from the Ivor Novello Awards in 2003. [371] Their single "Atlas", which was released as part of *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (2013) soundtrack. [372] was nominated for the 19th Critics' Choice Awards and shortlisted at the 87th Academy Awards. [373] In 2014, Coldplay were ranked as the sixth most awarded group of all time by Fuse. [374] Two years later, the band were chosen for *NME* Awards' Godlike Genius Award, which honours "careers of music icons who have been pioneers in the industry". [375] They have earned two American Music Awards, eight Billboard Music Awards, seven MTV Video Music Awards, three Juno Awards, two silver prizes at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity and established 11 *Guinness World Records*, currently holding seven of them. In 2022, it was reported that the band's estimated combined wealth – without Harvey – had surpassed £471 million, putting them among the richest musicians on the planet. [376]

# Legacy

Coldplay are considered one of the most influential bands of the 21st century. [377] Writing for *Firstpost*, Lakshmi Govindrajan Javeri commented they have "mastered the art of reinvention", consequently widening the "roster of artists inspired by them" and creating "a rich multi-genre legacy" which impacted a variety of mainstream and indie musicians worldwide. [378] Songs from the group have been covered and sampled on many occasions as well. [75] Furthermore, they were credited with bringing the sound of mainstream rock "towards something more gentle and melodic" and ushering in a "fresh timbre of

songwriting" when "British music struggled to define itself". [379] Neil McCormick from *The Telegraph* stated that the band represent the evolution of rock into a new era, while *Afisha*'s Sergey Stepanov described them as "the Beatles of the 21st century". Publications have also frequently described Coldplay as successors to <u>U2</u> as the biggest band in the world.

However, despite their popularity and impact, the group earned a reputation as polarising cultural icons, since they have attracted criticism as much as praise from the public and the music critics throughout their career. [386] Michael Baumann explained for *The Ringer* that Coldplay's rise to fame coincided with "a decade of artistic snark and cynicism: hipsterism, the peak of pop punk, and a new rebirth of <u>rockism</u>", which meant their "earnest, nonthreatening, and profoundly accessible" public image was established at "the worst time of the past 40 years to be those things". [387] In a piece for *The New York Times*, Jon Pareles named them



Coldplay at Estádio Couto
Pereira in 2023

"the most insufferable band of the decade". Conversely, Lanre Bakare told *El País* that Martin is new kind of pop star who connects with fans emotionally. In 2022, *The Times* Mark Beaumont defended that Coldplay regained respect and credibility in all fields by dedicating themselves to stadium spectacles.

Felipe Branco Cruz from  $\underline{Veja}$  credited them with reinventing the concept of arena rock by turning fans into protagonists of the concert instead of mere spectators, which included popularising the use of interactive LED wristbands on live performances. With the Music of the Spheres World Tour (2022–24), the group became "pioneers for sustainability" in live entertainment, reducing  $\underline{CO_2}$  emissions by 59% in comparison to their previous concert run. Moreover, the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) attributed increases in British music exports to Coldplay's global success in several occasions. With their use of the internet as a tool for promotion being considered revolutionary in the early 21st century. In 2016,  $\underline{Q}$  ranked their first five albums among the best of the last 30 years. The second,  $\underline{A}$  Rush of Blood to the Head (2002), was added to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Rolling Stone's definitive editorials. As another result of their impact and legacy, the group have spawned various tribute albums, events and acts.

# Other activities

# Philanthropy

Coldplay donates 10% from all of their profits to charity. The fund is held in a bank account none of the band members can access. They currently endorse more than thirty organizations, including Amnesty International, Migrant Offshore Aid Station and Global Citizen Festival. In 2003, an acoustic cover of the single "2000 Miles" was released to raise funds for Stop Handgun Violence and Future Forests, with all proceeds being donated to the two organizations. Two years later, the group partnered with the Make Poverty History movement and were featured in one of their campaigns.

Coldplay have also auctioned significant memorabilia for <u>Kids Company</u> in 2009, including Martin's first guitar, the globe from the <u>Parachutes</u> (2000) album cover and costumes worn on <u>Viva la Vida Tour</u> (2008–10). [404] They additionally became patrons for ClientEarth. [405]

The band performed a modified version of "A Message" (named "A Message 2010") at *Hope for Haiti Now*, a telethon which raised money for the victims of the 2010 Haiti earthquake. [406] Berryman mentioned that "You can make people aware of issues. It isn't very much effort for us at all, if it can help people, then we want to do it". [407] In 2012, Album Artists staged an exhibition with artworks from *Mylo Xyloto* (2011) era to raise £610,000 for Kids Company. [408] Two years later, Martin joined Band Aid for a second time and provided vocals to a new version of "Do They Know It's Christmas?", which focused on aiding the Ebola crisis. [409]



Make Trade Fair, abbreviated as MTF, shown on Martin's piano

In 2017, Coldplay made a donation of undisclosed value to the Centre for Cancer Immunology at University of Southampton, the first and only centre dedicated to cancer immunology research in the United Kingdom. The organisation reunited cancer scientists worldwide to enable the development of clinical trials and lifesaving drugs. In the following year, the band contributed to the *Plastic Oceans Album* from Artists' Project Earth, which was released on 20 February at London's Ocean Plastics Crisis Summit to raise awareness and funds to counter plastic pollution. Still in 2018, they made *Global Citizen - EP 1* available under the pseudonym Los Unidades, with royalties being directed to the institution's endeavours of education and advocacy towards the end of extreme poverty.

In 2020, the music video of "Trouble in Town" was inspired by George Orwell's <u>Animal Farm</u> (1944) and had all of its proceeds from streaming and publishing donated to <u>Innocence Project</u> and the African Children's Feeding Scheme. Coldplay declared support to the Ocean Cleanup as well, sponsoring two watercrafts that collect plastic from polluted rivers in <u>Malaysia</u>. According to <u>The Times</u>, the band donated more than £2.1 million to environmental causes through their J Van Mars Foundation on 2021. As part of their efforts to make touring more sustainable, they collaborated with One Tree Planted and funded a tree for each ticket sold on the <u>Music of the Spheres World Tour</u> (2022–24). Following their first live performance in Indonesia, Coldplay announced that their partnership with the Ocean Cleanup was renewed and the second watercraft would be deployed in <u>Jakarta</u>.

#### **Politics and activism**

The band have been vocal about <u>fair trade</u> and supported <u>Oxfam</u>'s <u>Make Trade Fair</u> campaign by collecting more than 70,000 signatures for their Big Noise petition on <u>A Rush of Blood to the Head Tour</u> (2002–03) and <u>Twisted Logic Tour</u> (2005–07). [417] Martin, who lives in the United States, criticised the <u>2003 invasion of Iraq during a show for Teenage Cancer Trust at Royal Albert Hall</u>, encouraging people at the venue to "sing against war". [418] He has also backed <u>Democratic presidential candidates John Kerry in 2004 and Barack Obama in 2008. [419] Coldplay take part in Meat Free Mondays as well; the campaign was launched by <u>Paul</u></u>



The ending of Coldplay's <u>Super</u> Bowl 50 halftime show performance

<u>McCartney</u> in hopes to slow climate change by having at least one meat free day a week. [420] In 2011, they endorsed the song "Freedom for Palestine" by posting the music video on their social media and received over 12,000 comments debating the message in less than a day. [421] Facebook later removed their publication because its content was reported as abusive by numerous users. [422] The band have also refused to play in Israel. [423] In 2023, Martin reaffirmed their support for Palestine during a show, adding that "We don't believe in oppression, or occupation, terrorism or genocide". [424]

Coldplay have supported the LGBT community as well, sparking controversy with their Super Bowl 50 halftime show performance. The band were accused by conservatives of promoting a "gay agenda" at the end, when rainbow-coloured placards were flipped to form the phrase "Believe in Love". American magazine The Advocate ranked it among the most memorable LGBTQ moments of the event. In 2016, they favoured "Vote Remain" at the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum. Following Brexit, Martin stated the "decision does not represent us or indeed most of our generation and the generation following us". A year later, the group appeared at One Love Manchester, a benefit concert organised by Ariana Grande in response to the Manchester Arena bombing which raised funds to help victims of the attack. Coldplay were also special guests at Concert for Charlottesville, a show focused on aiding the victims of the Unite the Right rally. In 2019, the band released Everyday Life, which saw them voicing more prominently their stance against racism, police brutality and gun violence. Which saw them voicing more prominently their stance against racism, police brutality and gun violence. In 2023, the Malaysian Islamic Party attempted to cancel the group's concert at Bukit Jalil National Stadium, as Martin often waves the pride flag during performances.

### **Endorsements**

Despite their worldwide popularity, Coldplay have remained notoriously protective of how their material appears in media. The band allow songs to be used in television shows and movies regularly, but most commercials are forbidden. In 2002, NME reported they turned down over \$85 million in contracts from companies including Gatorade, Diet Coke and Gap. Martin stated "We would not be able to live with ourselves if we sold the songs' meanings like that". The first time one of their songs were used for advertisements was with "Viva la Vida" in 2008, the group signed a deal with Apple to promote the exclusive availability of the single on Tunes Store. In 2010, Martin appeared at the company's annual special event. Following the death of Steve Jobs, Coldplay performed on his memorial service at Apple Campus, posthumously thanking his support.

Six years later, they took part in a <u>Target</u> commercial which promoted the exclusive deluxe edition of <u>Ghost Stories</u> (2014). Meanwhile, the music video for "Adventure of a <u>Lifetime</u>", which was directed by <u>Mat Whitecross</u> and recorded at <u>The Imaginarium</u>, had a <u>Beats</u> product placement. The company was allowed to use some parts of the video on their commercials as a return for covering the budget. In 2018, director <u>Jon M. Chu</u> revealed he sent a letter directly to the band laying out all his reasons in order to get a permission for using "<u>Yellow</u>" on <u>Crazy Rich Asians</u>. After it was granted, a Chinese-language cover of the track was commissioned as well.



<u>Target</u> commercial where Coldplay promoted *Ghost Stories* (2014)

In 2021, Coldplay announced a major partnership with German multinational <u>BMW</u> as part of their efforts to make touring as sustainable as possible. They commented the company's technology, which includes the first recyclable car batteries in the world, is able to power live performances almost entirely from renewable energy. As part of the deal, the band contributed on the marketing of two electric cars from the company and allowed "<u>Higher Power</u>" to be used in advertisements. In 2022, <u>DHL</u> became Coldplay's freight partner for the <u>Music of the Spheres World Tour</u> (2022–24) in order to reduce the logistical impact of the shows and avoid the use of fossil fuels.

### **Band members**

- Chris Martin lead vocals, piano, keyboards, rhythm guitar, harmonica (1997–present)
- Jonny Buckland lead guitar, keyboards, backing vocals (1997–present)
- Guy Berryman bass guitar, keyboards, percussion, synthesizers, backing vocals (1997– present)
- Will Champion drums, percussion, backing vocals, keyboards, piano, rhythm guitar (1998– present)
- Phil Harvey<sup>[a]</sup> manager (1998–2002; 2022–present), creative director (2006–present)

# **Discography**

- Parachutes (2000)
- A Rush of Blood to the Head (2002)
- X&Y (2005)
- Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends (2008)
- Mylo Xyloto (2011)
- Ghost Stories (2014)
- A Head Full of Dreams (2015)
- Everyday Life (2019)
- Music of the Spheres (2021)
- Moon Music (2024)

# **Filmography**

- How We Saw the World Live in Toronto (2006)
- A Head Full of Dreams (2018)
- Everyday Life Live in Jordan (2019)
- Reimagined (2020)
- Music of the Spheres: Live at River Plate (2023)
- Tutto Passa A Tribute to Napoli (2024)

### **Tours**

- Parachutes Tour (2000–2001)
- A Rush of Blood to the Head Tour (2002–2003)

- Twisted Logic Tour (2005–2007)
- Viva la Vida Tour (2008–2010)
- Mylo Xyloto Tour (2011–2012)
- Ghost Stories Tour (2014)
- A Head Full of Dreams Tour (2016–2017)
- Music of the Spheres World Tour (2022–2024)

### See also

- List of people associated with University College London
- List of British Grammy winners and nominees
- List of best-selling music artists
- List of highest-grossing live music artists
- List of artists who reached number one on the UK Singles Chart

### Notes

- a. Coldplay officially recognise Harvey as their fifth member. [1] He has been credited as such in their albums since A Rush of Blood to the Head. [2]
- b. The term "records" is for album and single sales combined. [4] Coldplay, however, sold 100 million copies in albums alone, while <u>Parlophone</u> have not disclosed the amount of records. [5]
- c. The achievement was extended to five headline performances in 2024. [362]
- d. As per <u>The Guardian</u>, [382] <u>The New York Times</u>, [383] <u>Stereogum</u>, [384] and <u>The Telegraph</u>. [385]

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## **External links**

- Coldplay Official Website (https://coldplay.com/)
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- Coldplay (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1095892/) at IMDb
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