

## Human Nature - The Christmas Album (2013)

Written by bluelover

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01 – *White Christmas* 02 – *Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)* 03 – *Sleigh Ride (with Jessica Mauboy)* 04 – *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* 05 – *Winter Wonderland* 06 – *Please Come Home For Christmas (with Smokey Robinson)* 07 – *Silent Night O Holy Night* 08 – *Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer* 09 – *Christmas Without You* 10 – *Give Love On Christmas Day* 11 – *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town* 12 – *This Christmas* 13 – *Amazing Grace* 14 – *Mary's Boy Child* HumanNature members: Michael Tierney Andrew Tierney Toby Allen Phil Burton

Human Nature has found its niche, having transformed from a boyband in the late 1990s to the Motown tribute group listeners are familiar with today. The group's endorsements from legends such as Michael Jackson and focus on the American market have paid off, as the group now has a Las Vegas residency. It is therefore surprising that this seasoned group has finally released a Christmas album of their own.

The four members of Human Nature still sound great on tracks like the opener *White Christmas*. However, it is identical to the version by The Drifters, which was the soundtrack during the hilarious scene in 'Home Alone' when Kevin burns himself with cologne.

Other vocal highlights include a glorious acapella version of *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* and the quirky barber-shop version of *Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer*.

Retro touches of the 1960s soak the album. Phil Spector influences are strong on tracks like *Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)* and *Christmas Without You*, which sounds like the glorious *Be My Baby* by The Ronettes. Legend and long-time supporter of Human Nature,

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Smokey Robinson, brings in the Motown vibe on Please Come Home For Christmas.

Some sound effects attempt to take the album out of the studio. Silent Night/O Holy Night has sounds of traffic, as if to mimic Christmas carols in the streets. However, the improvisations on Santa Claus Is Coming To Town (whose bouncy vibe recalls Madonna's Cherish) that attempt to replicate the vibe of a live concert should only stay on stage.

The tone is generally upbeat throughout the album, with bells ringing on songs like the rosy duet with Jessica Malboy Sleigh Ride. The exceptions are the traditional carols like the epic Amazing Grace (with the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra) and Mary's Boy Child, and the 1970s throwback of Give Love On Christmas Day, which almost sounds like a Bee Gees tribute with its impossibly high falsettos.

The Christmas album shows Human Nature doing what they do best: soulful vocals with retro touches and rich, heavenly harmonies. The band arrangements however are a bit sterilised, as they sound like they are straight out of shows such as Australian Idol and Australia's Got Talent. Nevertheless, this is an inoffensive album for the young and young-at-heart to enjoy at Christmastime. ---renownedforsound.com

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