

Christmas Like This

📀 By Ayiesha Woods | Gotee Records

The Grammy-nominated Ayiesha Woods offers a sassy, energetic holiday album with *Christmas Like This*. This nine-track CD features such classics as “Walking in a Winter Wonderland,” “Jingle Bells,” “Joy to the World” and “O Holy Night.”

“You have to watch it when recording a Christmas project because you always run the risk that it could be borderline cheesy,” Woods says. “We were very cognizant of that. When we said we were going to do a Christmas record, we were going to make sure that we’d make it timeless and that people would enjoy it 50 years from now.”

Woods certainly accomplished this goal, and although the songs have a retro feel, they are all still modern, fresh and fun. The artist shares more about her Christmas album and this festive season.

What’s your favorite song on Christmas Like This and why?

Ayiesha Woods: Most of the songs! Oh my word ... you don’t understand. I’m excited about this entire project. But if I have to have a favorite—and it’s not because of the context or the premise, but because of how it came out sonically—it would be “Rudolph.” I just love it—it’s just funk. It feels so good. It’s Christmas party all the way.

What’s your favorite carol on the album?

Woods: “O Come All Ye Faithful.” In a traditional sense, those songs were written at a time when writers wrote with depth and the lyrics were just beautiful and amazing. The reason “O Come” is one of my favorites is because, even though it’s a carol, it’s a worship song. It’s a song that celebrates not only the birth of Christ, but it also celebrates His death and

His resurrection and the life to come in Christ Jesus. It's straight worship—it could be sung all year round.

Why did you decide to do a new rendition of the R&B classic “Merry Christmas, Baby”?

Woods: “Merry Christmas, Baby” is a song that—it's not Christmas in our house unless you hear that song playing, the Otis Redding version. My dad turned us on to that song many, many years ago. I had to do that one just for him. And he loves it. We've swung it. It's got my dad's approval. He's going to put down the Otis Redding version and start playing the Ayiesha Woods version.

Is there a big family tradition you continue to follow year after year?

Woods: There's not one Christmas where I wake up and the house is not my family's. After we eat on Christmas day, everyone ends up at my folks' house. It's usually 2 or 3 in the afternoon and everyone, including people from our church family, gets together, we exchange gifts and then just dance. It's all about family, giving and celebrating Christ. I'll just jump on the keyboard and maybe have a little worship.

Why is Christmas the most wonderful time of the year?

Woods: Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year because what we are celebrating is beautiful. Although it's been commercialized in so many ways, Christmas is certainly something that's universally acknowledged. I wouldn't say accepted, but it's certainly universally acknowledged. And for the fact that the world knows that it's the day that we celebrate the Savior, it's amazing. It's an opportunity for us, as the Lord's creatures, to spread the love of Christ and reach those who do not know the real meaning of Christmas.

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