

Pet Shop Boys – Christmas (2009)

Written by bluelover

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1. *It Doesn't Often Snow At Christmas (New Version)* 3:53
2. *My Girl* 3:52
3. *All Over The World (New Version)* 5:35
4. *Viva La Vida/Domino dancing* 3:45
5. *My Girl (Our House Mix)* 5:49

Given the over-subscribed portfolio of possible song choices usually involved, you can hardly blame the Pet Shop Boys for cutting their artistic losses and settling for a Christmas EP rather than a full album.

After all, can you imagine Neil Tennant summoning up either the sincere piety required for a convincing "Silent Night", or the jolly bonhomie to drive a decent "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"? Even so, the only bona fide Christmas song featured here is "It Doesn't Often Snow at Christmas", a 1997 fan-club single re-tooled for the 21st century, whose exquisitely downbeat title hook offers a typically slightly-disappointed take on the usual meteorological cliché. A brief burst of chimes and choir leads into glum social-realist depictions of "families fighting around a plastic tree, nothing on the TV that you want to see" and the like, rescued from Grinch-hood at the last moment by the company of one's beloved. A new version of "All Over the World", from their Yes album, restores to Tchaikovsky's familiar melody a touch of the dignity jettisoned by "Nut Rocker", while elsewhere a medley of "Viva La Vida" and "Domino Dancing" lashes Coldplay's tune to a pounding PSB drum part, and two remodelled electropop versions of Madness' "My Girl" drape moody string pads around twitchy synth lines. A short and sour offering, more lemon sorbet than figgy pudding. ---Andy Gill, independent.co.uk

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