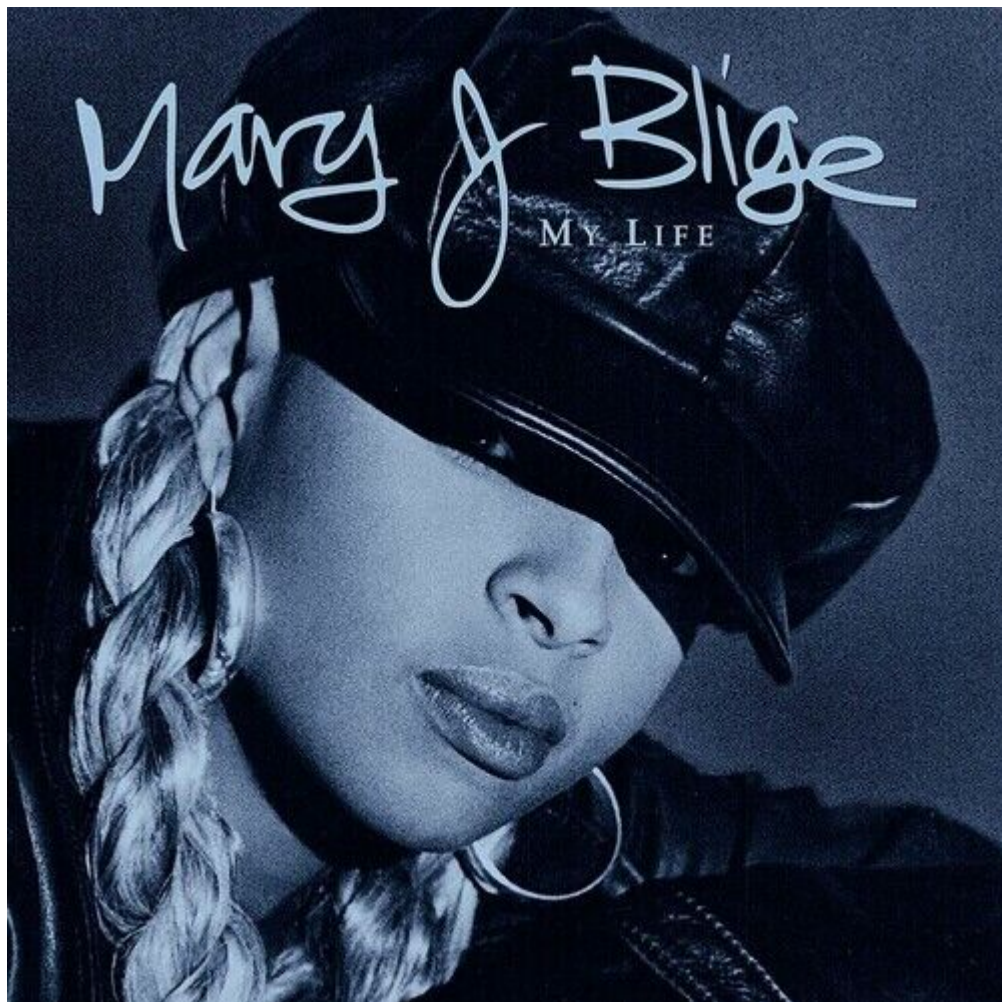


Throwback: Mary J. Blige-You Bring Me Joy



Mary J. Blige's "You Bring Me Joy" is from her iconic 1994 sophomore album *My Life*. Sean Combs, Chucky Thompson, and Joel Hailey produced the song, which gets its musical base from a sample of Barry White's "It's Ecstasy When You Lay Down Next To Me." Blige's ability to sing over White's groove epitomized what her hip-hop soul crown stood for. Using a digitized piece of R&B history with Blige's voice combined both genres and set up a blueprint that is still followed in 2024. Marcus Raboy, who had directed Blige's videos for "Real Love" and "Reminisce," returned for the "You Bring Me Joy" clip. Blige was filmed in a blue room with a posse of dancers that she joined in a routine on a shimmering floor. The song was the third single from *My Life* and another solid addition to the

album that quickly became a survival totem for many of her fans.

In 1996, the *My Life* Remix EP was released with remixes of “Mary Jane,” “You Bring Me Joy,” “Be Happy,” “Be With You,” and “I Love You” with appearances from LL Cool J, MC Lyte, Lin Que, Smif-N-Wessun, Keith Murray and Lauryn Hill. The album was remastered and re-released in 2020 to mark its 25th anniversary. The new edition included remixes of “Mary Jane,” “I’m Goin’ Down,” “Be Happy,” “I Love You,” and a cover of Aretha Franklin’s “(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman.” Amazon Prime Video released *Mary J. Blige’s My Life* documentary about the album in 2021. Blige recorded “When I Can’t Do Better” for *The Color Purple* album of music inspired by the 2023 film.

**Throwback: Barry White-
Practice What You Preach**



Barry White's "Practice What You Preach" was the height of his '90s comeback. The singer had his biggest successes in the '70s and was lucky for the nostalgia for that era that popped up during the '90s. White, Gerald Levert and Edwin Nicholas wrote "Practice What You Preach" which landed on White's 1994 *Icon Is Love* album. White's unmistakable baritone was as reassuring and romantic as it always had been. His legacy as a premier balladeer proved to have longevity and the single also became his first number one on the R&B album chart. *The Icon Is Love* was nominated for a Best R&B Album earning White his ninth nomination. He would win two Grammys for his 20th and final album *Staying Power* which was released in 1999. Barry White passed in 2003 and is remembered as one of the leading R&B love men of the past five decades.