UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

# Come Together: A Compositional Analysis of The Beatles' *Abbey Road* Album

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Music

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The Beatles' *Abbey Road* Album

by

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*Abbey Road* is The Beatles last recorded album that marks a valedictory point in their career. Not only was it the most commercially successful album for the group, but it also reveals significant growth in their musical, technical, and songwriting abilities since their first album *Please Please Me (1963).* One of the most striking features of *Abbey Road* is how connected and unified the musical material is on the album. There are several significant musical elements and devices that The Beatles use throughout to connect the tracks with one another that create a sense of unity and cohesion unlike that of any of their previous albums. Like a symphony that uses themes, motives, harmonic schemes, and orchestration to help unify a work and relate material to one another throughout each movement, in many ways *Abbey Road* achieves a similar sense of

cohesiveness in having musical ideas, motives, and formal and harmonic devices repeated and developed throughout the album.

It is not only the reappearance of these musical elements that make *Abbey Road* so unique but also the way in which The Beatles present and develop the material that creates variety and interest in their music. This is not only apparent in the way they treat rhythmic and melodic motives in the album but also in the way in which repetition of the musical material within a song continues to shift and develop throughout.

This paper provides an in depth analysis of how the tracks on *Abbey Road* are constructed, developed, and interconnected to one another. It traces the development of the musical material within each song as well as the material's relationship to the album as a whole. What my analysis reveals is that The Beatles were able to create a variety of musical material on the album that sustains the listeners' interest and plays with their expectations, while also being unified enough so that the music helps form a larger work. Thus, this level of detail, musical development, interconnectivity, and imagination distinguishes their music from other rock and pop artists of their time.

The dissertation of Patrick S Gutman is approved.

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# Biographical Sketch

Born and raised in Southern California, Patrick Gutman is a composer of concert, film, and ambient music. His love for dramatic and musical storytelling creates music that is bold, dynamic and full of expressive musical and non-musical content, which creates an engaging and evocative listening experience through the music's vivid imagery and emotional depth. His music has been performed in both the United States and in Europe, including Italy, France, and Switzerland. In addition to scoring dozens of short films (both animated and live action), Patrick has also scored three short commercials for a phone application in addition to his first feature film documentary, *50,000 Miles to Happiness* (2017). In Fall 2015 he released his first full-length album consisting of piano and electronic-based music. In 2016, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles commissioned Patrick to compose a song for Bloomsday, an international day that celebrates the life and writings of author James Joyce. The following spring, Patrick was the recipient of the Hugo Davise Fund for Contemporary Music at UCLA, and received a premier of his piece *Play-Etude* from the NOW Ensemble, a contemporary new music group based in New York. He is a fellow of the Cortona Sessions for New Music; the Chamber Music Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; the American Conservatory of Fontainebleau, France; the Talis Festival and Academy in Saas-Fee, Switzerland; and the Screen Music Program in Pavia, Italy.

As a pianist Patrick performs throughout Southern California as an accompanist, solo artist, and recording session player. Some of his achievements include a Winner of the MTAC (Music Teachers Association of California) Southern California Adult Piano Performance competition and 2nd Place Winner of the Piano Sonata Competition sponsored by CAPMT (California Association of Professional Music Teachers).

As an educator, Patrick has taught a wide variety of musical courses including musicianship and theory, 20th century pop music, and private and group piano lessons. Patrick has also taught piano courses at Los Angeles City College and offers private individual instruction as well. Patrick holds degrees from Chapman University's Conservatory of Music (BM Music Composition, BM Piano Performance - Summa Cum Laude) and California State University, Northridge (MM Music Composition - Summa Cum Laude). www.patrickgutman.com

# 1. Background Of *Abbey Road*

Perhaps more than any of their other albums, *Abbey Road* highlights The Beatles as musicians at their best and represents a significant growth in their musical, technical, and songwriting abilities since their first album, *Please Please Me,* in 1963. As biographer Philip Norman adequately puts it,

> "Something had stopped the elements diverging, and restored them to their old unsurpassable balance. *Abbey Road* was John Lennon at his best, and Paul McCartney at his best, and George Harrison suddenly reaching a best that no one had ever imagined. It was John's anarchy, straight and honed. It was Paul's sentimentality with the brake applied. It was George's new, wholly surprising presence, drawing the best from both sources."[1]

It is remarkable how their last recorded album surfaced at a time when tensions were at an all time high within the band. Given the disagreements and arguments that surfaced during the *Get Back* sessions in January of 1969 along with the financial struggles of Apple Corp., it is impressive that the group was still able to produce a successful album that would surpass any of their previous albums. When *Abbey Road* was released on September 26, 1969 in the UK and October 1 in America, it went to number one in the UK for nineteen weeks and number one in America for eleven weeks, breaking the record for the best-selling Beatles album. Within two months of its release, the record sold four million copies and would go on to sell nine million copies by 1992.[2]

[1] Philip Norman, *Shout!: The Beatles in their Generation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 382.

[2] Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: Revolver through the Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 271.

**Leading Up To *Abbey Road* – The *Get Back* Sessions**

In January 1969, The Beatles began writing a new album that had the working title of *Get Back*. These recordings would eventually become the *Let It Be* album that was released the following year in the spring of 1970. By the time the sessions began, tensions and arguments within the band were high, and, perhaps more than all the members of the group, McCartney desired some way to help alleviate this. The *Get Back* sessions were McCartney's attempt of trying to rekindle the comradery between the band and hoped that working on another album might spark a renewed faith and interest among each other to help ease the tensions that had been rising since the previous year.

His intentions were to make a live album that would strip away all of the production techniques that The Beatles had grown accustomed to since the release of *Rubber Soul (1965)* and *Revolver (1966)* and return to a simpler ensemble of guitars, drums, and bass like they used at the beginning of their career. In doing so, McCartney thought that this ensemble would also encourage the band to tour once again and play in front of a live audience. Having just finished *The Beatles* album (the "White Album") in the fall of 1968, McCartney felt that they had shown themselves that even as a more stripped down rock ensemble they were still able to write successful music.

At first, Harrison and Lennon were reluctant to record the new album. However, a compromise was eventually made to use Twickenham studios for the month of January to rehearse and record a new album. The goal was to document the making of the album that would culminate by the end of the month with a recorded live performance of the new songs in front of an audience. Additionally, all of the rehearsals would be filmed for a television special that

would be released as a companion to the album.[3] For these sessions engineer Glyn Johns was also brought onto the project to help record the album. Lennon had made it clear that he did not want this album to contain any "production gimmicks" such as overdubs and extensive music editing to which The Beatles had grown accustomed.[4] Since George Martin's input during the "White Album" sessions was often disregarded and his involvement in the making of that album quite minimal, Martin was seldom present during the *Get Back* sessions.[5] Due to his absence, Johns would end up filling the role of producer for the album. He recalls how "with the Beatles' *Get Back* project [eventually retitled *Let It Be*] it wasn't specified as to what capacity I was being retained in. I was just asked to work with them, and it became fairly clear as I walked in the door that they wanted me to produce, but that was never really stated. George Martin wasn't there and I was."[6]

What McCartney had hoped would be an opportunity to bring the band closer together seemed to turn on itself. Watching the *Let It Be (1970)* documentary that contains footage of these January rehearsals, one gets the sense of the type of tensions and arguments that The Beatles were going through at the time. For example, Harrison walked out on the sessions within the first two weeks after he got into a dispute with Lennon. This was also right after McCartney had critiqued Harrison's guitar playing on a rehearsal of "Two Of Us."[7]

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[3] Jonathan Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 532.

[4] Ibid*,* 533.

[5] Ibid, 533.

[6] Richard Buskin, *Inside Tracks* (New York: Spike, 1999), 144.

[7] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love,* 535.

The sessions culminated in what would become The Beatles last live performance on the rooftop of Apple headquarters in Savile Row, London. After performing five songs, the concert ended when police arrived to shut them down as a result of noise complaints. The next day The Beatles recorded three more songs that were not fit for a live performance ("Let It Be," "The Long and Winding Road," and "Two of Us"), and with that the sessions ended. It would not be until the following year when Phil Spector was hired to go through all the raw material to produce what would become the *Let It Be* album.

One of the benefits of the *Get Back* sessions was the collaboration with Billy Preston. Harrison had invited the American organist to come sit in on the rehearsals at Twickenham.[8] Preston had met The Beatles as early as 1962 during a Liverpool gig where he was playing as a backup musician for Little Richard's band.[9] When Harrison saw Preston performing with Ray Charles in London around the time of the sessions he reached out and invited him to join them in the rehearsals. This relationship would continue into further collaborations on *Abbey Road* later that year.

## **The Concept Behind *Abbey Road***

After the disaster of the *Get Back* sessions the band began to understand that the end of the group could be near and, by that summer, felt that *Abbey Road* might be their final album recorded as The Beatles. As early as April of 1969, Harrison revealed his thoughts on the matter:

> "Of course there is no question of us splitting up. There are some people who would like to see our friendship break up, but this is a physical and spiritual impossibility. The thing people don't understand about The Beatles is that we've known each other for so long and our level of communication is something others don't understand. We are all

[8] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love,* 537

[9] Ibid*,* 537.

> influencing each other. I don't question anything John does anymore. I know why he does it. I understand."[10]

By the time the album was released in late September, Lennon had made his feelings for the group clear to McCartney when he said, "I'm leaving The Beatles. I want a divorce."[11] Because tensions were still high between the members of the group, it seemed that the only way for them to work together was to make music with one another, and they did just that.

> "We were holding it together. The music was OK. And we were friends enough that, even though this undercurrent was going on, we still had a strong respect for each other even at the very worst points… We put together quite a nice album and the only arguments were about things like me spending to long on a track" [referring to "Maxwell's Silver Hammer"] - Paul McCartney.[12]

As Starkey (Ringo) put it, "I think it shows on the record when we were excited…It doesn't matter what we go through as individuals on the bullshit level; when it gets to the music you can see that it's really cool, and we had all put in one thousand per cent."[13]

The concept for *Abbey Road* came once again from McCartney who had approached George Martin to ask him to produce one more album for the group. Martin was a little hesitant at first to accepting McCartney's request:

> "*Let It Be* was a miserable experience and I never thought that we would get back together again. So I was very surprised when Paul rang me up and said 'We want to make another record. Will you produce it for us, *really* produce it?' I said 'Yes, if I am *really* allowed to produce it. If I have to go back and accept a lot of instructions which I don't like I won't do it.' "[14]

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[10] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love,* 559.

[11] Ibid, 569.

[12] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000), 340.

[13] Ibid, 338.

[14] Mark Lewisohn, *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions* (New York: Harmony Books, 1988), 177.

Martin agreed to come aboard and also brought back sound engineer Geoff Emerick to assist him. Emerick's revolutionary approaches to recording were indispensable in helping create the sounds on both *Revolver (1966)* and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967)* albums. Some of his innovative techniques on these earlier albums included placing the microphones close to the instruments to get a clearer articulation of attack from the instrument, in addition to using heavy automatic double-tracking, which is an electronic method of doubling the voice without having to record the singer twice.[15] On the psychedelic track "Tomorrow Never Knows" that concludes the *Revolver* album it had also been Emerick's idea to put Lennon's voice through a Leslie speaker. This becomes a characteristic sound used throughout *Abbey Road,* in particular with Harrison's guitar playing on the album. In reflecting back on the recording process for "Tomorrow Never Knows," Emerick remembers the process of fading in all of the various loops, backwards sounds, and collage-like effects in the song. Emerick states,

> "We had no sense of the momentousness of what we were doing-it all just seemed like a bit of fun in a good cause at the time-but what we had created that afternoon was actually the forerunner of today's beat-and loop-driven music. If someone had told me then that we had just invented a new genre of music that would persist for decades, I would have thought he was crazy."[16]

McCartney and Martin thought of creating a record that would be more ambitious than the Sgt. Pepper album and, like they did on that album, contain some sort of overarching formal structure or themes that tied the album together. It was George Martin who suggested that the album be conceived as "a continuously moving piece of music," which could encourage the group "to try to think in symphonic terms."[17] Lennon was just as reluctant about the idea as he

[15] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 329.

[16] Geoff Emerick and Howard Massey, *Here, There and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of The Beatles*, (New York: Gotham Books, 2006) 112.

[17] Buskin, *Inside Tracks*, 65.

had been with the *Get Back* sessions and would have preferred his and McCartney's songs to each have their own respective side of the album. As they had done before, a compromise was made where the first side would adhere to Lennon's idea of emphasizing the individual Beatle who wrote the song, while the second side would explore Martin's idea of a more 'symphonic' nature.

This symphonic nature for Martin's vision would ultimately take on the form of the medley, which takes up most of the second side on *Abbey Road*. Since active collaboration between the members did not seem promising for the group, Lennon and McCartney gathered several fragments of songs that they each had accumulated over the past year or so. With both McCartney and Martin's suggestions they began to piece them together to form a medley, a series of rather fragmentary songs that would be connected through harmonic schemes and other musical ideas that Martin had envisioned.[18]

The album breaks down into two sides, where side one features songs that highlight an individual Beatle while side two presents two more individualized Beatles tracks before moving into the fifteen-minute medley. Lennon and McCartney each have two songs featured on side one, with one song by Harrison and Ringo. Side two features Harrison's "Here Comes The Sun" and Lennon's "Because" before the medley of eight songs begins. As a sort of coda to the entire album, McCartney's little ditty "Her Majesty" is placed after the medley and begins nineteen seconds after "The End" has finished.

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[18] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 563.

**Instrumental Sounds And The Recording Process**

Although Abbey Road studios was booked for July and August for the group to use, recordings for some of the songs began as early as February 1969 with the first takes of Lennon's song "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" beginning just three weeks after the *Get Back* sessions. By the time recording started in Abbey Road studios on July 1, five basic tracks had already been recorded, which gave them less than two months to finish recording the rest of the album. On the first day of the Abbey Road sessions Lennon, and his son Julian, Yoko Ono, and her daughter Kyoko, had been in a car accident in Scotland.[19] Because of this, Lennon was absent for almost two weeks of the sessions before he would be able to record.[20]

*Abbey Road* was the first album for the group to use eight-track recorders. This provided more flexibility and ease in recording multiple parts at once, as well as allowed more individual control of the sounds and the mix during the recording process itself. The ease of overdubbing multiple parts and takes onto the mix became an invaluable tool for The Beatles, providing the opportunity to expand their musical sound world through instrumental layering. While *Abbey Road* does not contain many sound effects in comparison to some of their earlier albums (*Revolver, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band, The Beatles* - 'White Album'), it does contain a colorful palette of timbres and new sounds that help define *Abbey Road*.

One of these new sounds can be heard from Ringo's drum set. After being inspired by the sounds of Levon Helm's drum set, the drummer of The Band, Ringo adopted calf-skin heads for his tom-tom drums, which provided a rounder and deeper tone that had not been heard before on

[19] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions,* 177.

[20] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love,* 562.

a Beatles song.[21] Ringo recalls how his drumming on *Abbey Road* "was tom-tom madness. I had gotten this new kit made of wood, and calfskins, and the toms had so much depth, I went nuts on the toms. Talk about changes in my drum style—the kit made me change because I changed my kit"[22] This sound provided him with new sonic possibilities that allowed him to perform patterns and grooves that were of a more melodic shape than ever before.

Other new sounds that help define *Abbey Road* are the use of the Moog IIIp synthesizer that Harrison was very enthusiastic to use. After being introduced to the newly-built instrument when he was producing Jackie Lomax on a trip to Los Angeles, Harrison got a hold of one and brought it back with him. The role of the synthesizer on *Abbey Road* would provide a fresh alternative as a lead solo instrument and also provide colorful accompaniment to six songs on the album. Other contributions of colorful timbres from Harrison include a bottleneck slide playing style and using a rotating Leslie speaker cabinet to have the guitar play through.[23] The result of the Leslie speaker is a rich swirling, tremolo-like effect that provides motion to the sound and can be heard on several songs on the album, including Harrison's own "Something."

Adding to the depth and dimension of the sound palette on *Abbey Road* is the use of a small orchestra that George Martin provided for several of the songs in various configurations. The use of the orchestra not only gains more weight and size as the album progresses, but each time it appears it also adds new instruments and therefore presents new timbres in each subsequent appearance. When it is first heard on track two ("Something"), it contains only the string section. Track seven ("Here Comes The Sun") introduces woodwinds into the ensemble to

[21] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 574.

[22] Max Weinberg, *The Big Beat: Conversations with Rock's Great Drummers* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1984), 185.

[23] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 574.

create a mix of two piccolos, two flutes, two alto flutes, two clarinets, four violas, four cellos, and one double bass. The orchestra reaches its largest formation for the last three tracks of the medley that connect seamlessly with one another: "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight," and "The End." This thirty-person ensemble consists of four horns, three trumpets, one trombone, one bass trombone, twelve violins, four violas, four cellos, and one double bass.

## 2. Musical Overview of *Abbey Road*

One of the most striking features of *Abbey Road* that will be explored in depth in this paper is how connected and unified the musical material is on the album. There are several significant musical elements and devices that The Beatles use throughout that connect the tracks to one another, helping to create a sense of unity and cohesion unlike in any of their previous albums. This is one of the defining characteristics and qualities that make *Abbey Road* so unique for a rock album. Like a symphony that uses themes, motives, harmonic schemes, and orchestration to help unify a work and relate material to one another throughout each movement, in many ways *Abbey Road* achieves a similar sense of cohesiveness in the musical ideas, motives, and formal and harmonic devices that repeat and develop throughout the album.

### Key Schemes

One of the ways in which the songs on the album relate to one another are through key relationships of both a third and a fifth. These relationships occur on both a local level, where a song modulates to another key a third or fifth away from the home key, as well as on a macro level where tracks relate to one another by a similar relationship. This becomes a particularly defining characteristic of the medley as well, which demonstrates these harmonic schemes best

on both the local and macro level. Not only does the medley reference songs through similar key schemes within the medley itself, but it also references other songs on the album through these harmonic relationships as well.

On the local level, there are several instances where a song on the album modulates to another key that is a third away. One example of this can be seen in the song "Something," where the music begins in the key of C major and modulates in the 'middle eight' section to the key of A major, only to return back to C major for the final verse.[24] This harmonic movement of a third between keys in the same song appears again in "You Never Give Me Your Money," "Sun King," "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," "Carry That Weight," and "The End." This relationship of a third is heightened in the medley on both the local and macro level where the two keys of A major and C major seem in constant battle with one another throughout the medley. Not only do most of the songs in the medley touch upon one of these two keys and thus relate to the larger structure of the medley as a whole, but, in several instances, the two keys continue to switch between one another within the same song. This can be seen in the opening track of the medley "You Never Give Me Your Money," as well as "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," "Carry That Weight," and "The End."

Another important key relationship that helps provide harmonic unity is the relationship of a fifth. Whereas the medley is mostly based on key relationships of a third, the first eight individualized songs on the album are more connected through a relationship of a fifth. On a local level this can be seen in "Octopus's Garden" and "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," which modulate to a key a fifth away within the song. On a macro level there are a few instances on

[24] In this paper I prefer to use the term 'middle eight' rather than bridge to refer to the contrasting middle section of a song, as this is the terminology that The Beatles preferred to use. Even though the length of the middle section can be longer or sometimes shorter than eight measures, the term is still used.

side one where the keys of consecutive tracks are in a relationship of a fifth to one another. Track three—"Maxwell's Silver Hammer"—is in the key of D major and is followed by "Oh! Darling" in the key of A major. The next song "Octopus's Garden" is in the key of E major, a fifth away from "Oh! Darling." Another pair of tracks that achieve this relationship are "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" in the key of D minor followed by "Here Comes The Sun" in the key of A major.

**Rhythmic And Melodic Motives**

Besides the harmonic schemes contained in *Abbey Road* that help unify the album, several other significant musical elements provide a sense of unity as well. There are two rhythmic motives that continue to surface throughout the album. The first motive is introduced in track two ("Something") where a cross rhythm of 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 is played in the middle eight. This cross rhythm appears mostly on side two of the album in various configurations. In its simplest form, the rhythm diminishes to a pattern of 3 + 3 + 2, as seen in "Because," "You Never Give Me Your Money," and "Carry That Weight." The motive seems to peak in "Here Comes The Sun" where this asymmetrical grouping is heightened in the middle eight section. Here, both a 7/8 meter of a 2 + 2 + 3 pattern is used alongside an 11/8 meter with a 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 pattern.

One other significant rhythmic motive for the album appears mostly in the medley songs and consists of a syncopated rhythm of a dotted quarter followed by an eighth note that is often tied to another note. Although this rhythm can be quite common in pop music, The Beatles use it in a way that helps define a rhythmic feel for a section or phrase that is often supported further by other musical elements such as instrumental layering. This motive is introduced in the first track of the medley "You Never Give Me Your Money" and continues to appear throughout the remainder of the album. In fact, the syncopated motive is more often than not grouped into a

3 + 3 + 2 pattern where two quarter-dot notes are followed by a quarter note. In these instances the rhythm can be seen as a derivative of the cross rhythm motive introduced in “Something.” This syncopated motive reaches a climax in “Carry That Weight” where a condensed reprise of the opening medley track “You Never Give Me Your Money” is now backed by full brass playing the syncopated motive in “Carry That Weight.”

Another type of motive that is used on the album is a melodic motive of a ½ step chromatic line consisting of three to six notes. While it is mostly used for either harmonic or melodic embellishment, as the album progresses, it seems to take on a more dominant role in providing a formal function as well, such as being used to help transition from one phrase to the next, or, in the case of “Mean Mr. Mustard,” used to transition into the next song “Polythene Pam” in the medley. Songs in which this motive appears includes “Something,” “Maxwell’s Silver Hammer,” “Oh! Darling,” “Octopus’s Garden,” “I Want You (She’s So Heavy),” “Sun King,” “Carry That Weight,” and “The End.” In both “Carry That Weight” and “The End,” a strong recap of both the cross rhythm motive and the ½ step chromatic line is used. Both “Something” and “I Want You (She’s So Heavy)” use the same pitches for the ½ step chromatic line (A - G# - G - F#), which also appears again later on in “Mean Mr. Mustard.”

In each of these songs mentioned, the chromatic line is often used in a way that allows it to stand out or support a significant musical event. For example, in the case of “Something” the entire ensemble in the middle eight responds to the lyrics “I don’t know, I don’t know” with a descending six-note long ½ step chromatic line that also uses the syncopated cross rhythm of 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 (see figure: 2.1). Another example is in the song “I Want You (She’s So Heavy)” where the conclusion of the ‘A’ phrases in the verses use a three-note ascending ½ step

line that causes a break from both the melodic and rhythmic texture that had come before it, signaling the ending of one phrase and the beginning of another.




Figure 2.1: "Something" Cross Rhythm + Descending ½ Step Line (Middle Eight Section)[25]

**Lyrical Content**

In looking at the lyrical content on the album it appears to have a few different roles. Many of the lyrics seem to identify or describe a character through some sort of narrative being sung. Songs that tell a story about a character(s) which are often told in the third person include "Come Together," "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," "Sun King," "Mean Mr. Mustard," "Polythene Pam," "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," and "Her Majesty." Another form of character identification places the singer himself at the focal point where often an emotional state is described as they sing about how they feel about someone. These often more personal or intimate lyrics can be seen in "Something," "Oh! Darling," "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," and "Here Comes The Sun." This sense of "I" is juxtaposed at times with other songs that have the singer placing "you" as the subject of the song. These include "You Never Give Me Your Money," "Carry That Weight," and "The End."

[25] For all musical figures the guitar, bass, and vocals sound one octave lower than written.

**Other Musical Aspects Of *Abbey Road***

Beyond the use of key relations and motives there are a few other musical characteristics that help define and unify *Abbey Road*. Many of the songs include a short intro or pickup measure to begin the track. This becomes a useful musical device for the medley in transitioning smoothly from one song to the next. Many songs also include uneven or asymmetrical phrase lengths and section lengths, adding a continued sense of interest and unpredictability to the music. At times this asymmetry is supported by the use of mixed meters, which can be found in the songs "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," "Here Comes The Sun," "Mean Mr. Mustard," and "The End."

It is not only the reappearance of musical motives, figures, and devices that make *Abbey Road* so unique, but it is also the way in which The Beatles present and develop the material that creates continued variety and interest in their music. More often than not, The Beatles rarely repeat things the same way twice. In fact, one of the defining qualities of *Abbey Road,* and much of the music of The Beatles for that matter, is the way in which they develop and vary the musical material in both subtle and dramatic ways. This is not only apparent in the way they treat the rhythmic and melodic motives that have been mentioned, but also the way in which material within the sections of a song continue to shift upon further repetitions of the music. Some of these changes include shortening or extending phrase lengths, varying the orchestration, adding vocal harmonies, layering instrumental solos, or even changing melodic lines in both vocal and instrumental parts. Therefore, it seems that this album is defined not only by its musical elements that interconnect the tracks to one another but also by the way in which the material is treated, developed, and varied.

In the detailed analysis of each track in the chapters ahead, attention is paid to the changes that occur within each song and traces the development of the musical material throughout the album. This continued sense of development and variety allows the music to sustain interest and avoid the pitfalls of boredom through the same repetition of musical material. This is perhaps one of The Beatles' greatest strengths and allows *Abbey Road* to stand out amongst one of their best albums. What all of this reveals is that The Beatles were able to create a variety of musical material on the album that is able to sustain the listeners' interest and play with their expectations, while also being unified enough so that the music seems to belong to one another to make up a larger more complete work. Thus, this level of detail, musical development, interconnectivity and imagination distinguishes their music from other rock and pop artists of their time.

# 3. Analysis Of Individual Tracks

# I. Come Together

## Musical Elements at a Glance

**Dates Recorded:** July 21, 22, 23, 25, 29, 30; 1969
**Key:** D minor/D Major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**John Lennon:** vocals, rhythm guitar, handclaps, tambourine
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass, electric piano
**George Harrison:** Lead guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, maracas
**Form:**
Vamp – Verse – Vamp – Verse – Refrain
Vamp – Verse – Refrain
½ Vamp – Instrumental Verse – ½ Vamp – Verse – Refrain
Vamp - Outro

## Overview

The title "Come Together" draws its name from the slogan "Come together – join the party," a phrase that Timothy Leary wanted Lennon to write a theme to for his campaign to run for governor in the following year of 1970.[26] Initially, the up-beat blues song seemed to mimic the Chuck Berry song "You Can't Catch Me," in which Lennon actually plagiarized the opening line "Here come old flat-top."[27] However, after McCartney's recommendation to slow down the tempo the feeling of the song transformed into something else. McCartney recalls this transformation:

> "He originally brought it over as a very perky little song, and I pointed out to him that it was very similar to Chuck Berry's 'You Can't Catch me.' John acknowledged it was rather close to it so I said, 'Well, anything you can do to get away from that.' I suggested

[26] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 246.

[27] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 574-75.

> that we tried it swampy – 'swampy' was the word I used – so we did, we took it right down. I laid that bass line down which very much makes the mood."[28]

With muffled tom toms, muted guitars, heavy echo applied to the track, and a deep and resonant bass that fills the space, "Come Together" instantly creates a mood that sets itself apart from any other track on the album.

One of the strengths in "Come Together" lies in its ability to create a sense of space through a rather limited use of musical material. While the overall arrangement is often sparse and understated, the song is structured to open up in significant moments that seem to lift everything out of the haze momentarily. These moments are seen in the instrumental verse and outro when instrumental layering occurs with solos from both the electric piano and lead guitar that are heard only in these sections. The solos are set against a texture of distorted rhythm guitar, noisy cymbal hits and a piercing snare drum that is also reserved for these moments as well. These layers provide an opportunity for musical growth as the space changes into a brighter and more vibrant mood. Compare this to the more subdued nature of the verses where muted guitars strum simple bar chords to Ringo's kick drum and floor tom hits, while McCartney's smooth and highly melodic bass line carries the track along. Vocal harmonies in the song are also used quite minimally. McCartney adds two-part harmony to accompany Lennon for only a few measures in verses two, three, and four, and at the beginning of the refrain when they sing "Come together."

One of the interesting harmonic effects that this song provides is its allusion to both D major and D minor, though D minor is more explicitly heard than the former due to the presence of F natural throughout. The song is limited to primarily three chords: $Dm^7$ (i), A major (V) and G major (IV), with a brief appearance of Bm (vi) in the refrain. The only time F# is actually

[28] Barry Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years from Now* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997), 553.

heard in the song is at the beginning of the refrain section when it is sung by Lennon over the B minor chord. In that same measure in the refrain the F# is sung once again but this time is placed over an A major chord, allowing the F# to be heard as an added sixth (see figure: 3.1). This continues to undermine the key of D major in support of D minor. Thus, in this song, the sense of a tonic chord is the $Dm^7$ that has the lowered $^{b}3$ scale degree (f natural) and $^{b}7$ scale degree (C natural).

As if undermining D major was not enough, much of this song undermines the third of the chord in general, as seen in the guitar accompaniment that uses bar chords of open fifths to provide most of the harmony. In leaving out the third of the chord not only is some harmonic ambiguity implied, but it also continues to support the overall sense of space in the song. Thus, much of the accompaniment emphasizes the root, fifth, and seventh of the chord forming the blues tri-chord [025].

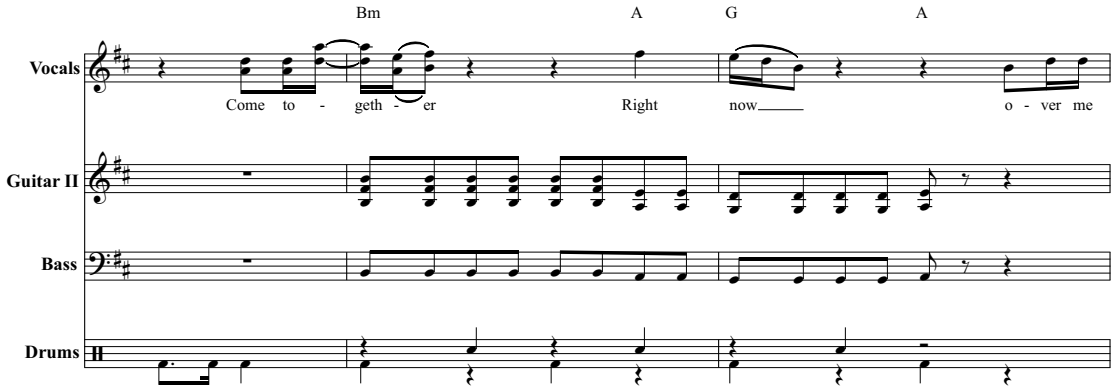



Figure 3.1: “Come Together” – Refrain

## In Depth Analysis – Come Together

### Vamp

The introduction consists of four measures of a vamp that is rooted on the $Dm^7$ chord. Right from the opening The Beatles make use of some darker timbres to help set the 'swampy' mood. Slap-back echo is applied to Lennon's voice saying "Shoot me," while McCartney's smooth bass line, which rises a minor tenth in each measure before resolving back down to D by beat four, plays underneath.[29] As if to amplify the echo effect from Lennon's vocals, Ringo plays sextuplets on the drums beginning with stick hits that move to the hi-hat and then descends to the toms. This gives the illusion that the percussion has emerged from the vocal line and can be heard as an extension of the echo effect from the vocals. Helping color the bass line is the rhythm guitar that doubles the bass for its upward rise in the first half of the measure and then sustains its notes through the remainder of the measure.

### Verses

The eight-measure verses continue the mood that was set from the opening vamp by having the vocals accompanied by the bass guitar's same opening melodic line running underneath. This is also supported by steady eighth notes on the floor tom and quarter note pulses in the kick drum to provide some rhythmic motion. A muted guitar also plays in a steady eighth note accompaniment that alternates between harmonic intervals of fifths and sixths.

The vocal line uses a limited amount of material where the [025] motive (C - D - F) dominates the melodic line for much of the verses. The melody is based in a D-minor pentatonic scale and spans the limited range of a fourth. Upon repetition of the verses McCartney adds brief vocal harmonies that extend the vocal range up to a minor sixth.

[29] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 575-76.

The harmony for the verses begins on the $Dm^7$ chord for four measures, opens up to the dominant (A) for two measures and then concludes the verse on the $G^7$ ($IV^7$) chord for the remaining two measures. On the $G^7$ chord, the music puts on the brakes momentarily as the rhythm guitar drops out and a sustained bass note and crash cymbal hit rings over a pulsing syncopated kick drum to prepare for the refrain.

**Refrain**

While the refrain is only two measures long and consists of the single phrase "Come together right now over me," it contains the fastest moving harmonic progression in the song, with two chords played per measure. As stated earlier this is also the only part of the song where an F# appears, which is heard in the vocal line on the word "together." However, the chord accompanying this is not a D major chord but a B minor chord (vi) that feels deceptive and slightly unresolved. When the F# is sung again in the same measure it is heard the second time as an added sixth to the A major chord playing underneath. Also to note in this section is the distorted guitar sound that helps the song open up momentarily with its brighter and grittier timbre, before returning back to the darker sounds and mood of the intro.

**Instrumental Verse**

It is in the instrumental verse where an overall greater sense of forward momentum is felt in the song. Upon repeating half of the vamp after the third vocal verse the song begins to open up and become brighter as if it were lifting momentarily out of the smoky haze. Here, the drums pick up momentum as they carry a traditional backbeat with snare hits on beats two and four, and a raucous crash cymbal plays an even stream of eighth notes while McCartney's bass pulses steadily along all the while. Adding to the overall brightness are distorted guitar accompaniment

and solos from both the electric piano and lead guitar that expand the overall range of the song through playing in the upper registers.

The length of the instrumental verse is eight measures and uses half of the vamp to conclude the section and transition back into the last vocal verse. This section begins with an electric piano solo for four measures that is then answered with four measures of a lead guitar solo. The entrance of the lead guitar solo in its upper register continues to lift the song higher as Harrison plays a duet with himself in fourths and fifths, recorded on two separate tracks. Harmonically, this section has four measures of the $Dm^7$ chord and four measures of an A-major chord. Here, the last two measures of the A chord replaced the $G^7$ chord that had ended the verses previously.

The solos are followed by a shortened two-measure embellishment of the vamp to transition back into the final vocal verse. Here, the drums drop out to provide space for the beautiful counterpoint between the electric piano, guitar, and bass. Note that the "Shoot me" has been removed in this vamp to allow the instruments to speak more clearly with one another.

**Outro**

The outro section is over a minute long and accounts for nearly 25% of the entire song. The section is one big vamp on the opening $Dm^7$ chord where an antiphonal pattern occurs between Harrison's lead guitar and Lennon's singing of the refrain "Come together." This antiphonal style is a technique that will continue to be used throughout the album. The solo guitar plays an embellished version of the [025] blues motive heard in Lennon's vocal line from the verses. Ringo plays a similar drumming pattern that he did in the instrumental verse, using a heavy crash cymbal and piercing snare hits that are interrupted by short two beat drum fills rounding off every other measure. This contributes further to the overall noise of this section.

The electric piano is also playing a repeated two measure melodic line during this outro that was taken from the embellished ½ vamp section that concluded the instrumental verse. After nearly twenty-four measures, the song fades out as if emerging back into the smoky haze from which it came from. This fade out could be seen as a foreshadow of the medley in which the transition between "You Never Give Me Your Money" and "Sun King" utilizes a cross track fade to bridge the two tracks together.

# II. Something

## Musical Elements at a Glance

**Dates Recorded:** April 16; May 2, 5; July 11, 16; August 15; 1969
**Key:** C major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**George Harrison:** vocals (double-tracked), lead guitar (via Leslie speaker), handclaps
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass, handclaps
**John Lennon:** guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, handclaps
**Billy Preston:** Hammond organ
**Orchestra:** 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 cellos, 1 double bass
**Form:**
Intro – Verse – Verse – Middle Eight – Instrumental Verse – Verse - Outro

## Overview

"Something" is the first of two George Harrison songs that appear on *Abbey Road* and is a demonstration of the amount of growth and maturity that he achieved as a singer-songwriter since his beginnings with The Beatles. This song would become one of the most widely successful love songs of the time, covered by numerous artists such as Ray Charles, Elvis Presley, Smokey Robinson, and Frank Sinatra.[30] Similar to the way Lennon plagiarized his opening line of "Come Together" from a Chuck Berry song, Harrison also borrowed the opening line of "Something" from a James Taylor song "Something in the Way She Moves."[31] However, unlike in Lennon's situation, James Taylor didn't seem to mind the reference and no lawsuits ensued for Harrison.

The lyrics seem to capture the elusive nature of a 'something' in his lover where a requited love borders a level of both innocence and uncertainty within the singer who questions

[30] Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love*, 576.

[31] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 247.

what to make of his feelings. Musically there is a balance of hopeful optimism, as seen through the opening measure that becomes the 'Something motto,' in conjunction with slight uncertainty of these feelings demonstrated through the pulsing and highly syncopated middle eight section that begs that this love be understood by the singer himself. The bass guitar seems to be a companion to this love affair in the way that it is just as melodic and prominent as the vocal and guitar lines. With its long and melodic scalar lines that often descend stepwise, it seems as if it too is falling in love with that special 'something.'

Enhancing these sentiments is the chromatic voice leading that is used in the song and, in particular, is heard in the opening measure that serves as a sort of 'motto' for the song. As music theorist Walter Everett describes, "The intangible wonder conjured by surprisingly altered and redirected scale degrees is established as the song's musical focus, and it perfectly fits the poetic notion of a "something" that cannot easily be expressed in words."[32]

The song emphasizes stepwise motion in both the instrumental and vocal parts where descending bass lines could be interpreted as a 'falling in love,' and the counterpoint between the bass-and-vocals and the bass-and-lead guitar in the instrumental verse can be seen as a duet between two lovers. In particular, the song uses a descending and ascending ½ step chromatic line for some colorful voice leading that heightens the emotional intensity of the song. This ½ step chromatic line is first heard in the opening measure between the bass and lead guitar moving in contrary motion with one another, and becomes the 'Something motto' for the song (see figure: 3.2). Since the song contains no refrain, this harmonic progression, with its distinct voice leading, serves as a 'motto' for the song, a term music theorist Walter Everett labeled for this opening measure and one that I prefer to use as well.

[32] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 250.

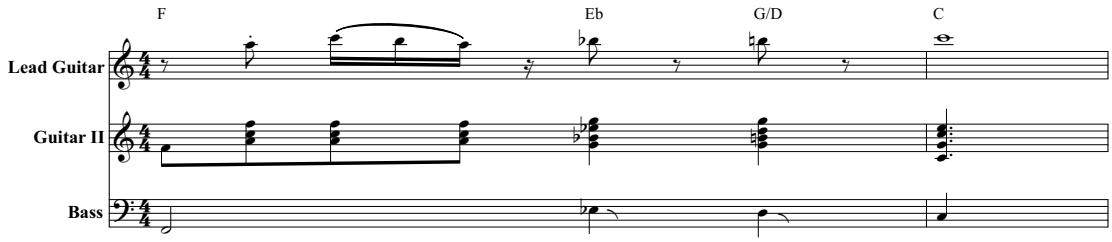



Figure 3.2: ‘Something Motto’

This ‘Something motto’ reappears at the ends of verses as a transitional figure into the next section. The chromatic ½ step melodic lines are also seen in other places beyond the motto, such as in the organ part at the end of the verse (“I don’t want to leave her now”) as well as in the middle eight and coda where the ‘Something motto’ is extended to conclude the song.

Harmonically, the song moves through chromatic mediants on both the local level, such as chord changes from one to the next, as well as the macro level where the song moves from the key of C major in the verses to A major in the middle eight. This play between the two keys most certainly foreshadows a similar back and forth movement that will occur on side two of the album, particularly within the medley itself.

It is interesting to note that Harrison supplies all of the vocals in the song, whether they are single tracked, double tracked, or harmonized as heard in the middle eight section. Harrison as the sole singer invites the listener into a more personal and intimate setting in which he shares his vulnerabilities and passions while falling in love.

## In Depth Analysis - Something

### Intro/'Something motto'

The intro begins with a one beat pickup measure of a sextuplet tom-tom fill that leads into the 'Something motto.' As a side note, this album contains multiple songs that utilize a pickup measure and becomes a technique that is essential for the transitions in the medley to help provide continuity and brevity between the different tracks as they move from one to the other.

The contrary stepwise motion of the chromatic voice leading between the lead guitar and bass are an important feature of the motto. While the bass line moves downward (F - Eb - D - C), the lead guitar moves chromatically upwards (A - Bb - B - C) simultaneously. As a result of this contrary motion, the harmony moves smoothly from F (IV) to Eb ($^{b}$III) to an inverted G chord ($V^{6/4}$) which arrives on C major (I) for the beginning of the verse.

### Vocal Verses

The verses are eight-measures long with a phrase structure that parses into 6 + 2 + 1, with the motto being placed at the end of each verse. The first six measures move from I to V utilizing a two-measure V/V sequence in measures three to six ($C^7$ - F; $D^7$ - G). The remaining two measures conclude each verse with the same repeating line "I don't want to leave her now/You know I believe and how," and moves chromatically from A minor (vi) to a $D^9$ chord by the end ($V^9$/V). Following this is the one-measure motto that functions as a transitional measure into the next verse or, when it comes after the second verse, helps transition into the middle eight section.

The opening vocal line of the verse contains a retrograde of the ascending chromatic ½ step line heard in the guitar part in the opening motto, moving from C - B - Bb - A on the downbeats of the first four measures (see figure: 3.3). This chromatic line is then transposed through a similar descending pattern in the organ part (A - G# - G - F#) in the last two measures

of the verse “I don’t want to leave her now/You know I believe and how.” As another foreshadow of what is to come on this album these exact pitches reappear later on in the organ part of “I Want You (She’s So Heavy)” as well.




Figure 3.3: “Something” - First Verse (Vocals + Organ)

Similar to “Come Together” the range of the vocal melody is narrow and spans only a fifth ($G^4$ - $D^5$). This simplicity seems to allow the heartfelt nature of the singer to come through in a calm, relaxed and yet sincere attitude where nothing sounds forced in this song. This limited vocal range contrasts with the middle eight section where the vocals’ range is expanded and heightened further. The ranges of other melodies in the song are also extended later on in the lead guitar part in the instrumental verse. Here, the guitar part plays melodic lines that cover the range of an octave + fifth. In doing so, it feels as if the guitar is able to break free of the uncertainty and express its sincerity of love through strong melodic lines that emphasize both C-major pentatonic and C-mixolydian scales.

The rather light accompaniment of the verses never seems to over power the sensitivity that the singer is feeling. The rhythm guitar is present during the first half of the verses and plays a few chords that often sustain themselves and blend into the surrounding mix. At the beginning

of the second verse strings enter and supply a rather subdued accompaniment for the first half of the section, and provide a single countermelody line for the last two measures of the verse "I don't want to leave her now/You know I believe and how." In this later part the string's melody rises up an octave over the two measures as if trying to reach for this love. The drums in the verses play a very simple back beat with kick drum hits on one and three, and snare hits on two and four, providing just enough of a beat to keep the song moving forward without being too overpowering.

What is also interesting is the vocal arrangement in the verses. In the first part of the verse when Harrison is singing about 'her' the vocals are single tracked. However, at the end of the verses when he sings in the singular: "I don't want to leave her now/You know I believe and how," the vocals are double-tracked in unison.

**Middle Eight**

The beginning of the middle eight comes as a surprise when the motto is used to modulate to the key of A major. Here the G chord heard at the end of the measure can be seen as a $^{b}$VII in the new key. What is even more shocking is how the A-major chord at the beginning of the middle eight comes only two beats after the Eb-major chord heard in the 'Something motto,' a relationship that is a tri-tone apart and occurs in such close proximity to one another. This further enhances the element of surprise and harmonic color that occurs here.

Adding to this harmonic surprise are some instrumental and rhythmic colors that enhance the middle eight section and distinguish it further from the verses. The middle eight's texture is more syncopated and rhythmically dissonant in comparison to the verses, as if there is a sense of urgency with this love building within the singer. The appearance of syncopated pizzicato strings adds to this rhythmic tension and is only slightly soothed by the remaining strings playing

similar melodic lines as they did in the verses. Adding to the rhythmic tension are the drums playing a stream of septuplets that move back and forth between the toms and hi-hat. This supports a sense of urgency and motion forward as if the love within is growing itself. These septuplets could also be seen as a development out of the opening drum fill that was heard at the beginning of the song as well.

The structure of the middle eight contains two parallel AA' phrases that are broken down into a 4 + 4 measure grouping. The first phrase opens and closes on the A chord (I), while the second phrase ("You stick around and it may show") begins on A (I) and moves through the same harmonic progression as the first phrase, but in the last measure modulates back to C major by means of a V/V - V - I cadence in the second to last measure of the section. The harmonic motion of the middle eight could also be seen as an embellishment or development of the opening motto's stepwise voice leading. Because of the bass guitar's descending stepwise motion certain chords are placed in their inversion as a result of the descending line in the bass. This progression moves from A - C#m/G# - $F\#m^7$ - A/E - D over the course of three measures before arriving back on an A-major chord by the fourth measure. This is repeated upon the second phrase but lands on a C-major chord at the end instead of an A-major chord to lead into the instrumental verse.

What connects the two phrases together is a syncopated line that arrives after the second statement of "I don't know" and seems to be a response to the singer's sense of hesitation and uncertainty. This syncopated line is another descending ½ step chromatic line that extends the initial range of the first chromatic line heard in the motto down to a fourth now. The bass part moves in a rhythmic pattern of 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 +2 + 2 that is reinforced by the entire ensemble that plays the same grouping pattern (see figure: 3.4). This rhythmic pattern is another foreshadow of

a characteristic cross rhythm that will appear on several tracks on side two, including Harrison's other song on the album "Here Comes The Sun." Upon concluding the second phrase (A') the syncopated line returns but this time the bass steps down diatonically in the key of C major, with a 3-2-1 voice leading that resolves into the instrumental verse.

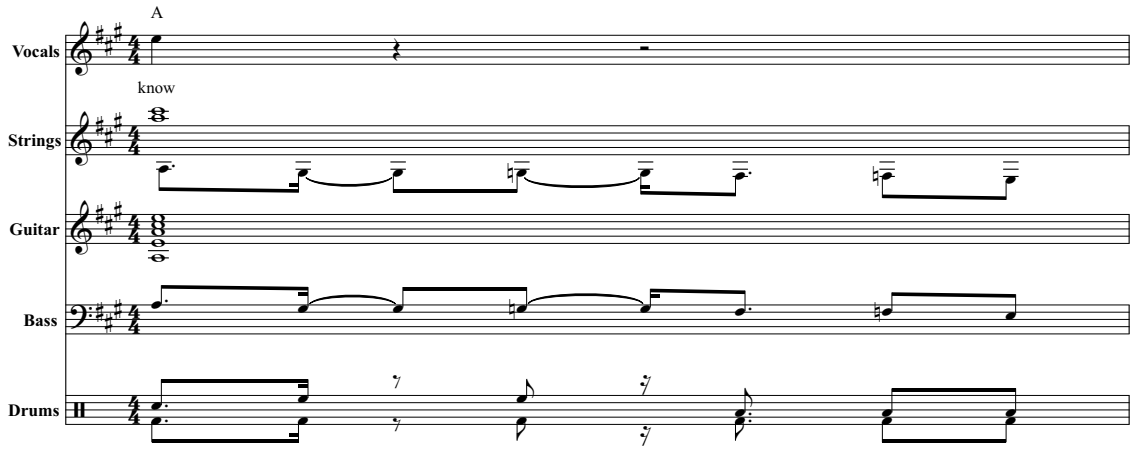



Figure 3.4: "Something" Cross Rhythm + Descending ½ Step Line (Middle Eight Section)

The range of the vocal line in the middle eight extends itself further than it had in the verses. In the first measure the range is expanded to a minor sixth ($C\#^5$ - $A^5$). By the end of the middle eight, the vocal line extends its range to a minor seventh as it peaks at a high $B^5$ on the last iteration of "I don't know," as if proclaiming the singer's uncertainty and surrendering to the mystical power of love. What is marvelous about the vocal harmonies in this section is the way in which Harrison seems to be in a duet with himself, asking what his intentions are and then responding with an honest sense of uncertainty. At the start of the middle eight, Harrison sings in two-part harmony in thirds, "You're asking me does my love grow?" When he responds to his own question "I don't know, I don't know," the vocal harmony is removed and only himself singing in unison remains, double-tracked. When Harrison responds the second time to his question with "I don't know, I don't know" at the end of the A' phrase, upon the last iteration of

"I don't know," a vocal harmony in thirds is added and climaxes on the $B^5$ note. It is as if he has finally surrendered to his uncertainty and anything that is left to be said can be said with his guitar that begins its solo in the instrumental verse.

**Instrumental Verse**

The instrumental verse carries with it the same harmonic structure as the previous verses and has the same length of eight-measures. The accompaniment of the strings remains the same as in the previous verses, with Ringo's drums picking up into a light backbeat where gentle cymbal hits and occasional brief drum fills provide motion forward. The lead guitar solo begins with small musical fragments that, over the course of the verse, build into longer lines that become more melodic and embellished as the section unfolds. The solo begins with a three beat motive that grows into three and a half beats in the next measure, and then spirals into elongated lines that are more rhythmically pulsed, vibrant, and alive as they move through both C-major pentatonic and C-mixolydian scales. Underneath all of this, McCartney's active bass line pulls the song along through its steady eighth note pulse that is interrupted by bursts of sixteenth note scalar figures.

**Outro**

The outro of the song begins with the motto but leads to a deceptive cadence where the $V^{6/4}$ chord (G) resolves into an A major chord, alluding to the same transition that occurred between the second verse and the middle eight (see figure: 3.5). However, upon the second repetition of the motto the music arrives on the tonic of C major. The ascending ½ step chromatic line reappears not only in the motto but also the next measure where the harmony lands on the A major chord for the deceptive cadence. This can be seen in the bass line which ascends from C# - D - D# - E - F in the second half of the measure. Meanwhile, the guitar in

beautiful counterpoint plays a three-note descending ½ step motive (G# - G - F#) above the bass during the last two beats of this measure as well, as if this contrapuntal idea is taking its final bow and desires one last opportunity to make a developed reappearance at the conclusion of the song.

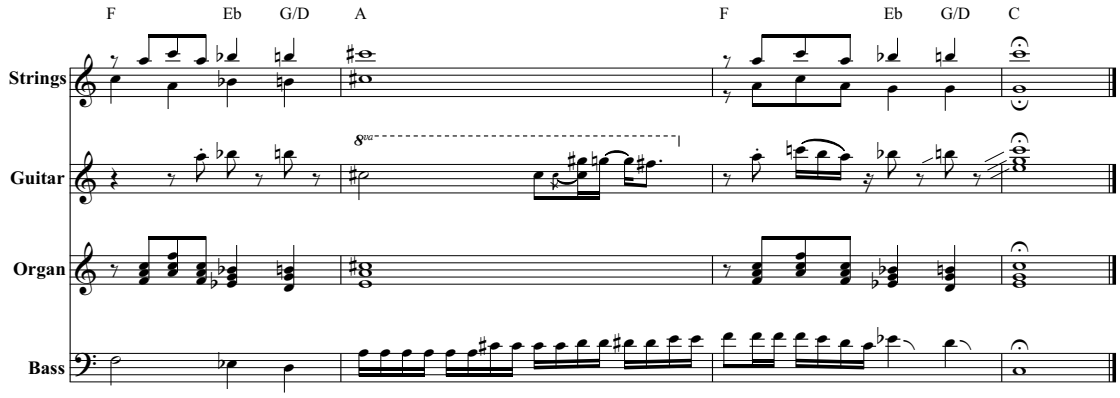



Figure 3.5: "Something" – Outro

**Concluding Thoughts**

As mentioned in the *Abbey Road* overview this album contains a lot of cross-track references that continue to surface throughout. There are a few to mention in this song that are significant in how it sets up many of the upcoming motives and musical ideas that are to be used later on. The beginning sextuplet drum fill of "Something" seems to recall the opening of "Come Together" which uses similar sextuplets underneath the "Shoot me." The use of drum fills and pick up measures for that matter will also be expanded upon in side two during the medley.

The ½ step chromatic line as seen in the opening motto and throughout "Something," becomes a musical motive that runs throughout several other songs on this album. Specifically, the descending A - G# - G - F# line is an exact copy of the organ part in "I Want You (She's So Heavy)." The syncopated cross rhythm that appears in the middle eight of "Something"

(3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2) is also used in several other songs on the album in various configurations, including “Here Comes The Sun,” which develops this rhythmic motive further, in addition to reappearing in “Because” and a few of the medley tracks as well (“You Never Give Me Your Money,” “Carry That Weight” and “The End”). Lastly, the keys of C major and A major become a harmonic foundation for the medley wherein these keys battle it out for dominance throughout and in “The End” one of them achieves victory over the other.

## III. Maxwell's Silver Hammer

**Dates Recorded:** July 9, 10, 11; August 6; 1969
**Key:** D major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals, backing vocals, piano, guitar, Moog synthesizer
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar (via Leslie speaker), bass
**Ringo Starr:** backing vocals, drums, anvil
**George Martin:** Hammond organ

**Form:**
Verse – Chorus – Interlude
Verse – Chorus – Instrumental Chorus – Interlude
Verse – Chorus – Instrumental Chorus – Outro (Developed Interlude)

### Overview

Like "Come Together," "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" is another character narrative in a Vaudevillian style that tells a story of a medical student named Maxwell who becomes a homicidal convict by murdering first his girlfriend, then his teacher, and then finally the judge who convicted him. In contrast to McCartney's enthusiasm of wanting the song to be a hit, the other members of The Beatles seemed less enthusiastic with it and all seemed to have an opinion about the song. Harrison said:

> "Sometimes Paul would make us do these really fruity songs. I mean, my god, Maxwell's Silver Hammer was so fruity. After a while we did a good job on it, but when Paul got an idea or an arrangement in his head…"[33]

Ringo recalls how "The worst session ever was Maxwell's Silver Hammer. It was the worst track we ever had to record. It went on for fucking weeks. I thought it was mad."[34] But perhaps it was Lennon who detested the song the most, despite the fact that he didn't even perform on the track

[33] Mitchell Glazer, "Growing up at 33 1/3: The George Harrison interview," *Crawdaddy,* February, 1977, 35.

[34] Austin Scaggs, "The Beatle's all-time favorite ("Yer Blues") and the Shea Stadium gig he can't remember," *Rolling Stone,* January 24, 2008, 22.

since he and Yoko had been in a car accident and were recovering during the three days spent recording the song at Abbey Road. However, he was present during the sessions:

> "That's Paul's. I hate it. 'Cuz all I remember is the track - he made us do it a hundred million times. He did *everything* to make it into a single and it never was and it never could've been, but he put guitar licks on it and he had somebody hitting iron pieces and we spent more money on that song than any of them in the whole album. I think."[35]

In his defense McCartney explains:

> "Maxwell's Silver Hammer was my analogy for when something goes wrong out of the blue, as it so often does, as I was beginning to find out at that time in my life. I wanted something symbolic of that, so to me it was some fictitious character called Maxwell with a silver hammer. I don't know why it was silver, it just sounded better than Maxwell's hammer. It was needed for scanning. We still use that expression even now when something unexpected happens."[36]

Despite The Beatles' opinion of the track, one of the qualities that makes "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" so interesting are the subtle, and at times not so subtle, changes in form and orchestration upon repetition of its sections. The song's form consists of three sections that move through a Verse – Chorus - Interlude structure. Each time a verse is repeated and a new cycle begins it contains noticeable variations in its orchestrations and musical material so that the song avoids a pitfall into being too predictable and helps keep the listeners' interest as it moves forward. For example, the second and third verses are varied in comparison to the first verse by using additional orchestrations from the Moog synthesizer, as well as added vocal harmonies that appear during the third verse. Additionally, each time a chorus ends it also always leads into new material or something familiar that has been developed further. For example, after the first chorus comes the first interlude which introduces that musical material for the first time. After

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[35] David Sheff, *All We Are Saying: The Last Major Interview with John Lennon and Yoko Ono* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2000), 202.

[36] Miles, *Many Years from Now,* 554.

the second chorus, an instrumental chorus uses lead guitar as a solo. This leads into an embellished interlude with different rhythmic accompaniment in comparison to the first interlude. After the third chorus comes another instrumental chorus but this time instead of a lead guitar solo there is a solo from the synthesizer instead. This leads to an even more developed and embellished interlude that also serves as an outro, where backing vocals are developed into three-and four-part harmony. These changes in both form and orchestration help keep musical interest in what might have otherwise been a simple or repetitive song. By always reaching for something new and continuously developing material within each section or cycle of formal structures, the song is able to sustain continued interest throughout.

The instrumentation for "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" consists of a simple backing track of bass guitar, played by Harrison in this song, drums, and piano that appears for the first time on the album. Adding to these sounds are lead guitar, the synthesizer making its first appearance on the album, and an anvil sound emphasizing the "bang bang" lyrics in the chorus. The layering and placement of these instruments within the song support the changes in form and development of musical material. For example, the synthesizer provides a few different timbres in the song, using a more Theremin-like type of sounds in the verses and big brass-like sounds in the last two choruses. Both the synthesizer and the lead guitar switch off solos in the instrumental choruses, with the guitar taking the first instrumental chorus and the synthesizer taking the second instrumental chorus. Here, the synthesizer once again switches to a new sound akin to a synth lead patch.

The vocal melody in the song has a range of a major ninth ($D^4$ - $E^5$) and contains an overall melodic arc that peaks in the chorus. In the verses the melodic peak reaches a $D^5$ in the connecting phrase that leads into the chorus, and peaks at $E^5$ on "Maxwell" on the second phrase

of the chorus. What this voice leading demonstrates is a long-term melodic arc that seems to support forward motion in the song by continuing to reach towards a higher pitch in each section. The melodic outlining of chords in the vocal line also provides a nice contrast to the smoother stepwise motion that was heard in "Something."

The track also makes use of onomatopoeia and some scat-sung vocals as well. As a side note, other Beatles tracks that use onomatopoeia can be heard in "All Together Now," "Drive My Car," and "Happiness Is A Warm Gun" to name a few. The track is nearly all sung by McCartney (single-tracked) save for a few select moments in the verses where vocal harmonies seem to take on characters from the 'gallery' and chime in on the fate of Maxwell. Additionally, backing vocals reappear in three and four-part harmony in the outro as well.

## In Depth Analysis – Maxwell's Silver Hammer

### Verses

The song starts abruptly with McCartney's voice singing the first verse and has an almost surprising or startling effect. The result is one where the listener is quickly brought into the narrative and the effect provides a nice contrast to the first two tracks that had included intros, even if they were brief. The verses are twenty measures long and can be broken down into an 8 + 8 + 4 phrase structure (AA'B). The A phrases begin on the tonic chord (I) and opens each time to V. The B phrase serves as a four-measure connecting or transitional phrase that leads into the chorus. There is a suspension of time in the B phrase with drums only playing the hi-hat on beats two and four, and a sustaining of chords that move through V/V - V before arriving on I at the start of the chorus.

Upon each repetition of the verses there are some noticeable differences in both orchestration and vocal harmonies that should be mentioned. The first verse begins with only piano, bass, and lead vocal. In the second verse the synthesizer is added to create a Theremin-like sound that provides counterpoint at the mostly half note level. In the third verse the synthesizer reappears again but in a lower register than its first time and adds a contrapuntal line that mostly outlines triads, which moves at the quarter note level. The result is a darker timbre overall. This lower register in the third verse also provides some head room for the appearance of a two-part chorus in thirds that responds to the narrative as if they were a crowd of people "screaming from the gallery" saying "Maxwell must go free." At the end of the third verse the lyrics end with "… a noise comes from behind," and the sound of a howl appears and leads into the chorus. Again, this is another example of a response to the narrative and another form of onomatopoeia.

**Choruses**

The chorus consists of eight measures with two phrases of 4 + 4 in an AA' structure. There are two versions of the vocal choruses that end the sections differently. In the first chorus, as well as the instrumental choruses, the phrases open up from I to a V/V and then make its way back to I by the end of the section. For the second and third vocal choruses it moves through similar harmonies but remains open by ending on a V chord instead of arriving back on the I chord. This helps lead into the instrumental choruses thereafter.

The vocal choruses following each verse are typically performed the same way upon further repeats, except for when they lead into the instrumental choruses and therefore end on a V chord instead of closing off and resolving back to I. There are though some subtle variances that occur between the vocal choruses. The first vocal chorus includes the same instruments as

the first verse but adds electric guitar and contains no backing vocals. In the second and third choruses the backup vocals add "tu lu tu lu lu" commentary at the end of the first phrase. Acoustic guitar is also added in for the second and third vocal choruses. Additionally, at the end of the third chorus McCartney sings a "whoah whoah whoah" to help transition into the final instrumental chorus. Variances in the instrumental choruses include the lead guitar solo in the first instrumental chorus and the synthesizer taking lead solo in the second instrumental chorus.

**Interludes**

The interlude sections are four measures long and include the most embellished and colorful chord progressions in the song. With a closed harmonic structure that begins and ends on the tonic, the harmony moves through the following progression: I - $V^{4/3}$/VI - VI, which then leads into a plagal cadence via a $V^{4/3}$/IV - IV - I (see figure: 3.6). This plagal cadence seems to almost glorify Maxwell for a moment. The G chord (IV) found in the interludes is also the only time that it appears in the entire song, further heightening the significance of the plagal cadence. Also to note is the ½ step chromatic line heard in the lower voice of the right hand piano chords, which ascends from A - A# - B - C in the first two measures of the interlude.

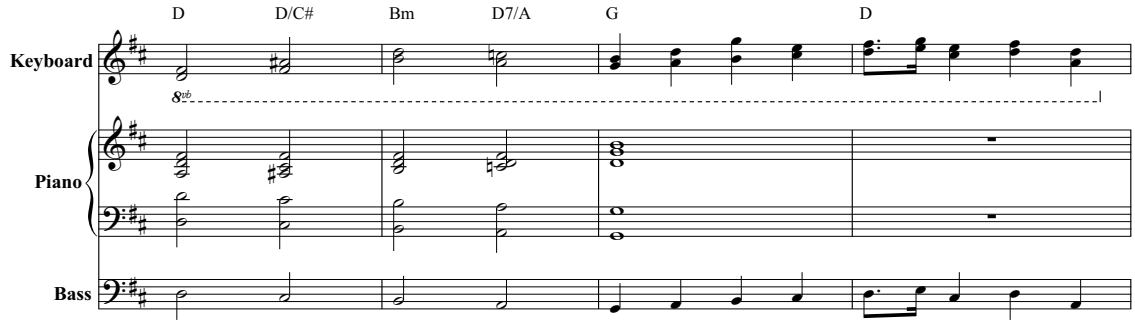



Figure 3.6: "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" - First Interlude

Like the other structures of the song the interlude contains variances upon each repetition. The first interlude sustains chords at the half note level. Upon the second repetition there are added triplet arpeggios of the chords played on the synthesizer as if it was trying to break up the monotony of the sustained half note chords heard previously. Upon the third interlude, which also serves as the outro for the song, there is added vocals in three and four-part harmony singing "silver hammer man" and contains the most vocal harmonies in the entire song. This is also the first time any vocals have been sung in an interlude section. There is another plagal cadence that occurs, which is reminiscent of a church choir praying for the deceased; perhaps it reflects the same characters from the 'gallery?' And if the plagal cadence was not enough to adequately conclude the song, notice how the anvil switches its rhythm from being played on beats one and two during the chorus sections, to then conclude on beats two and three to provide a more definitive ending.

**Concluding Thoughts**

"Maxwell's Silver Hammer" contains musical references to other tracks on the album. There is the return of the key of D major that references "Come Together" and foreshadows the end of side one with "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," except that song is in D minor. The use of mostly stepwise motion in the bass line also draws a similarity to "Something." The narrative-like characterization of Maxwell flashes back to a similar characterization seen in "Come Together." It also foreshadows other narrative-like characters to be seen in the medley including "Mean Mr. Mustard," "Polythene Pam," "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" and the bonus track "Her Majesty."

# IV. Oh! Darling

**Dates Recorded:** April 20, 26; July 17, 18, 22; August 8, 11; 1969.
**Key:** A Major
**Meter:** 12/8
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals, backing vocals, bass, guitar
**John Lennon:** backing vocals, piano
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, guitar (via Leslie speaker), Moog synthesizer
**Ringo Starr:** drums

**Form:**
Intro - Verse - Verse - Middle Eight - Verse - Middle Eight - Verse - Outro

## Overview

While "Something" handled the uncertainty of love through innocence and hopeful optimism, "Oh! Darling" is its antithesis where one's pleads to stay with their lover is exposed in a raw and noisy attempt. With McCartney hitting high D's and falsetto Es at the top of his lungs, moments of "Oh! Darling" bears a similar resemblance to the shouts and screams he had sung in "Helter Skelter." McCartney recalls his process of recording the vocals: "I came into the studios early every day for a week to sing it by myself because… I wanted it to sound as though I'd been performing it on stage all week."[37] Engineer Alan Parsons remembers how McCartney would show up early before rehearsals to sing through the vocals:

> "Paul came in several days running to do the lead vocal on 'Oh! Darling'. He'd come in, sing it and say, 'No, that's not it, I'll try it again tomorrow'. He only tried it once per day, I suppose he wanted to capture a certain rawness which could only be done once before the voice changed. I remember him saying 'five years ago I could have done this in a flash', referring, I suppose, to the days of 'Long Tall Sally' and 'Kansas City'."[38]

[37] Barry Miles and Pearce Marchbank, eds, *Beatles in their Own Words* (New York: Omnibus, 1978), 102.

[38] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions*, 180.

"Oh! Darling" is yet another character piece that demonstrates someone desperately trying to win a lover back. With a simple backing track of drums, bass, piano and electric guitar with no instrumental solos, the focus of "Oh! Darling" highlights the lead vocals and carries with it a climactic melodic arc that, over the course of the song, becomes more desperate and enlivened with near shrieks and screams that beg for the lover to stay with him by the end. With a 12/8 meter that seems to recall the dance hall 'doo-wop' days, this song defies that style with an edge of both grit and passion that highlights the incredible power of McCartney's voice.

Over the course of the song, McCartney's vocals change and develop with each repetition of the verses. With slight melodic variations throughout each verse, the song culminates in both the final middle eight section and the last verse with high falsetto E's and screams on high D's in the upper register to close out the song. There is also a nice juxtaposition in vocal range between the vocal lines in the verses in comparison to the middle eight. Whereas the vocal lines in the verses span over an octave with more definitive melodic contours and shape, the middle eight is quite tight and narrow, often staying on a single note and repeating it in a sort of declamatory manner. However, in both the verses and the middle eight an emphasis of a two-note motive of a descending whole step that appears throughout the song occurs.

Aside from McCartney's lead vocals there are subtle three-part harmonies singing scat pronunciation "Ooo, Ah" that back up the lead vocals in the verses. However, every time the verse is repeated (four verses total) the backup vocals come in on different measures. The order that they enter in each verse is 4, 2, 3, 1. This technique of varying the entrances of the backup vocals in the verses in these subtle ways reveals once again how The Beatles are able to pay attention to small details.

## In Depth Analysis – Oh! Darling

### Verses

Once again The Beatles use a pickup measure to serve as the intro, which bears a similarity to the brief intro of "Something." The opening $E^{aug7}$ chord ($V^{+7}$) begins as if it were a wondrous dream before McCartney's vocals lead into the first verse. What is interesting and surprising about this opening chord is the vocal melodies' relationship to it, in which McCartney sings "Oh!" with an F# and an A over the suspended $E^{aug7}$ chord. These non-chord tones add a heightened level of tension to the augmented chord that provides a satisfactory release on the word "Darling" in the next measure, beginning the verse. This release of tension on the word "darling" also seems to create a nice subtle level of word painting.

The structure of the eight-measure verse contains two phrases (AB). The A phrase moves through a traditional I - V - vi - IV progression over the course of four measures. As if to develop more momentum, the B phrase ("Believe me when I tell you") doubles the speed of the harmonic progression to two chords per measure, moving back and forth between vi and V before ending on the dominant ($E^7$) to lead into verse two. Upon further repetition of verses two and three, the last measure exchanges the dominant chord in favor of a $V^7$/IV chord to lead into the middle eight section. Only in the last verse at the end of the verse section does the song arrive back on the tonic chord (A major) to conclude the song.

The arrangement of the verses contains a steady eighth note pattern in the piano with rather 'sharp' guitar chords emphasizing beats four and ten in the 12/8 meter. In the last two measures that conclude all of the verses, a speeding up effect occurs. Besides the harmonic rhythm doubling its pace for the B phrase in the verses, the accompaniment also builds up a rhythmic momentum as well. In the last two measures of the first verse, the drums intensify their

rhythm into a stream of sixteenth notes between the snare and toms, and drops out with the other instruments on beat seven of the last measure while the vocals lead back into verse two. This 'putting on the brakes' effect is similar to the way the fourth verse ends and concludes the song. However, at the ends of verses two and three, this rhythm is intensified even more to help propel the song into the middle eight section. In the last measure of these verses, the drums increase their speed into non-tuplets while the piano increases its rhythm to sixteenth notes. This rhythmic motion and complexity helps prepare the listener for the middle eight section that elevates the song to an even higher emotional intensity.

Adding to the subtlety of variety in the verses is the placement of the melodic peaks in the vocal line, where the moments of highest intensity shift throughout each verse. In a way this resembles the entrances of the backup vocals that always come in at different places within the verses. This subtle level of unpredictability keeps the music interesting and forward-moving. The following is the development of the melodic peaks in the verses: In verse one, McCartney's highest note is an $A^5$, as heard in the opening pick up measure "Oh! Darling." The second verse adds a high falsetto $E^6$ "Ooo" in measure five after the phrase "Believe me when I tell you." In the third verse the vocals peak earlier here compared to the second verse. In this instance the high falsetto is removed and instead the vocals peak on a high $C^6$ earlier on in measure three when McCartney sings "I'll never make it alone." The climax of the vocals are reached in verse four where McCartney repeats the high $C^6$ in measure three as he did in verse three, though slightly more ornamented ("I'll never let you down."). There is also a spoken line pleading "oh, believe me darling" at the end of the A phrase. The high falsetto $E^6$ as heard in verse two is added back in measure five and the verse closes out on a screaming "Do you no harm," climaxing on a high $D^6$ before arriving back to $A^5$ to close out the song.

The vocal melody in the verses contains a two-note motive of a descending whole step (F# - E) that is heard throughout the verses. In these cases the F# is an appoggiatura that resolves into the E which is a chord tone, and is cleverly placed above four different chords over the course of the verse which places it within a different musical context each time (see figure: 3.7). The first time the motive appears is on "darling" in measure one over an A chord, where the F# serves as an appoggiatura (6-5). The second time is in measure two where it is placed over an E major chord and serves as another appoggiatura (9-8). In measure three it is placed over an F# minor chord and serves as a neighbor tone, with an 8-7-8 motion. Measure five places the motive over a B minor chord and serves as another neighbor tone, with a 5-4-5 motion.

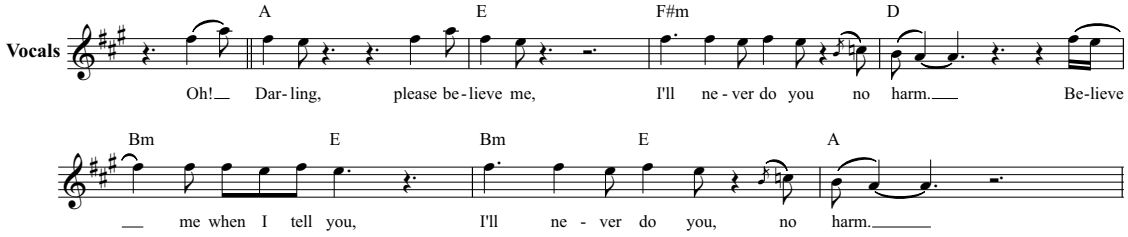



Figure 3.7: "Oh! Darling" – First Verse: Two-Note Vocal Motive

This two-note motive of a whole step also appears two other times in the verse with the pitches B - A. The first time occurs in measure four and appears as an appoggiatura on the word "harm" over a D major chord (6-5). The second time occurs on measure six, again as an appoggiatura on the word "harm" over an A major chord (9-8). This two-note motive also returns in the middle eight sections, using the pitches $B^5 – A^5$ as well as $A^5 – G^5$ throughout.

**Middle Eight**

The eight-measure middle eight section serves as an emotional climax where the vocal register maintains itself within a rather tight and narrow vocal range in the singers' uppermost

register, providing a contrast to the smooth and wider vocal range of the verse sections. The first three measures hovers between $A^5$ - $C^6$ and makes its way through a bluesy melisma one octave down to $A^4$ on the word "cried," delivering a lovely form of word painting. This repetition on single notes is amplified at the end of the middle eight where the rhythmic intensity is heightened on the phrase "nearly broke down and died," creating another subtle example of word painting. Here, the vocal line repeats notes on a high $B^5$ with a syncopated rhythm on "broke down," while the piano speeds up its rhythm into sixteenth notes and then joins the syncopated rhythm of the vocals on "broke down" (see figure: 3.8). The song reaches its highest climactic point here as the piano plays in its highest range, reinforcing the passion and intensity of the singer's emotional turmoil. As if the music suddenly 'breaks down,' a dramatic pause has the accompaniment drop out on the words "and died" while the vocal line delivers another smooth melisma over the dominant chord before the $E^{aug7}$ chord concludes the middle eight and transitions back into the verse.




Figure 3.8: "Oh! Darling" – End Of Middle Eight Section

Upon repeating the middle eight for the second time McCartney adds in another falsetto "Ooo" on the second repeat of "When you told me, ooo" as well as embellishes the melisma on the word "cried" which goes even lower this time than it does when it appears in the first middle eight, suggesting that the singer sinks even lower to his knees to plea with his lover.

This heightened emotional climax delivered from the singer is reinforced with the harmonic movement of the middle eight. Beginning on a IV chord (D) the middle eight moves through a $^{b}$VI chord (F), V/V chord (B) and ends with the same opening $E^{aug7}$ chord to conclude the middle eight and transition back into the verse. With a two-measure phrase structure of ABA'B' the harmonic rhythm of the A and B phrases contains one chord per measure. This is slowed down slightly in the A' phrase where there is one chord (B) for two measures before another speeding up effect occurs in the last two measures of the middle eight. There, the harmonic rhythm moves back to two chords per measure.

Other features of the middle eight that add to this emotional intensity are the dry and 'sharp' guitar arpeggios emphasizing the eighth note pulse in groupings of three notes. The drum pattern is similar to those in the verse and continues to keep a rather straightforward backbeat to heighten the pounding eighth note pulse, heard in both the piano and the guitar parts. Note how there are no backup vocals in the middle eight section which allows the lead singer's desperate pleads to stand out even more on their own.

Lastly, the appearance of the ½ step chromatic line occurs a few times in the middle eight section. The left hand notes of the piano ascends from D - D# - E - F in moving from the D chord on the last beat of measure one of the middle eight section to the F chord starting in measure two. In measure three of the section ("Well you know I nearly broke down"), the bass line moves at the quarter note level from B - C - C# as well. In moving into the syncopated ending of the

middle eight section in the second half of measure six ("You didn't need me anymore"), the left hand piano part once again plays an embellished form of the motive, moving from B - C - C# - D - D# - E in an eighth note rhythm on beats eight through twelve to further heighten the intensity of the ending of this section.

**Outro**

The outro is similar to the one measure intro except it contains a short harmonic embellishment of the tonic through an A - $Bb^7$ - A progression, where the Bb is the Neapolitan-chord. The use of the Neapolitan here foreshadows the reappearance of this chord later on in the album in the songs "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," "Because," as well as "Sun King." The listener is then left with the synthesizer playing a harmonic-like sounding patch of a descending F# minor chord with a passing tone of B included.

**Concluding Thoughts**

There are a few references to other tracks on the album in "Oh! Darling" that should be noted. There is a reappearance of triplets in the drums that seem to flashback to both the intro of "Come Together" and "Something." The predominantly stepwise motion in the bass also bears a similar resemblance to the stepwise motion of the bassline heard in "Something." The key of A major in "Oh! Darling" not only references the key of the middle eight in "Something," but also foreshadows its prominent appearance in the medley. Additionally, there is a key relationship of a fifth between this song and the preceding song "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" which is in the key of D major.

# V. Octopus's Garden

**Dates Recorded:** April 26, 29; July 17, 18; 1969
**Key:** E major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**Ringo Starr:** vocals, drums, percussion, effects
**John Lennon:** guitar
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass, piano
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar (via Leslie speaker)
**Form:**
Intro - Verse - Refrain - Verse - Refrain - Middle Eight - Verse - Outro

## Overview

It became customary for The Beatles to have Ringo sing a song on each one of their albums, with the exception of *A Hard Day's Night* and *Let it Be*. Until "Octopus's Garden" Ringo had only written one other song, "Don't Pass Me By," which was included on *The Beatles* album (the 'White Album'). Here Ringo gets a shot at writing another song in which the clear and simple vocal melodies and repetitive four-chord progression lends itself to feeling like another 'kids' sing along' in a similar fashion to "Yellow Submarine." It was during the 'White Album' sessions where Ringo decided to take a leave of absence from the group and take a trip to Sardinia. Ringo recalls how his inspiration for "Octopus's Garden" came from this trip:

> "I wrote Octopus's Garden in Sardinia. Peter Sellers had lent us his yacht and we went out for the day... I stayed out on deck with [the captain] and we talked about octopuses. He told me that they hang out in their caves and they go around the seabed finding shiny stones and tin cans and bottles to put in front of their cave like a garden. I thought this was fabulous, because at the time I just wanted to be under the sea too. A couple of tokes later with the guitar – and we had Octopus's Garden!"[39]

Like many other tracks that we have seen so far on the album, each verse develops subtly once again through instrumental and vocal layering. With a simple backing track of drums,

[39] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, 312

rhythm guitar and bass, lead guitar playing is saved for primarily the intro, outro, and middle eight, with some light melodic decoration in the second and third verse and the last refrain. Scat and antiphonal singing between the lead and backup vocals occurs in the verses and develops into three-part harmonies in the refrain. There is also the addition of a piano layer that occurs towards the ends of the verses and remains through the refrain.

Most of the vocal melodies revolve around an E-major pentatonic scale with some brief moments of scale degree four (A) being used during the verses. Overall the accompaniment is rather textural and uses patterns with repetition to provide support for the vocal melody. Additionally, many of the vocal melodies are constructed mostly by patterns, often going back and forth between two notes per measure in the verses.

Harmonically, the song is built almost entirely out of the simple and repetitive chord progression of I - vi - IV - V. This includes the harmonic progression in the middle eight that modulates to the key of A major. The exception to this repetitive harmonic progression is found in the first two measures of the intro, the outro, as well as the B phrase in the verse that omits the I chord in favor of using the vi chord (C# minor) for the first two measures before finishing with the remaining IV - V progression.

## In Depth Analysis – Octopus's Garden

### Intro

The four-measure intro contains two phrases that are two measures long each, with the first phrase having lead guitar playing an E-major based pentatonic line and the second phrase having the ensemble enter playing a condensed version of the four-chord harmonic progression.

Here, the harmonic rhythm is doubled in comparison to the verses, having two chords per measure instead of one.

**Verses**

The verses consist of a twelve-measure phrase structure of AA'B (4 + 4 + 4), with each phrase remaining open on V due to the repetitive four chord pattern of I - vi – IV – V. The tracking of the lead vocals in the verse matches the phrase structure by having Ringo sing single-tracked for the A phrases, and double-tracked for the B phrase. In the B phrase, the piano is added where it plays a stream of eighth notes with occasional sixteenth note embellishments, while Ringo plays a similar stream of eighth notes on the ride cymbal only. The B phrase is distinguished further from the A phrases by having the absence of scat vocal harmonies. With the exception of the piano part, the rest of the ensemble sustains chords for most of this phrase as well. This allows for a greater impact for when the beat picks back up and the rest of the ensemble joins in for the refrain section. Additionally, while the pair of A phrases have an overall descending melodic contour, making its way from $B^4$ - $F\#^4$, the B phrase emphasizes the repetition of single notes hovering around $C\#^5$ and $A^4$. However, the B phrase does contain the highest melodic peak of all the phrases, reaching an $E^5$ in measure two of the phrase, providing an overall ascending melodic arc for the verse sections.

Upon repetition of verses there are some subtle differences and slight developments that occur in the music. There is some scat singing from the backup vocals in verse two ("Ooo, Ah") that are in a call and response with the lead vocals. In verse three, this is developed further through the backup vocals singing back some of the same phrases that the lead vocals sing (i.e. "Lies beneath the ocean waves"). Lastly, there are also brief solo guitar interjections in both verse two and three during the A phrases.

**Refrain**

The refrain section is four measures long and contains three-part vocal harmony singing "I'd like to be…", which helps distinguish it against the verses same harmonic and melodic structure. It is a closed phrase this time that begins and ends on I, with the third measure condensing the harmonic rhythm of the IV and V chord so that the harmony arrives back on the tonic by the fourth measure. The final refrain also has some solo guitar layered into the mix that continues into the outro.

**Middle Eight**

The middle eight section has a simple AA' phrase structure (4 + 4), and has arrived in the key of A major through a simple pivot modulation from the refrain section; the E major chord from the refrain is a 'V' in the key of A. The harmonic progression for the A phrase is the same as the A phrases in the verses: I - vi - IV - V. The A' phrase in the middle eight uses the refrains' phrase structure, where its last two measures use a IV - V - I progression to conclude the section. This helps modulate the song back to E major for the final verse. This is again achieved by another simple pivot modulation.

Features that help set this section apart from its preceding sections include pattern changes in the drum part that emphasize every beat through Ringo's consistent quarter note bass drum hits and accented toms on every beat. Sound effects help recreate the feeling of being underwater. As Everett notes, "Ringo gurgled through a straw into a glass of water on one track, and Paul and George sang through a Leslie speaker."[40]

[40] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 255.

**Outro**

The outro takes the last measure of the refrain "In an Octopus's garden with you" and extends it through three repetitions that delay the resolution of the tonic until the third time. The first two of these repetitions leads into a deceptive cadence on vi, with the last iteration resolving to I. With each repetition there is an antiphonal response between the three-part vocal harmony singing "In an octopus's garden with you" and lead guitar playing in an A-minor pentatonic scale. Underneath this, a neat layering of the two-part scat backup vocals used earlier in the verses support the three-part harmony above it. The last measure of the section briefly recalls the opening guitar solo idea, except it reverses the melodic contour as it ascends down instead of up to resolve the song, creating a nice mirror effect between the beginning and ending of the song.

**Concluding thoughts**

In a similar fashion that the key of "Oh! Darling" was the "V" of its preceding track "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," there is another pair of I - V track relationships between this song and the previous track "Oh! Darling." Here, "Octopus's Garden" is the "V" of "Oh! Darling" which is the 'I' (A major). There also seems to be a flashback to "Something" in that both songs contain a deceptive cadence in their outro. In "Octopus's Garden" the deceptive cadence repeats itself twice before resolving back to the tonic, while "Something" only used the cadence once.

## VI. I Want You (She's So Heavy)

**Dates Recorded:** February 22, 24; April 18, 20; August 8, 11, 20; 1969
**Key:** D minor/ A minor
**Meter:** 4/4, 6/8 (mixed meters)
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**John Lennon:** vocals, backing vocals, lead guitar, Moog synthesizer
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, congas
**Billy Preston:** Hammond organ

**Form:**
Intro – Verse – Verse – Refrain
Instrumental Verse – Refrain
Verse – Outro

### Overview

It seems quite fitting that "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" would be the concluding song for side one on the album. Being the longest song not only for the album but also in all The Beatle's repertoire, it most certainly carries the weight of the first side of the album and then some. "I Want You" bypasses the uncertainty of love heard in "Something," and instead elevates the angst and pains heard in "Oh! Darling" to a heightened emotional climax that turns desperate pleas into a musical love affair between sound, texture, and density. Like "Something" and "Oh! Darling," "I Want You" is a personal narrative that uses only fourteen words over the course of the 7:47 second long track. Not only was this the first song that The Beatles worked on for the *Abbey Road* sessions, but it also became the last song recorded for the album. In fact, the final mixing and editing of "I Want You" on August 20 marked the last time that all four Beatles would be together in the studio at the same time.[41]

The structure of the song is daring with its consistent juxtaposition of 4/4 and 6/8 meters, uneven lengths of phrases and sections, and its ability to create a sense of unpredictability in the

[41] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions*, 191.

way it is able to continuously develop its musical material from verse to verse, refrain to refrain. The form contains only two primary musical structures that are juxtaposed between one another—verse and refrain—with the intro and outro being musical material from the refrain section. Some of the contrasting features between the verse and refrain sections are as follows: The verses contain a 4/4 meter that over the course of the song speeds up its tempo slightly upon each repetition, with its increased speed most noticeable in the final verse. Meanwhile the refrain is consistently in a slow 6/8 meter each time it reappears. The keys between both sections contain a relationship of a fifth, with the verses being in A minor while the refrains are in D minor. While the verses highlight the lead vocals that double with lead guitar, with the ensemble providing a supportive backing role, the refrain elevates the ensemble into overdrive with bright guitar arpeggios, organ riffs that move through two octaves in range, a prominent (and quite ominous perhaps) bassline ostinato, and three-part vocal harmony. Also to note are the differences of perspectives with the lyrics between the two sections, where the verses speak in first person while the refrains describe the woman from a third person perspective.

The song's overall trajectory is one that continues to add more weight and mass through instrumental layering and orchestration as the song develops. With each repetition of the verses and refrains there is an additive process which continues to gain momentum and climaxes in the outro of the song, where the use of white noise from the Moog synthesizer along with Ringo's heavy and consistent crash cymbal hits emphasize higher frequencies that expand the spectral range more broadly than what had come before in the song. It seems rather appropriate that the song ends with an abrupt cut to silence as if the track itself could not carry all of the accumulation of noise and weight any longer. Engineer Alan Parsons recalls this process: "We

were putting the final touches to that side of the LP, and we were listening to the mix. John said 'There! Cut the tape there'. Geoff [Emerick] cut the tape and that was it. End of side one!"[42]

Adding to the overall mass of this song is the use of instrumental doublings. The vocal lines in the verses are often doubled with the lead guitar, which begins to embellish the vocal line upon further repeats of the verses. Lennon and Harrison also used multi-tracking to overdub the guitar parts multiple times to help create a heavier sound as well.[43] Other instrumental doublings include the bass and guitar in the outro, in addition to the organ and guitar parts at the ends of each verse. The overall effect is a sound that has more definition to the musical lines with a thicker weight and body to it overall.

## In Depth Analysis – I Want You (She's So Heavy)

### Introduction

The intro is a five-measure phrase with a suspension at the end that appears to half cadence in D minor (i - $i^6$ - $V^{b9}$/V - $^bVI^{b7}$ - $V^{aug7}$); note the common tone F that ties each chord together from one to the next (see figure: 3.9). The choice to end on an augmented chord also seems to be a small flashback to "Oh! Darling" where the intro began with a suspended $E^{aug7}$ chord and concluded its sections with the same chord as well. There is also a relationship of a tri-tone between the $V^{b9}$/V chord ($E^{b9}$) and the $^bVI^{b7}$ chord ($Bb^7$) that adds to the dissonance of this introduction. With such a tension filled harmonic progression emphasizing the dominant, along with the asymmetrical phrase length of five measures, the introduction sets a rather unsettling

[42] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions*, 191.

[43] Miles, *Many Years from Now*, 555.

mood for this song and prepares the listener for the varying levels of dissonance that will be achieved throughout the song.

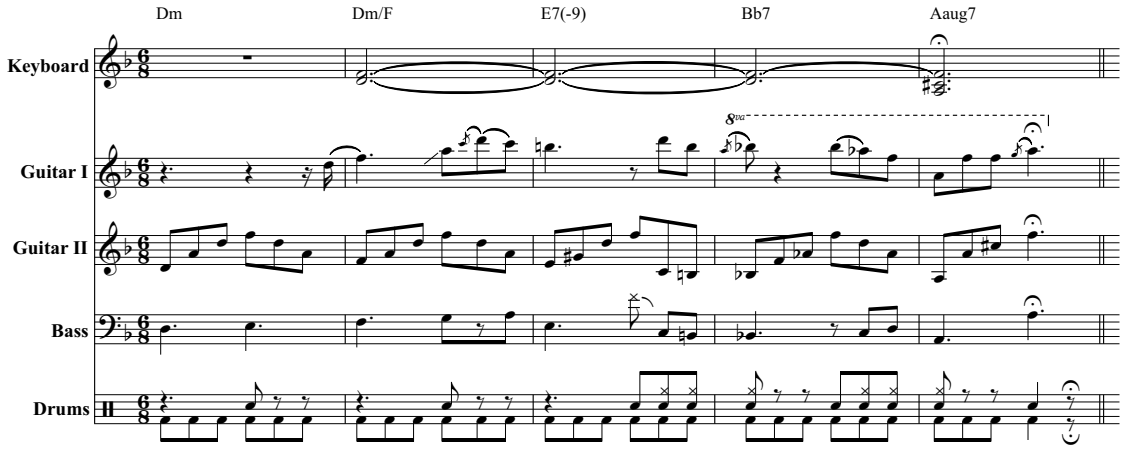



Figure 3.9: "I Want You" – Introduction

Adding to this unsettling harmonic progression is the drum pattern that plays a pulsing eighth note rhythm in the kick drum that provides the track with an immediate drive and intensity. This lightens up when the verse begins and the ensemble responds antiphonally to Lennon's voice. Also to note is the guitar arpeggio in this opening which seems to foreshadow similar accompaniment for a few other tracks on side two, including "Here Comes the Sun," "Because," and the ending of "You Never Give Me Your Money," which makes its reprise in "Carry That Weight."

**Verse 1**

Despite the cadence on an augmented V chord in D minor, what begins the verse is not a D-minor chord (i) but actually an A-minor chord (minor 'v') that comes as a surprise to the listener. The verse is in a 4/4 meter that contains an ABA'C phrase structure of unequal lengths and utilizes sub phrases to help construct the larger structure. While the A and A' phrases

contain lyrics, the B and C phrases are instrumental and serve the purpose to connect to the next phrase or section.

The phrases parse into the following groups: A = 8.5 measures long and ends upon the second repetition of "driving me mad" where it cadences from an $E^{7b9}$ ($V^{7b9}$) chord to an A minor chord (i). The B phrase is two measures long and serves as a connecting phrase between the A and A' phrase. Because of the cadence in A minor at the end of the A phrase, the arrival of the D minor chord at the beginning of the A' phrase feels like a minor iv chord here rather than a tonic. The A' phrase is a similar eight and a half measures in length as the A phrase, and by the end of it uses the Neapolitan Bb major chord ($^{b}II$) to function as a pre-dominant to the C phrase, which begins on the $E^{7b9}$ chord ($V^{7b9}$). The C phrase is six measures long and stands on the $E^{7b9}$ chord. In this instance what could have been a repeat of the B' phrase (the connecting phrase) is replaced here with a stand on the dominant, and serves to transition the song back into A minor upon moving into verse two. In this case, the A-minor chord at the beginning of the second verse now feels like a proper tonic in comparison to the first verse where its arrival from the intro felt more deceptive. The function of this $E^{7b9}$ chord shifts upon later repeats when it leads back not into A minor (i) but instead directly modulates into D minor upon the beginning of the refrain sections.

Both of the A phrases contain sub phrases that, over the course of the eight and a half measures, build and lengthen through an additive process. The A phrase breaks down as follows: "I want you" = 3 beats; "I want you so bad" = 6 ½ beats; "I want you" = 5 ½; "I want you so bad, its driving me mad, its driving me mad" expands to 14 ½ beats as Lennon's vocals descend and cadence in A minor (see figure: 3.10).

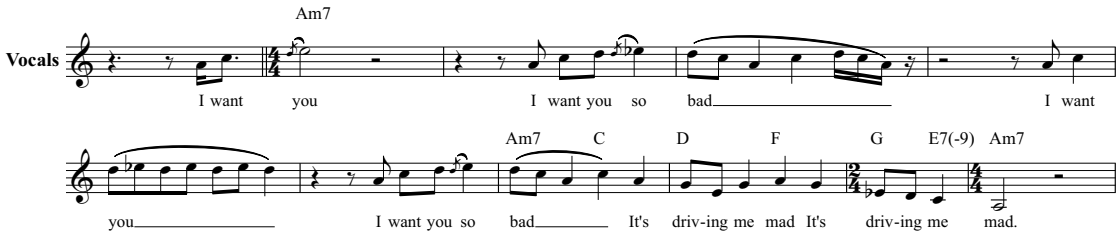



Figure 3.10: "I Want You" - Vocal Melody (First Verse)

The vocal line in the verses covers quite an extensive range of an octave + fifth. An A-minor pentatonic vocal line emphasizing the blues tri-chord [025] (A - C - D) permeates the melody, with occasional $^{b}5$ 'blues' notes sung as well. The voice is also doubled here with guitar that continues to decorate the vocal line upon further verse repetition.

The arrangement of the verses varies upon each repetition. In the opening six measures of the first verse the ensemble responds to Lennon antiphonally three times, answering his statements of "I want you" with strong three and four-note declamatory eighth note hits. Specifically, for the first and third responses from the ensemble, they answer with three notes, while the second time they answer with four notes. There also seems to be a subtle allusion here to "Octopus's Garden," where similar three-note rhythmic declamatory statements concluded the verse section to lead into the refrain.

Each of the three rhythmic responses is followed by silence that is filled in by the hiss of the recording studio itself. For the remaining two and a half measures of the A phrase the ensemble enters together with a smooth backbeat in the drums that carries through the remainder of the verse. There is also the appearance of the ½ step chromatic line in the 2/4 bar that concludes both the A and A' phrases. At the end of the A phrase it is heard in the bass line, while

at the end of the A' phrase it has the entire ensemble playing the ½ step line in a quarter note triplet rhythm to transition into the C phrase, as if to momentarily slow the music down to create more tension upon the arrival of the $V^{7b9}$ chord in the C phrase. This ½ step line will reappear again in the C phrase as well as other places later on in the song.

The characteristics of the C phrase include a pounding guitar and organ part in an eighth note rhythm that helps support the tension on the dominant. These rhythmic 'jolts' are then answered antiphonally in the bass with a melodic line that also contains another instance of the three-note ½ step chromatic line that descends this time (G - Gb - F) before making a melodic gesture that sweeps up and back down (see figure: 3.11). This call and response has been used in all of the previous tracks except "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," and will most certainly appear many more times on the remainder of the album. Not only does the guitar and organ play the 'jolting' rhythm antiphonally with the bass, but the pattern of the jolts changes slightly upon repetition. While the first two 'jolts' are in the same syncopated rhythm, the last 'jolt' plays straight eighths to help conclude the section. Perhaps this can be seen as a development out of the opening rhythm at the beginning of the verse where a similar eighth note rhythmic response was presented in an antiphonal manner.




Figure 3.11: "I Want You" – 'C' Phrase of Verse

**Refrain**

The refrain section consists of the introductory material with an AA' phrase structure that parses into 5 + 5 measures. Beginning in D minor actually sounds a bit like a surprise coming from the $E^{7b9}$ chord that ended the verse. This mirrors the similar harmonic surprise that was felt when the intro arrived on the A-minor chord in the first verse, except this time instead of expecting an A-minor chord to appear at the start of the refrain the song switches back to D minor through a direct modulation, giving this section a fresh and unexpected feeling.

The harmonic progression begins on D minor (i) and opens to $E^{7b9}$ ($V^{7b9}$) over five measures as it had in the intro, and then repeats this phrase once more. There is also the appearance of backup vocals for the first time that build into three-part harmony. The refrains also emphasize more top-heavy frequencies than the lower frequencies heard in the verses. The

section contains heavier treble from the vocal parts and the organ solo while having a more subdued bass line and sparse kick drum in the drum part. Compare this to the verses that emphasize lower frequencies from a more prominent bass line, kick drum and tom-toms, and at times a muted guitar.

Upon repetitions of the refrain there is a staggering of entrances in the vocal harmonies. In the first refrain the vocals enter on "heavy" on the fourth measure in two-part harmony that splits into three parts. In the second refrain the vocals enter on the third measure in two-part harmony singing "heavy." The organ in this refrain also develops and embellishes its chromatic scalar riff upon repeats to heighten the intensity and overall brightness of this section.

**Verses 2-4**

Upon repetition of the verses, further development and variance in the musical material occurs. The second verse begins with a smooth drum pattern with a snare hit on beat three that provides a more laid back groove. The lead guitar continues to double the vocal line throughout with occasional embellishments and will continue to do so for the remaining verses. There is also the addition of the organ playing chords throughout the section. Note how the A' phrase has the organ using the ½ step descending line in the middle voicing of the chords, moving from D - Db - C - B.

The third verse is instrumental only and has the lead guitar soloing throughout. Here, the lead guitar is playing an even more embellished version of the verses' vocal melody within an A-minor blues scale. This instrumental verse with lead guitar seems to be a flashback to "Something," where the instrumental verse there seemed to express the inner emotions of the singer. Here, the lead guitar appears to be doing something similar.

The drums in this instrumental verse continue to take on a more laid back feeling by only having snare hits on beats four now with slight accents on toms in a syncopated rhythm. The organ is still present in this verse but has embellished its harmonic role in the A phrase, where it outlines the ½ step descending line (A - Ab - G - Gb) in the chords' upper voice now. This same line is a direct reference to "Something" where the organ used the same pitches in the descending ½ step pattern at the ends of the verses in the song. This chromatic line is then transposed for the A' phrase where it appears again in the middle voice of the chords, moving from D - Db - C - B as it had done in verse two.

The fourth verse picks up the tempo with an almost jazzy groove to it, as if the weight of the track is growing more and more as it moves and builds towards its climactic outro. The lead guitar here takes on an even more dominant and independent role from the vocal melody as well. The vocals reach their climax in the last phrase of this section as Lennon screams "yeah" at the top of his lungs as if he can't take the angst of this longing any longer.

**Outro**

The outro is an extended development of the refrain and intro that totals three minutes in length, and cycles through nearly fifteen full repetitions of the five-measure phrase before it abruptly cuts to silence on the "& of 1" on the fifth measure of this phrase. The idea of using a short phrase length (five measures here) that repeats itself multiple times is a device that is used again in several songs on the second side of the album: the middle eight in "Here Comes The Sun," the outro in "You Never Give Me Your Money," the two-measure phrase structure in the verses of "Sun King," the repeated two-measure double plagal cadence in "Polythene Pam," and the repeated two-chord harmony that underlies the two-measure guitar solos heard in "The End."

Something interesting to note is how the ensemble transitions from the faster and more upbeat tempo of the fourth verse into this slower tempo in 6/8 for the outro. Like the other previous transitions from the 4/4 meter into the 6/8 meter, it seems The Beatles feel their way into the new tempo rather than have a constant rhythmic value carry over into the new meter. However, in this case it feels as if they have almost 'stumbled' into this outro as an ensemble, and takes them about three beats to regroup themselves to be in sync with one another. Specifically, it feels the arpeggios in the guitar part want to be just slightly ahead of Ringo's drum pattern at the start of the outro. Part of this might have come from the slight slowing down at the end of the last verse when they sing "She's so" which is followed by a brief pause of silence afterwards. Perhaps this might have made the adjustment to the new tempo in the outro a little tricky to nail precisely. Whether this was a fluke of the live recording process or not, I feel it adds a rougher and grittier character to this section, and I see the imperfections of recording a live performance to actually having their benefits in enhancing the song, rather than detracting from it.

Unlike the intro where both lead guitar, rhythm guitar and bass all took on different musical roles, here the lead guitar and bass double one another in playing the ominous bass line that was heard in the opening. Meanwhile, the rhythm guitar plays the same broken arpeggios as it had in both the intro and the refrain. As this section escalades through each repetition of the five-measure phrase Ringo's drums become louder and noisier through constant cymbal hits interjected only by short drum fills.

It is also interesting to note how the $A^{aug7}$ chord that appears in the last measure of this five-measure phrase gives a slight sense of relief as it functions as a dominant that does indeed, for the first time in the entire song, return to the tonic D-minor chord (i) when it repeats the

phrase. And yet, in the context of the ever-growing loop of this asymmetrical five-measure phrase there feels a sense of incompleteness as if the music is continuously reaching for something more but never quite gets there. The song actually ends on the dominant $A^{aug7}$ chord and thus never resolves itself. So while on the micro level of the five-measure loop it appears to resolve to the tonic, within the context of the outro section and the entire song for that matter, it actually does not resolve. This can serve a few purposes. Since it closes side one of the album, this 'incompleteness' lets the listener know that more music is to come. Also, this augmented chord in the context of the intro resolves to A minor rather unexpectedly at the beginning of the verse. In the outro it resolves into silence and the listener is left harmonically suspended and incomplete. However, when "Here Comes The Sun" begins in A major it is as if the $A^{aug7}$ chord found its home and pulls a similar move as it did in the intro where it resolves to A, but in "Here Comes The Sun" it resolves to A major instead of A minor. This technique of ending the song harmonically suspended is again another foreshadow of side two where a similar technique is used in "Because" which helps prepare the listener for the medley coming thereafter.

**Concluding Thoughts**

This song contains quite a few cross-references to other tracks. There is the use of the Neapolitan chord that comes back again in "Because" as well as in "Sun King." Also, the dichotomy of the key of D minor and A minor reflects a similar key relationship of a fifth that has occurred between three consecutive tracks seen on side one; the key of D major in "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," the key of A major in "Oh! Darling," and the key of E major in "Octopus's Garden." In this song, the battle between the two keys foreshadows a similar battle that occurs throughout the medley between the keys of C and A.

Other cross track references includes the use of the ½ step chromatic line. This is seen in both the organ part, where one of its lines was a direct copy from another ½ step line used in "Something," as well as the endings of the A and A' phrases in the verses. The C phrase in the verse also briefly includes the ½ step line heard in the bass as well. Lastly, having an instrumental section featuring a lead guitar solo seems to recall both "Something" and "Maxwell's Silver Hammer."

There is also something wonderful in the way in which this song seems to highlight and at times elevate many of the musical devices and motives heard thus far on the album. The use of call and response, uneven phrase and section lengths, the return of the ½ step chromatic line, and the ability to vary and develop the musical material upon repetitions of the verse and refrain sections have been used several times before this song, and will continue to resurface on the second side of the album as well.

## VII. Here Comes The Sun

**Dates Recorded:** July 7, 8, 16; August 6, 11, 15, 19; 1969
**Key:** A major
**Meter:** 4/4, 7/8 and 11/8 (mixed meters)
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**George Harrison:** vocals, backing vocals (double-tracked), acoustic guitar, harmonium, Moog synthesizer, handclaps
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals (double-tracked), bass, handclaps
**Ringo Starr:** drums, handclaps
**Orchestra:** two piccolos, two flutes, two alto flutes, two clarinets, four violas, four cellos, 1 double bass

**Form:**
Intro - Chorus -Verse - Chorus
Verse - Chorus - Middle Eight
Verse - Chorus - Chorus - Outro

### Overview

It was on a fresh spring day in Eric Clapton's garden when Harrison came to write "Here Comes The Sun." He explains:

> "Here Comes The Sun was written at the time when Apple was getting like school, where we had to go and be businessmen: 'Sign this' and 'Sign that'. Anyway, it seems as if winter in England goes on forever; by the time spring comes you really deserve it. So one day I decided I was going to sag off Apple and I went over to Eric Clapton's house. The relief of not having to go and see all those dopey accountants was wonderful, and I walked around the garden with one of Eric's acoustic guitars and wrote Here Comes The Sun."[44]

Perhaps of all of the tracks on *Abbey Road* "Here Comes The Sun" is the most rhythmically complex, and creates a kaleidoscope of rhythmic colors where shifting meters, heavy syncopation and cross rhythms play with the listeners' expectations. Asymmetry is present throughout the entire song as exemplified in uneven phrase lengths, changing meters, and unequal section lengths that continue to change and develop upon each repetition. These changes

[44] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, 339.

in meter, rhythm, and section lengths combined with instrumental layering, colors the song in an arrangement that is as bright and optimistic as the spring day in which it was written.

From the start of the track the music introduces rhythmic syncopation by beginning not on the downbeat of measure one but instead on beat two. For a moment the song feels as if it began in a 3/4 meter and switched to a 4/4 meter, and it takes until the end of the second measure to adjust as the rhythm settles into a more recognizable and steady pattern (see figure: 3.12). From just the intro and first chorus section alone the listener is introduced to two rhythmic ideas that are used and developed throughout the song. The first figure is a syncopated eighth/quarter/quarter motive that is first introduced in the guitar at the end of measure one, and appears in both the vocal line and instrumental accompaniment throughout the song. Often the third note of that motive can be shortened to an eighth note in length or extended. In any case the emphasis of weak beats is most certainly stressed throughout.




Figure 3.12: “Here Comes The Sun” – Introduction

The second rhythmic motive is a cross rhythm pattern consisting of various groupings of 3 + 2. The first appearance of this pattern is introduced at the end of the first chorus in the two-

measure guitar break as a 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 grouping; this takes place over two measures of 4/4. This pattern will continue to be developed and abbreviated throughout the song and exploited into greater detail in the middle eight section (see figure: 3.13).

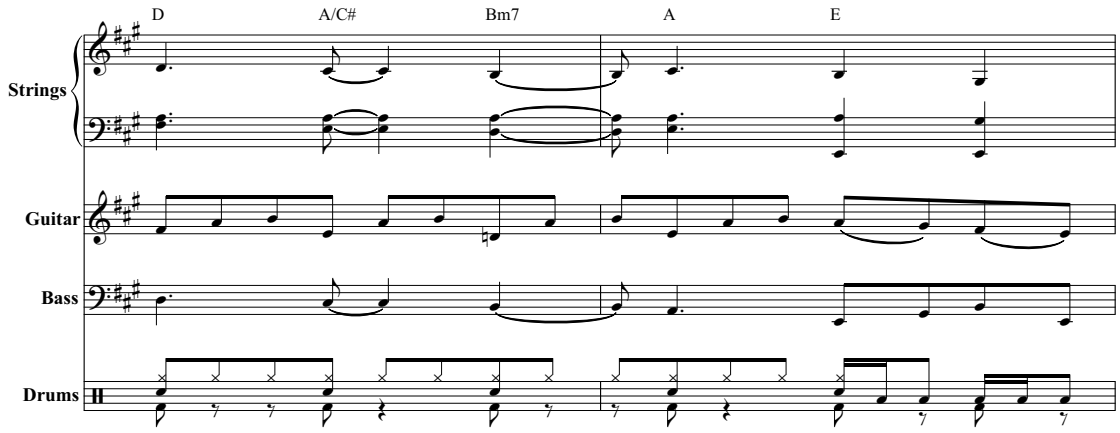



Figure 3.13: “Here Comes The Sun” - Guitar Break

Beyond the development of rhythmic motives are changes in the length of the chorus sections upon its repetitions. Each time the chorus appears in the song its section length changes. What begins with an initial seven measures in length extends into nine measures upon the second repetition. In the third iteration of the chorus the ninth measure leaves out one-eighth note to create a 7/8 measure. This 7/8 measure helps prepare the listener for the middle eight section’s asymmetrical metrical grouping and irregular eighth note patterns that follow. At the end of the song the chorus, with its initial seven measures in length, is placed back to back for its fourth and fifth iteration before leading into the outro. The outro serves as a summation of much of the rhythmic material presented in the song, where the rhythmic syncopations continue to appear along with the cross rhythms from the guitar break. It also includes a brief recap of the middle eight’s irregular grouping pattern of 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 to help conclude the song.

Coupled with the kaleidoscope of shifting rhythms, meters, and syncopation is the instrumental layering and orchestration of musical material that develops in the song, climaxing in the middle eight section. The use of a modified orchestra consisting of two piccolos, two flutes, two alto flutes, two clarinets and 0/4/4/1 strings creates an accompaniment that supports but doesn't dominate the acoustic guitar and light backing of drums and bass. The Moog synthesizer is also used in the song to double and color the vocal line while also providing counterpoint to the vocals heard in the middle eight and verse three sections.

The arrangement of the song has the instruments layer in through staggered entrances. The song begins with solo acoustic guitar with the synthesizer doubling the melody for the second half of the introduction. Strings enter upon the first chorus and carry through the rest of the song. They also provide a softer accompaniment for the acoustic guitar, vocals, and synthesizer to play over. The drums and bass enter at the end of the first chorus on the guitar break that helps pick up the energy and transition into the first verse. From here, much of the song remains in a rather homogenized texture until the middle eight section, where another orchestral build of staggered entrances occurs. It begins with acoustic guitar, bass and drums, and then adds in synthesizer, vocal harmonies, hand claps, and the orchestra upon further repetitions of the phrase "Sun, sun, sun, here it comes."

## In Depth Analysis – Here Comes The Sun

### Intro/Verses

Both the intro and the verses are eight measures long. The acoustic guitar begins the song on beat two and has the Moog doubling the guitar melody beginning in the second half of measure four. Starting with this simple orchestration not only helps set up the care-free and more

folk-like style of the song, but it allows the entrances of the rest of the ensemble at the end of the first chorus to sound fresh and pleasantly unexpected. The harmonic structure of the intro is the same for the verses. It uses a simple I - IV - V progression that forms a neat AA' structure (4 + 4). This simple harmonic progression helps contrast a more colorful harmonic sequence of descending fourths that is used in the middle eight section. Adding to this simplicity in the verses is the vocal melody which uses primarily an A-major pentatonic scale for its melodic lines.

Upon repetition of the verses there are developments in the orchestration. In verse two the synthesizer is layered in with a flute-like sound that mostly doubles the vocal melody. This is contrasted in verse three when the synthesizer presents a countermelody in its upper register as a continuation of its melodic line from the middle eight section. There is also variance in the vocal melody where the A phrase "little darling" has Harrison's voice double-tracked at the unison the first time, and has him singing in three–part harmony with himself the second time he sings "little darling" at the beginning of the A' phrase for the first two verses. The third verse has Harrison singing in three-part harmony for both repetitions of "little darling" to begin each of the A phrases.

**Choruses**

What is particularly novel about the chorus sections in "Here Comes The Sun" is the way in which it changes its length with each repetition, adding to the kaleidoscope of shifting rhythms and phrase structures. In each chorus there are always five measures of vocals singing "Here comes the sun" followed by a two-measure guitar break. After these initial seven measures the length of the chorus varies upon each repetition of itself. When the first chorus appears after the intro before the first verse it is presented in its simplest form of seven measures long, parsing into a 5 + 2 phrase structure. Harmonically the first phrase moves in a I – I - IV – V/V – I

progression, while the guitar break moves through a IV - $I^6$ - $ii^7$ - I - V progression, where each harmonic change occurs in the cross rhythm grouping of 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 over the two measures. Here, the dominant chord is played over the last 2 + 2 grouping of the cross rhythm. When the chorus comes back for the second time after the first verse it is extended by two measures to create a nine measures long section. The extra two measures added at the end of the chorus move to the dominant ($E^7$) and help transition back into the second verse. When the chorus appears for the third time, after the second verse and right before the middle eight, what would be the ninth measure of the chorus section becomes shortened by an eighth note resulting in a 7/8 measure parsed into 2 + 2 + 3 rhythmic groupings. This asymmetry helps prepare the listener for the middle eight's unstable meters while still harmonically ending on the dominant ($E^7$).

However, this 7/8 measure can be seen as an elision between the ending of the chorus section and the beginning of the middle eight section for a few reasons. First, this 7/8 musical material comes back in the middle eight at the end of each repetition of "Sun, sun, sun, here it comes," making the musical material in the measure feel as if it belongs with the middle eight. Additionally, the two-quarter note rhythmic hits that begin this 7/8 measure could also be interpreted as a rhythmic break from the backbeat groove of the chorus and the start of something new (the middle eight). However, the harmony in this 7/8 measure sustains the dominant ($E^7$) which seems to suggest that this measure still belongs to the chorus since that section ends on the dominant every time. Thus, this 7/8 measure seems to elide the two sections while also preparing the listener for the changing meters and irregular eighth note groupings in the middle eight.

Another important aspect of the chorus is the guitar break that follows the vocals that sing "it's alright." This cross rhythm of 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 plays over two 4/4 measures with the final two beats of the second measure balancing out the asymmetrical pattern by steadying the beat back into an even groove. This cross rhythm develops further in the middle eight section when this irregular pattern turns into a combination of 11/8 + 4/4 + 7/8 meters.

**Middle Eight**

The middle eight begins with the 7/8 measure on an $E^7$ chord that parses into a 2 + 2 + 3 grouping and prepares the listener for the upcoming 11/8 meter of "Sun, sun, sun, here it comes." The structure for the middle eight consists of three phrases that are grouped into an 11/8 + 4/4 + 7/8 meter that repeats itself six times in total (see figure: 3.14). The 11/8 measure contains a diminution of the cross rhythm of the guitar break and falls into a 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 rhythm. The harmony in this 11/8 measure is also something new, containing a sequence of chords in descending fourths that move from C - G - D - A, before ending on an $E^7$ to repeat the phrase structure again. Interestingly enough, this same progression is used in the re-transition of "A Day In The Life" to move from the middle eight section back into its final verse. This sequence could also be interpreted as a triple-plagal cadence that moves from $^{b}$III - $^{b}$VII - IV - I. The 7/8 measure that ends the cycle parses into the same rhythmic grouping of the 7/8 measure that elided the chorus with the middle eight, 2 + 2 + 3. A 4/4 measure is placed in between the two asymmetrical measures of this section that helps provide a moment of rhythmic stability before the cycle repeats itself again. Upon the sixth iteration of this structure, the 7/8 measure is left out and instead is replaced by four measures of 4/4 that help stabilize the rhythm and transition back into the verse. The harmony here stands on the dominant ($E^7$) and prepares for the arrival of tonic in the last verse.




Figure 3.14: “Here Comes The Sun” - Middle Eight (First Half)

The orchestration of the middle eight is one that continues to build as it extends its range higher and higher, as if the sun is emerging from behind the clouds and is shining brighter. The first iteration of the cycle contains no vocals, with the remaining vocal iterations growing from one to three-part harmony by the end of the 11/8 measure. Upon entering the third repetition of the phrase structure the synthesizer enters and begins moving upwards of four octaves over the course of the remaining cycles which, by the sixth repetition, results in a softening or purifying of its timbre that perhaps is derived from a sawtooth wave. Also beginning in the third cycle is the addition of syncopated handclaps that are added in.

As the middle eight continues to build there is a certain sense of unpredictability as to when it might end and where it might be headed towards next. In that sense this seems to bear a resemblance to the coda of “I Want You (She’s So Heavy).” When the middle eight finishes its

sixth iteration and moves to the re-transition phrase the wind section of the orchestra builds itself up higher and higher in range into an $E^7$ chord until the song makes its return back into the final verse.

**Outro**

After the final verse the chorus makes an appearance twice more before leading into the outro that is five measures total in length (see figure: 3.15). The outro is unique in how it briefly recaps some of the primary musical material from the song and provides a conclusive resolution. It combines one measure of the syncopated ending from the chorus sections ("It's alright"), followed by two measures of the guitar break and ends with a two measure recap of the 11/8 measure of the middle eight, which resolves this time successfully on the tonic A major. The use of solo guitar in the final two measures here seems to mirror the instrumentation of the intro, while also harmonically recapping the descending fourths sequence from the middle eight of the triple-plagal cadence. This quasi-plagal ending seems to flashback to the more traditional IV - I plagal cadence that ended "Maxwell's Silver Hammer."




Figure 3.15: "Here Comes The Sun" – Outro

**Concluding Thoughts**

"Here Comes The Sun" seems very appropriate to have been the starting track for side two of the album. Not only does it provide optimistic relief coming from the emotional intensity of "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," but its use of cross rhythms and uneven phrase lengths seem to provide a foundation that many of the songs on side two will reference. The cross rhythm groupings of 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 and the variations of this rhythm contained in "Here Comes The Sun" will appear not only in "Because" but several other songs contained in the medley: "You Never Give Me Your Money," "Carry That Weight" and "The End." Thus, the medley is not only a self-contained structure that references itself throughout the eight tracks, but it also continues to place itself within the larger context of the album by referencing familiar techniques and musical ideas heard on earlier tracks of the album.

# VIII. Because

**Dates Recorded:** August 1, 4, 5; 1969
**Key:** C# minor
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**John Lennon:** vocals, lead guitar
**Paul McCartney:** vocals, bass
**George Harrison:** vocals, Moog synthesizer
**George Martin:** electric spinet (harpsichord)
**Form:**
Intro – 'Mini-Bridge' – Verse – 'Mini-Bridge' – Verse
Full Bridge – Verse – 'Mini-Bridge' – Outro (includes 'Mini-Bridge' at end)

## Overview

"Because" seems to defy any stylistic category of rock, pop, jazz or rhythm and blues. Instead, what is achieved is something transcendental that feels endless, circular, and simply breathtaking. The highlight of the song is the vocal harmonies that are sung in a consistent three-part texture that was arranged by George Martin. Martin describes his involvement in structuring the song:

> "'Because,' for example, was very much a John song, but it needed the combined singing of the three men [excluding Ringo], so obviously it became a joint effort. Between us we also created a backing with John playing a riff on guitar, me duplicating every note on an electronic harpsichord, and Paul playing bass.
>
> Each note between the guitar and harpsichord had to be exactly together, and as I'm not the world's greatest player in terms of timing I would make more mistakes than John did, so we had Ringo playing a regular beat on hi-hat to us through our headphones. We had no drum machines in those days, so Ringo was our drum machine.
>
> After that the three boys sang the whole song together in harmony, and then we overlaid another three voices and then another three voices, so we had a nine-part harmony all the way through."[45]

[45] Buskin, *Inside Tracks*, 65.

Perhaps some of the most unique aspects of "Because" is its emphasis of vocals, harmony, and texture. As described from Martin, "Because" features vocal harmonies recorded three-times over to create a lush and thick nine-person choral ensemble that beautifully juxtaposes the sparse, bright, and rhythmically static arpeggio accompaniment of the electric harpsichord doubling electric guitar. With a bass line that also mostly doubles the left hand of the harpsichord to help sustain notes throughout and no presence of drums, the minimal accompaniment for the song creates a space that highlights the vocal ensemble as a tour de force. In fact, because of the amount of doublings in the accompaniment there never appears to be more than two independent parts going on at once between the vocals and the accompaniment. Even in the outro section where the synthesizer solos over the arpeggio accompaniment, it is used antiphonally with the voices so that they never compete with one another, and any overlap between the voice and the synthesizer always has the synthesizer simply sustaining notes while the voices sing above it.

Another notable aspect of "Because" is the theme of circularity. Adding to the circular and revolving-like arpeggio accompaniment and melodic lines that continuously swell up and down are the harmonies that seem to mimic this sense of circularity as well. Often they are left unresolved or deceptively lead into unexpected and chromatic harmony that continues to touch upon the tonic briefly, only to wander off again and ultimately leave the song suspended and unresolved.

There is a wide use of harmonic color in this song. Traditional harmonies used consist of the i, ii half dim.$^{7}$, IV, V, and VI chord. However, what colors "Because" in such striking ways are the variety of uses of the second scale degree. There is the traditional ii half dim.$^{7}$ chord built on the second scale degree that appears as a D# half dim.$^{7}$ chord. But the more adventurous and

also ambiguous use in which The Beatles manipulate the second scale degree is through the $^{b}$II Neapolitan chord. The first entrance of this D major chord is heard after the intro and before the first verse, when the vocals enter singing "Ah." This 'mini-bridge' section appears between the verses in the song and develops later on into a full bridge section. Not only is the $^{b}$II scale degree used to build the Neapolitan chord here but it is also used to build two fully diminished seventh chords in the song as well. In both instances where the diminished seventh chord is built on 'D,' the chord is enharmonically spelled to resolve differently each time.

Like in "Here Comes The Sun," "Because" layers its instruments through staggered entrances and makes use of instrumental doublings that continue to add a sense of space in the song. Beginning with electric harpsichord the electric guitar enters at measure five doubling the arpeggios and remains in sync with the harpsichord for the remainder of the song. The vocals and bass guitar enter in measure nine upon the vocals singing "Ah," with the bass mostly doubling the left hand bass notes of the harpsichord. The synthesizer is saved for the full bridge.

The lyrics in "Because" also match the ambiguity and circularity of the harmonies in the song. The structure of the lyrics in the verses seems to revolve back around to itself in a circular-like manner. Each verse begins with a personified lyric that creates a neat ABA-like lyric structure, where there is a return of the opening line to conclude the ending of each verse: for example, "Because the world is round, it turns me on/Because the world is round."

As music theorist Walter Everett points out, there is a wonderful word play that occurs in the verses where the verb that is used to describe the emotions felt by the singer carries a double meaning with the description of the image. Everett writes: "a second meaning of the word "turn" follows the word "round." The second verse reinterprets "blows" following "wind," and the third

verse provides a double meaning for "blue" with "cry."[46] Furthermore, Everett points out the shifting perspectives that are contained in the lyrics, where "each verse alternates an external appearance with its effect on the composer's psyche."[47]

## In Depth Analysis – Because

### Intro

The eight measure intro begins with an arpeggio texture in the electric harpsichord that remains constant throughout the entire song, allowing the ends of its phrases to suspend its notes on the '& of 2' to help create brief pauses between sections. The arpeggios parse into a 3 + 3 + 2 grouping that recalls similar patterns used in "Here Comes The Sun." With an AB phrase structure of 4 + 4 the intro begins the A phrase on C# minor (i) and moves through the ii half dim.$^{7}$ chord before landing on the dominant by the end of the phrase. The B phrase in measure five begins with a deceptive cadence on A major (VI) and by the end of the phrase has turned that chord into an $A^{7(13)}$ chord which seems to lift the song up and out of C# minor momentarily (see figure: 3.16).

[46] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 260.

[47] Ibid, 260.




Figure 3.16: "Because" - Intro + Mini-Bridge

**Mini-Bridge**

With the arrival of the vocals singing "Ah" on the Neapolitan chord (D) in addition to the entrance of the bass playing suspended notes, the song seems to open up into a brighter landscape painted through new harmonic colors and timbres. The two-measure 'mini-bridge', a label musicologist Alan W. Pollack uses and one that I prefer to use as well, begins as if the song has modulated to the key of D major. The $A^{7(13)}$ chord that ended the intro seems to function like a V in the key of D. However, through ½ step chromatic voice leading in the vocal lines the harmony slides its way down from D major into a G#dim.$^{7}$ (4/3 inversion) chord that deceptively resolves into the home key of C# minor at the start of the verse.

**Verses**

As seen in "Octopus's Garden," "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" and "Here Comes The Sun," the verses contain the same harmonic structure of the intro, with the addition of vocals singing lyrics. It is parsed like the intro into two phrases that make an AB structure of 4 + 4. What is interesting about the mini-bridge is its relationship to the verses and its role in potentially being both an independent section as well as belonging to the verses. In the later case it would then extend the verse sections to being ten measures in length instead of eight.

The first time the mini-bridge appears after the intro it seems it could be the beginning of the verse because of the quasi "V - I" cadence from the $A^{7(13)}$ chord that ended the intro section and its resolution into the D major (Neapolitan) chord in the next measure. In this case, when the word "Because" enters for the first time at the start of the first verse it feels as if it is a continuation of a phrase, as if it had started in mid sentence and belonged to something that came before it. Ironically enough the word it enters on begins with "Because," as if the singers had already been speaking!

However, later on when the mini-bridge reappears at the ends of the verses, which end once again on the $A^{7(13)}$ chord as it had in the intro, it feels as if the mini-bridge is now concluding the verse as an afterthought and preparing for an arrival back on tonic at the start of the next verse. Thus, it appears that the function or role of the mini-bridge seems to help elide sections together, and yet is significant and memorable enough to be developed later on to become its own section for the full bridge. This technique of eliding sections together also occurred in the previous song "Here Comes The Sun," and will resurface again in the medley in "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" as well as "Carry That Weight."

Something else to note about the verses are the way in which the vocal lines remain in a thick three-part texture throughout the entire song. This can make it difficult to pinpoint what the main vocal melody is. Moments where the vocal ensemble breaks away from this homogenized texture are at the ends of phrases where the top voice sings an embellished melisma to decorate the vocal texture briefly.

**Full Bridge**

The full bridge is six measures long and can be seen as an extension of the mini-bridge. This section comes as a surprise when what seems to start off the same way as a mini-bridge actually develops into something new. By taking the previous G#dim.$^{7}$ chord that concluded the mini-bridge and enharmonically spelling it to an E# dim.$^{7}$ (6/5 inversion) chord, the bridge resolves not to C# minor as the listener has come to expect from the verses but instead resolves into an F# major chord (IV). Coincidentally, the new lyrics in this section which begin with the word "new," as in "Love is old, love is new," land on this fresh IV chord to create a subtle level of word painting. It is also on this word "new" where the synthesizer enters for the first time using a brass-like patch to punctuate the texture by doubling the arpeggio pattern with the guitar and harpsichord. The section concludes with a half cadence on V which is the only time any section has cadenced on the G# major chord in the entire song. This provides a satisfactory sense of arrival on the tonic at the start of the third verse and helps delineate the bridge section, and mini-bridge section for that matter, as something separate from the verses.

**Outro**

The eight-measure outro contains the same harmonic structure as the verses and is sandwiched between two mini-bridges, both of which have been embellished melodically through melismatic vocal lines. The outro alternates every two measures in an antiphonal pattern

between the synthesizer, which is playing fragments of the verses' melody, and the vocals that are singing embellished fragments of the verses' melody using the vowel sound "Ah." Thus, the outro seems to provide a unifying conclusion to the end of the song by combining the wordless vocals from the mini-bridge and overlapping it with the harmonic structure of the verses. Meanwhile the synthesizer, which had only played in the bridge, now plays fragments of the verses' melody as well.

The last chord of the song is the same G#dim.$^{7}$ chord that ended the mini-bridge and leaves the song open ended and unresolved as if the piece could continue on in an endless loop if it wanted to. This technique seems to recall the same way in which "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" left the track unfinished on an augmented chord. Like that song this ending serves a few purposes. Leaving the listener in this suspended state supports the circularity and endlessness quality of the track. Concluding on a tonic here would have been out of place for the character of the song, since the essence of the song focuses more on asking questions instead of delivering a conclusive answer. Additionally, the function of this diminished seventh chord sets the listener up perfectly for the start of the medley by resolving into the Am$^{7}$ chord that begins the next track in "You Never Give Me Your Money."

**Concluding Thoughts**

There is an interesting parallel between "Because" and Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" that should be noted which helped inspire the song. Lennon was listening to Yoko Ono play the piece one day and asked her to play the chords backwards. He recalls:

> "Yoko was playing Moonlight Sonata on the piano. She was classically trained. I said, 'Can you play those chords backward?' and wrote Because around them. The lyrics speak for themselves; they're clear. No bullshit. No imagery, no obscure references."[48]

[48] Sheff, *All We are Saying*, 191.

Both pieces are in the same key of C# minor and both are in a slow tempo. They each contain a Neapolitan chord that is prepared by an A major chord (VI) preceding it, and both feature a repeating arpeggio accompaniment that is consistent throughout the entire piece.

## 4. Medley Overview

The Beatles had never achieved a musical feat like the medley before *Abbey Road,* but experiments with larger scale forms and relating tracks to one another on an album had been explored previously. *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967)* is the most comparable Beatles album to have attempted a large-scale form. The first two tracks of that album, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" followed by "With A Little Help From My Friends" are segued together so that one flows seamlessly into the other. A similar transitional device was also used for the last three tracks of the album as well, where "Good Morning, Good Morning" segues into the reprise of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" which segues into "A Day In The Life." This last track seems to function as a coda to the album as well.

The opening track for that album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" is in the key of G major and ends on a $IV^7$ ($C^7$) chord, leaving the track unfinished as it moves right into "With A Little Help From My Friends" where the $C^7$ chord that ended the first track becomes a $^{b}VI^{b7}$ in the new key of E major. One feels a sense of completion between the two tracks when the second song ends conclusively on the tonic E-major chord. Upon the reprise of the opening track at the end of the album it begins in the key of F major but halfway through modulates back to its original key of G major, thus relating back to the first track by using the same key as well as similar musical material. This time the reprise of the song concludes in the key of G that provides a resolution to the harmonic suspension that had ended the opening track. "A Day In The Life" seems to sum up both of the keys that were presented in the first two opening tracks. It continues in the key of G major where the reprise of Sgt. Pepper had ended and modulates to the key of E major in its middle section, referencing the key of "With a Little Help From My Friends." In returning to its final verse it modulates back to G major. However, after a twenty-

four measure orchestral glissando the song ends at the last minute on an E major chord, just as "With A Little Help From My Friends" had.

In some ways the medley achieves a similar harmonic unity and relationship between its opening track "You Never Give Me Your Money" and the final three tracks of the medley: "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight" and "The End." These tracks relate to the opening track of the medley through references to previous musical material such as melodies, rhythms, and keys. The play between G major and E major seen between the first two tracks on Sgt. Pepper's album as well as the albums last two tracks, seem to parallel the same back and forth movement between the keys of A major (and at times A minor) and C major in the medley on *Abbey Road*. However, the medley expands the idea of interconnectivity between the tracks further than Sgt. Pepper's album by having this harmonic battle between the two keys continue throughout most of the medley's songs, rather than being saved only for the final tracks on the album. This duality between the keys of C and A also occurs within the same songs in the medley, rather than just between songs, and can be seen in "You Never Give Me Your Money," "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight," and "The End."

Despite the fact that many of the fragments of songs in the medley were written before the Abbey Road sessions, there are several ways in which the medley holds itself together as a complete work beyond just references to the keys of A and C. Cross track references also continue to be present throughout the medley, relating back to musical material presented in both the medley and on the album as well. The most noticeable of these references is the reprise of the first track "You Never Give Me Your Money" that occurs in "Carry That Weight." Here, the B

section of “Carry That Weight” references the opening section of the first track, in addition to recapping the outro of that earlier track in the outro of “Carry That Weight.”

Both the cross rhythm motive and the ½ step chromatic line return in the medley, as well as a new rhythmic motive that is introduced. This new syncopated motive consists of a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note that is usually tied to another note, often another dotted quarter note. This is first introduced in the solo piano accompaniment in the intro of the first track “You Never Give Me Your Money,” and appears on a few other tracks in the medley; “Sun King,” “Golden Slumbers,” “Carry That Weight,” and “The End.” In each of these songs the motive appears in a musically significant way. In “Golden Slumbers” it appears in the chorus section where the ensemble punctuates the rhythm underneath McCartney’s sustained and powerful vocals. In “Carry That Weight” there is a reprise of “You Never Give Me Your Money” in its middle section and the outro section that also utilizes the syncopated motive. In “The End” the accompaniment during the middle section plays the syncopated motive while the three guitarists take turns soloing over it.

Other cross track references in the medley that help unify the songs includes the way in which the songs begin. Like the Sgt. Peppers album had done, the medley makes extensive use of segueing tracks together to create a sense of continuity and unity between the songs. The transitions between songs often use a pickup measure to elide two tracks together. In particular there is a two beat drum fill that is used between “Sun King” and “Mean Mr. Mustard,” as well as between “Golden Slumbers” and “Carry That Weight” which is nearly identical. There is also a double plagal cadence that permeates “Polythene Pam” and features a guitar solo playing over these chords in its outro. This seems to develop further in “The End” when all three guitarists take turns soloing while a similar two measure cadential figure of $A^7$ - $D^7$ plays underneath.

In looking at the way in which the songs are constructed and developed, it appears that in general the medley favors shorter musical ideas and statements that rely on the repetition of musical phrases, chords, and melodies to help create a sense of unity within a single track. In doing so the construction of these smaller forms help construct the larger form of the song. The Beatles often use a sort of musical 'tiling' device to help construct phrases or sections of a song. Often a short phrase of two-measures or more is repeated and juxtaposed against other short 'musical tiles' that help makeup the larger section. This device had been used earlier on in the album, as seen in the repetition of the one-measure vamp in "Come Together," as well as in the middle eight section of "Here Comes The Sun" with the repeating three-measure loop of "Sun, sun, sun, here it comes." In the medley this device is used in the outro in "You Never Give Me Your Money," the two-measure phrase structure in the verses of "Sun King," the two-measure ending phrases in "Mean Mr. Mustard," the repeated two-measure double plagal cadence in "Polythene Pam," the two-measure phrase structures in the verses of "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," and the repeated two-measure pattern of $A^7$ - $D^7$ during the guitar solos heard in "The End."

The lyrics for the medley are often in the third person and describe a narrative about someone, rather than using the singular "I" to reference themselves directly. Narratives like this are seen in "Sun King," "Mean Mr. Mustard," "Polythene Pam," and "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window." This perspective shifts by the end of the medley when The Beatles seem to address the audience (the fans) directly in the last song "The End." Here the emphasis is placed on 'you,' as in "Are you gonna be in my dreams tonight," as well as the chanting of "Love you" in the middle section of the same song.

Walter Everett also makes a very interesting connection between the underlying themes of the text and their association to the keys of C and A:

> "The juxtaposition of the tonal centers of A and C seems to be a central concern, and certainly a clue exists in "Golden Slumbers," wherein a desire to find a way home is sung in A minor, and the consequence of the return, a lullaby, is set in C major; thus, A contains tension, and C repose.
>
> Much of the poetic text of the medley deals with selfishness and self-gratification - the financial complaints in "You Never Give Me Your Money," the miserliness of Mr. Mustard, the holding back of the pillow in "Carry That Weight," the desire that some second person will visit the singer's dreams – perhaps the "one sweet dream" of "You Never Give Me Your Money"? – in "The End." These selfish moments are all set in the context of the tonal center of A. Generosity is expressed in the comfort offered in "Golden Slumbers"; in "Carry That Weight," the group can be heard to admonish the singer to stop being so selfish – recall McCartney's preoccupation with his personal financial difficulties. These are the points where C major is central.
>
> A great compromise in the "negotiations" is finally achieved in the equation of "The End." Apparently McCartney has understood the repeated C-major choruses, because he comes to the earth-shaking realization that there is only as much self-gratifying love ("the love you take"), that of A major, as there is of the generous kind ("the love you make"), that of C major."[49]

**Organization Of Medley Into Four Movements**

One possibility of looking at the overall formal structure of the medley could be to organize the tracks into four movements. These movements are classified by each song's formal structures, track lengths, harmonic layout, and the way in which each song ends and transitions to the next. In doing so, it seems the tracks can be divided into four sections or movements that make up the medley.

The first track "You Never Give Me Your Money" is the longest song in the medley, weighing in at 4:03 seconds and contributes to about 25% of the medley's overall length. It contains three non-repeating sections that outline the key schemes of A minor, C major and A

[49] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 271.

major which introduces most of the keys that will be used in the medley. While the song does end on an A major chord it cross fades into "Sun King" and leaves the listener with a somewhat incomplete feeling. This works in the medley's favor by supporting the larger structure of the work rather than closing itself off to feel like another individualized Beatles' song heard previously.

The second movement consists of the next track "Sun King," a dreamy slower tempo song that also contains a more self-enclosed structure (ABA) that begins and ends in the key of E major; the dominant key of the preceding track. With a track length of 2:26 seconds it takes up about 15% of the medley's total time. While the track concludes on the tonic E major, the transition from this song into the next is quick and is achieved by a two beat drum fill that leads right into "Mean Mr. Mustard."

The third movement consists of "Mean Mr. Mustard," "Polythene Pam," and "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," which equals about 4:25 seconds total, roughly 25% of the total medley's length. The length of the first two songs roughly equals the length of the third song which helps provide a sense of forward motion and a larger formal arc within this movement. Additionally, the rather fragmented structures of the first two songs allows the third song's repeating verse-middle eight structure feel more satisfying and conclusive rather than fragmentary. The first two tracks seem to build momentum as they move towards the third track that begins with a climactic opening that seems to release the tension built from the preceding two songs. With the first two tracks of this set being in the key of E major, the dominant to the key of A major, and segueing into the next tracks continuously, the medley feels a slight sense of conclusion as the last track "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" begins and ends on its tonic A major chord and does not immediately segue into the next song.

The fourth movement consists of the last three tracks of the medley "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight," and "The End" which weighs in at approximately 5:45 seconds in length, and makes this movement the longest of them all, about 35% of the medleys' total length. Like the third movement, the first two tracks of this set continue into the next and builds momentum towards the grand finale of "The End." This movement begins with the quiet opening of "Golden Slumbers" and increases its energy through "Carry That Weight," and explodes into a rocking final number in "The End" that contains the largest amount of instrumental solos on the entire album. This movement also serves the role of a reprise where both "Golden Slumbers" and "Carry That Weight" recap moments of the opening track "You Never Give Me Your Money." All three of these songs contain modulations, or tonicizations, between A major/minor and C major, and in "The End" at the last moment the key of C major concludes the medley.

# 5. Analysis Of Individual Tracks – Medley Songs

## I. You Never Give Me Your Money

**Dates Recorded:** May 6, July 1, 11, 15, 30, 31; August 5; 1969
**Key:** A minor - C major - A major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals (multi-tracked), backing vocals, bass, piano, chimes, tape loops
**John Lennon:** backing vocals, guitar
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, guitar (via Leslie speaker)
**Ringo Starr:** drums, tambourine

**Form:**
Three Part form (through composed)

### Overview

> "This was me directly lambasting Allen Klein's attitude to us: no money, just funny paper, all promises and it never works out. It's basically a song about no faith in the person, that found its way into the medley on Abbey Road. John saw the humour in it."[50]
> –Paul McCartney

While the first section of the song seems to reference The Beatles' monetary state of affairs, the later sections seem to flashback to that "magic feeling" of the early days of their stardom where "One sweet dream came true." The song is through composed into three parts with each section delivering new timbres, textures, lyrics, and harmonies that help distinguish one section from another. The only other Beatles song that seems to have been through composed would be Lennon's "Happiness Is A Warm Gun." This formal structure is an interesting way to begin the medley since this song in and of itself seems to be a sort of mini-medley, with each section containing musical material that could have evolved into its own song. Yet in this case each section merely presents a fragment of a song that uses repetition of phrases and harmonic sequences to help establish some sense of unity within each section.

[50] Miles, *Many Years from Now*, 556.

There are a few musical elements that do provide some overall cohesiveness to the song. There is the theme of money that runs throughout the lyrics in each section, with McCartney singing the lead vocals for the entire song. Musically, there is the syncopated rhythmic motive of a dotted quarter followed by an eighth note that is usually tied to another note. This is first introduced in part one in both the introduction and the start of the vocal verse when McCartney sings "money" in the opening phrase "You never give me your money" (see figure: 4.1). In part two, this motive appears in the bass guitar's rhythm in the second half of the section "But oh, that magic feeling." In part three it also appears in the second half of the section ("Came true, today") in the bass guitar which plays underneath the vocals, as well as in the bass line in the outro section.




Figure 4.1: "You Never Give Me Your Money" - First Vocal Verse

In looking at the key schemes of the three sections there is a unifying ABA' effect that happens where the pitch 'A' serves as the tonic in both part one (A minor) and part three (A major), with the relative key of C major sandwiched in between for the middle section. Adding to this is a harmonic recap of the keys of A major and C major that occurs in the second half of part three, where the repeating chord progression of C - G - A sums up the two main keys of the song. This summing up of the keys of A and C not only serves as a unifying factor for this song, but foreshadows much of the medley's harmonic schemes as well.

Apart from the few unifying ideas presented in the song, each section is quite distinguished from one another through unequal section lengths, varying harmonic progressions, and different orchestrations for each section. In looking at the harmonic layout of each section there is an interesting trajectory that occurs that seems to have the harmonies overall moving towards a more embellished and colorful harmonic palette by the end of the song. Part one is entirely based upon a diatonic sequence of fifths. Part two breaks down into two subsections. The first section contains many secondary dominants that color the harmony, while the second subsection emphasizes a double plagal cadence of Bb - F - C. Part three begins with a harmonic sequence of minor thirds that outlines a diminished seventh chord, creating a rich and chromatic opening to the last section. This is then followed by a verse that begins with a I - V/V - $^{b}$III progression to enhance the harmonic color further.

The orchestration and layering of the instruments also helps distinguish each section from one another. Part one consists of solo piano and light guitar playing for the introduction, with accented cymbal hits and suspended bass notes for the vocals' verses. Part two picks up the tempo with drums playing in a heavier style which is supported by a strumming pattern in the guitar, and an active and bluesy piano part that is akin to a sort of 'boogie woogie' bass line that

doubles with the bass guitar. The second half of part two lightens up with the drumming and brings in three-part vocal harmonies that are heard for the first time in the song. Part three is the heaviest and most rock section of the entire song, and has the entire ensemble of rhythm guitar, double-tracked lead guitar, piano, bass, drums, and vocals (double-tracked) playing together. Two-part vocal harmonies are also present in the outro section. The track then begins a slow fade out into nature sounds as the medley moves into "Sun King."

## In Depth Analysis – You Never Give Me Your Money

### Part One

Part one is twenty-four measures in length and consists of eight-measure long phrases that are repeated three times. The first time serves as an introduction with only piano and light guitar, while the second time adds vocals and in the third repetition bass and light drums are added. The harmonic progression for each phrase moves through a diatonic sequence of fifths in root position: $Am^7$ - $Dm^7$ - $G^7$ - C - $F^{maj7}$ - Bm dim.$^7$ - $E^7$ - Am. This type of sequence using fifths has been used previously in an abbreviated form in "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" as well as "Here Comes The Sun," except in the latter song the harmony had descended through fourths in its middle eight section. Helping to color the diatonic progression are occasional sevenths added to several of the chords, in addition to appoggiaturas that occur on the downbeats in the vocal melody. The melodic line contains mostly stepwise motion downward with triadic leaps concluding each end of the two phrases. Upon the second verse McCartney sings in two-part harmony with himself in thirds. Note how when McCartney sings "funny paper" automatic

double-tracking is used, with tape echo also being applied on "break down" at the end of the section.[51]

Also to note is the syncopated quarter dot/eighth note rhythm that permeates most of the piano part here. It is also heard in the vocal lines in measure two and eight, the bass lines in measures two, four, and eight, and highlighted further through cymbal accents from Ringo throughout the remaining section. Ending this first part is a pivot modulation where G major (VII) serves as V in the new key of C major leading into part two.

**Part Two**

While the tempo of this section remains the same from the first section, a shift to a new key, musical texture, and quicker harmonic rhythm of two chords per measure helps set this section immediately apart from its predecessor. Part two consists of two subsections (AB) that contrast one another and divide into unequal proportions, with the A subsection equaling eight measures in length and the B subsection equaling fifteen measures total. The A subsection ("Outta college, money spent") consists of two AA' phrases (4 + 4) that utilize two sequences containing secondary dominants (V/vi - vi; V/IV - IV) before achieving a V - I cadence by the end of each phrase.

The B subsection ("But oh that magic feeling") consists of five repetitions of a three-measure phrase that uses the double plagal cadence of Bb - F - C, drawing similar parallels to the descending fourths in the middle eight section of "Here Comes The Sun." The harmonic rhythm in this section also lends itself to a feeling of slowing down since it shifts from two chords per measure to only one. However, the growing repetition of the asymmetrical three-measure phrase builds anticipation and will pick up its overall harmonic pace in part three.

[51] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 261.

The vocal line of the phrases in the A subsection follows an overall melodic sequence of skipping down a third and then stepping up, and continues its way down until it arrives at the end of the phrase on $E^4$, one octave lower than where it began. The B subsection has its melodic lines using more stepwise movement that has an overall ascending motion. Rhythmically speaking, note the guitar's textural accompaniment here that groups notes into patterns of three, which seems to subtly recall the cross rhythms in "Here Comes The Sun." This section also features Harrison's lead guitar run through the Leslie speaker to add to this "magic feeling" by providing a chime-like sound that shimmers throughout the mix.

**Part Three**

Similar to the transition from part one into part two, part three continues the same tempo as before but is distinguished by a rather dissonant seven measure harmonic progression parsed into a 3 + 4 phrase structure that serves as an introduction into the final verse section. Like part two, part three breaks down into two subsections (AB). The introduction of this section begins with a guitar solo that is mostly doubled by both the lead and rhythm guitar. It is only the last few notes of each phrase where the two guitars break away from this unison doubling and split into two-part counterpoint via contrary motion (see figure: 4.2).




Figure 4.2: "You Never Give Me Your Money" - Introduction To Part Three

The ending of the part two section elides with the beginning of the part three section on the tonic C major chord. These seven introductory-like measures in part three function as a transition that leads into the verse of this section. The first three measures still belong to C major as the harmony moves in a I - $V^7$/V - $^{b}III^{b7}$ - $V^7$ - I progression that ends on measure four.

The remaining four measures of this introduction begin a harmonic cycle of minor thirds that outlines a diminished chord on its downbeats (C - Eb - Gb - A). Coupled with this are the guitar solos that use a short musical figure to sequence higher until the arrival of the A subsection of part three, where the key of A major proves victorious over C major. Also in the last measure of this introduction is an appearance of the ½ step chromatic line that has been used throughout the album. Here, the line is used to help transition from the introduction into the verse section, where both guitars playing in parallel sixths with one another ascend through half steps

to arrive in the key of A major. Specifically, guitar I plays C# - D - D# - E while guitar II plays Bb - B – B# – C#.

The A subsection ("One sweet dream") consists of three phrases broken down into 4 + 2 + 1½. The first four measures of this section are a transposed version of the opening measures of the introduction of part three. The second phrase ("Soon we'll be away from here") begins on a minor iv chord that moves through $^{b}$VII (G) before it arrives back on A major. The beginning of the first phrase is repeated again ("One sweet dream") but for only 1½ measures this time before leading into the B subsection.

The B subsection consists of a two-measure phrase "Came true, today" that begins on a C major chord and passes through a G/B chord before arriving on A major in the second measure. Meanwhile, the bass line punctuates the syncopated dotted quarter/eighth motive in the first measure of this phrase. The phrase repeats four times before entering an outro section that takes the same two-measure phrase and loops it nearly fourteen times until the track fades out and "Sun King" fades in (see figure: 4.3). This mosaic patterning of repeating small phrase lengths will also be seen in the next track, and also recalls both "Come Together" and "Here Comes The Sun" which utilized a similar technique. After the fourth repetition of this phrase the lead vocals drop out and in its place is the chant "One, two, three, four, five, six seven/All good children go to heaven" in a steady rhythm that seems to highlight the rhythm guitar's accompaniment that groups a similar stream of eighth notes into a subtle cross rhythm of a 3 + 5 + 4 grouping. Later in the medley when this outro returns for its brief reprise in the outro in "Carry That Weight," this grouping in the guitar will shift slightly to become a 3 + 3 + 2 + 4 pattern. This is due in part to the bass guitar that punctuates the first part of the rhythm in a 3 + 3 + 2 pattern that helps imply this cross rhythm further. Meanwhile, in this outro the lead guitar plays an A-minor

pentatonic based solo over the dotted quarter/eighth note syncopated motive heard in the bass line in the first measure of the coda.

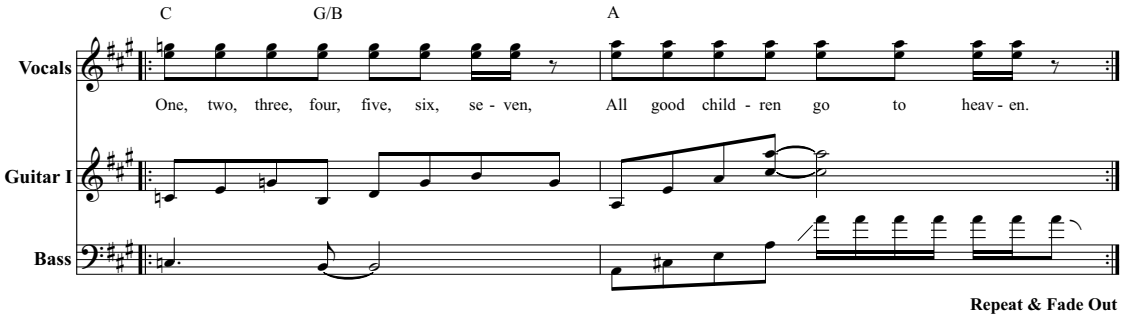



Figure 4.3: "You Never Give Me Your Money" – Outro

What is fascinating with the ending here is how the battle between the keys of C and A still work against one another in this final part. Although the key of A major is established in this section, the close proximity and repetition of C major against A major seems to still emphasize the earlier key. Because the song fades out there is some hesitancy in knowing which key is more important. In a way, this allows the 'tonal drama' of the medley to continue as the sounds of crickets and nature sounds fade in and lead into "Sun King."

## II. Sun King

**Dates Recorded:** July 24, 25, 29; 1969
**Key:** E major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**John Lennon:** vocals (multi-track), lead guitar, maracas
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass, tape loops
**George Harrison:** lead guitar (via Leslie speaker)
**Ringo Starr:** drums, bongos, tambourine
**George Martin:** Lowery organ
**Form:**
A Section: Intro – Instrumental Verse
B Section: Chorus – Middle Eight – Chorus
A' Section: Verse

### Overview

With its dreamy and calming atmosphere of nature sounds above a muffled and subdued rhythmic pulse from the kick drum, "Sun King" instantly sets a mood of relaxation that provides an opportunity for the album to settle into a slower tempo for the time being. Lennon notes how the inspiration for "Sun King's" nonsensical lyrics of Italian and Spanish in the final verse came to be:

> "When we came to sing it, to make them different we started joking, saying 'cuando para mucho'. We just made it up. Paul knew a few Spanish words from school, so we just strung any Spanish words that sounded vaguely like something. And of course we got 'chicka ferdi' – that's a Liverpool expression; it doesn't mean anything, just like 'ha ha ha'. One we missed: we could have had 'para noia', but we forgot all about it. We used to call ourselves Los Para Noias."[52]

The arrangement of "Sun King" is rather understated in a way that never comes off as obtrusive or aggressive by any means. While the song uses both rhythm and lead guitar the two rarely play together and when they do, the lead guitar is mostly used for accenting short melodic fragments that ring out thereafter. While the bass is heard in the forefront of the mix it plays a

[52] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, 337.

simple accompaniment that also feels subdued and unobtrusive. Ringo uses only the kick drum and light cymbal hits to keep a mellow pulse throughout that helps carry the tune along. Meanwhile, the organ is saved only for the B section where the track brightens up momentarily before it drops out as the song enters into the last verse.

The vocals are always in three-part harmony in the song except for the middle eight section of the B section and the final verse where they split into four-part harmony. In the last verse the vocals mostly sing an $F\#m^7$ chord in a syncopated rhythm, while speaking the jumble of nonsensical words. The delightful wordplay in this final verse provides a sort of harmonic color that decorates the four-part texture and highlights once again The Beatles' strength as a vocal ensemble.

There are interesting and quite significant parallels in the way that "Sun King" relates to "Because," with "You Never Give Me Your Money" serving as a point of contrast separating the two. In both of these Lennon songs there is a musical focus on harmony and texture with sparse accompaniment to create a rather cool and calming mood that emphasizes space within the mix itself. "Sun King's" vocal harmonies draws a similarity to "Because" as both maintain a consistent three-part vocal texture throughout, with "Sun King" adding four-part harmonies at moments in the song. These tracks are in contrast to "You Never Give Me Your Money" which emphasizes solo vocal lines within a more upbeat and rock texture.

Other significant parallels between "Sun King" and "Because" lie in the way the voices enter in each of the songs. In "Sun King" the voices enter at the end of the instrumental verse on a pivot chord (F/G) that modulates the song from the key of E major to C major. This chord, if viewed from the key of E major, can be seen as an inverted Neapolitan$^9$ chord ($^{\flat}II^9$). As described earlier the entrance of the vocal harmonies in "Because" does something similar by

having the voices enter for the first time on the $^{b}$II chord as well; in that case it is D major in the context of C# minor. In both songs the vocal entrances begin singing in three-part harmony and even enter speaking the same vocal pronunciation "Ah." Furthermore, in "Sun King" this two-measure entrance where the vocals sing "Ah" serves as a transition from the instrumental verse into the B section, drawing similarities to the function of the 'mini-bridge' that connected the intro to the verse in "Because."

There are a few other parallels between the two songs to mention. "Sun King" is in the key of E major, which is the relative major to the key of C# minor in "Because." "Sun King" also seems to have some resemblance to the circularity idea as seen in "Because." In the case of this song the circularity effect is created by the movement from the key of E major to the key of C major in the B section, and back to the key of E major for the final verse. This creates an ABA form that closes itself the way it began. Specifically, an instrumental verse (A) and a sung verse (A') sandwiches the B section.

Moving beyond the comparisons with "Because" there are other features of this song to note. Harmonically there are chromatic mediant relationships between the chords used in the middle eight-like phrases in the B section ("Everybody's laughing"), in addition to the key structures of C and E major for the song's main sections. This same mediant relationship parallels the battle between C and A throughout much of the medley. Similar to the way in which the ending of "You Never Give Me Your Money" was constructed, much of this track is built up from small phrases of two measures in length that, through repetition, makeup their respective sections. Lastly, there is the appearance once again of a descending ½ step chromatic line heard in the B section in both the organ and lead guitar parts.

Overall, the track seems to have a trajectory of moving from a darker or more subdued mood to one that opens up into a brighter sound. This is supported through the use of the organ, vocal harmonies, as well as the key change to C major in the B section. When the song retreats back to the A' section (vocal verse), rather than falling completely back into the more somber and quiet mood of the opening of the track, the section instead is enriched by the four-part harmony in the vocals. This theme of having a trajectory that brightens or lifts out of the 'haze' has been heard on several previous tracks on the album: "Come Together," "I Want You (She's So Heavy)," "Here Comes The Sun," and "You Never Give Me Your Money." We also see this trajectory of brightening or opening up in a song occurring later on in the medley in "Golden Slumbers." Furthermore, "Golden Slumbers" could be seen as a prelude into "Carry That Weight" which elevates the energy and mood further. Thus, these similarities in musical structures show a cohesiveness between the tracks in both the medley as well as the album as a whole.

## In Depth Analysis – Sun King

### A Section

The A section is purely instrumental and begins with the sounds of birds, crickets, and other insects that help transition from the previous track into this one. Throughout the entire section the bass guitar keeps a pedal point on E that moves between an octave and enhances the sense of space and openness of the track. After the four-measure intro that sustains the tonic (E) chord, the song enters the instrumental verse where a two-measure phrase using a $ii^7$ chord ($F\#m^7$) alternates between a two-measure phrase of an $E^6$ chord and repeats this cycle three times. During the measures where the $F\#m^7$ chord is present the bass moves to an F# as the root

of the chord but still makes the jump of a minor seventh up to E. This helps prolong the tonic note as a pedal point throughout the section.

Ringo's use of kick drum to keep a low and subdued pulse is the perfect timbre to match this dreamy mood by staying low and out of the way. Light cymbal hits create a soft resonance to fill the space at moments, and the snare drum is nowhere to be found throughout the entire song except for the transition into the next track at the very end. It is as if The Beatles gave themselves (and the listener) permission to relax at this point in the album with no particular place to rush off to. Also to note is the syncopated rhythmic motive of the quarter dot/eighth note that was introduced from the previous track. Here it is seen in the bass guitar's rhythm in the first two beats of each measure in the verse. Ending the last repetition of the $F\#m^7$ phrase is a quarter-note triplet rhythm in the guitar that seems to subtly cross waves between the bass line's syncopated rhythm, but never becomes rhythmically dissonant enough to cause concern.

After the third iteration of this cycle a two-measure connecting phrase is introduced that unexpectedly changes both the texture and harmony of this instrumental verse. The rhythmic pulse is paused while the vocal harmonies enter on an F major chord placed over a sustained G in the bass, creating a $G^{11}$ chord that serves to modulate the song into the key of C major.

**B Section**

The B section contains a mini AA'BA'' phrase structure where the A phrases act as a short chorus while the B phrase acts like a small middle eight section. The chorus phrase ("Here comes the sun king") is four measures long and is repeated twice. The harmony of the A phrases moves in a C – $C^{maj7}$ – $Gm^7$ – $A^7$ progression where the last chord $A^7$ ($V^7$/ii) that ends both phrases helps provide a sense of continuity and forward motion and also helps prepare for the B phrase to enter. The B phrase ("Everybody's happy…") serves as a contrasting response to the A

phrases and is a mere four measures in length, which is parsed into an AA' structure of 2 + 2. These two measure sub phrases alternate between F major and $D^7$, another chromatic mediant relationship. There is also the appearance of the ½ step chromatic line in both the lead guitar and organ during this B phrase. It first appears in the last two beats of the second chorus phrase (A') to help transition into the B phrase, playing a G - Gb - F - E descending line in an eighth note rhythm. It then appears again as a response to the first phrase "Everybody's laughing" where it enters again on beat three and plays the same descending line in the same rhythm.

After the B phrase ends the song moves back into the A'' chorus phrase which is four measures long, like it was before, but does not repeat the phrase twice as it had at the beginning of this section. Also, the underlying harmony of this A'' phrase in comparison to its earlier A phrases has changed. This time the harmony moves in a C - $Em^7$ - $C^7$ - F harmonic progression. Just like the quick modulation that occurred between the instrumental verse and the B section, a similar abrupt transition occurs where this F major chord, through chromatic voice-leading, directly modulates into the $F\#m^7$ chord that begins the final verse. Once again this F major chord could be seen as a pivot chord on the Neapolitan in the new key of E major.

**A' Section**

Upon the return of the A' section the most noticeable difference between this verse and its earlier instrumental verse is the addition of four-part vocal harmonies. The concoction of Spanish and Italian words strung together come off as mere gibberish, though it sounds convincing with its syncopated rhythm of eighth notes tied to eighth note triplets. These eighth note triplets seem to have developed out of the quarter note triplets heard earlier in the instrumental verse in the guitar part. This triplet syncopation in the vocals, which moves against the sixteenth note guitar texture and later on moves against the quarter note triplets in the guitar

part at the end of the section, makes for a nice and subtle cross rhythm effect that continues to lull and seduce the listener into a relaxed slumber before concluding the song on an $E^6$ chord.

## III. Mean Mr. Mustard

**Dates Recorded:** July 24, 25, 29; 1969
**Key:** E major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**John Lennon:** vocals (multi-tracked), piano, maracas
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass
**George Harrison:** guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, bongos, tambourine
**Form:**
Intro – Verse - Verse

### Overview

Lennon had written the fragment that later became "Mean Mr. Mustard" while he was in Rishikesh, India, in 1968. Lennon explains, "That's me, writing a piece of garbage. I'd read somewhere in the newspaper about this mean guy who hid five-pound notes, not up his nose but somewhere else."[53] The inclusion to mention Mr. Mustard's sister Pam to connect it to the next song was a conscious choice for Lennon. "In 'Mean Mr Mustard', I said 'his sister Pam' – originally it was 'his sister Shirley' in the lyric. I changed it to 'Pam' to make it sound like it had something to do with it. They are only finished bits of crap that I wrote in India."[54]

"Mean Mr. Mustard" provides contrast in both its energy and musical arrangement in comparison to "Sun King." With the first two songs of the medley being quite complete songs in and of themselves, "Mean Mr. Mustard" is the first one that truly feels like a fragment of a song. For such a short song with only two verses it contains quite an amount of musical interest. This includes unequal phrase lengths, colorful major/minor seventh harmonies that have a chromatic mediant relationship with one another, as well as a metric modulation at the end of the song.

[53] Sheff, *All We Are Saying*, 203.

[54] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, 337.

The transition into “Mean Mr. Mustard” is achieved through a two beat drum fill that begins on beat three of the last measure of “Sun King.” One cannot help but see a parallel of this intro to the brief drum fill that introduces “Something.” Despite the fact that both “Sun King” and “Mean Mr. Mustard” are in the same key of E major, the textural shift from a relaxed backbeat drumming pattern to a straightforward almost ‘march-like’ beat comes as a rather abrupt surprise. With a simple arrangement of drums, bass, piano, and guitar one gets the sense that they are listening to a rock album once again.

Harmonically speaking there are only four chords used in this song: $E^7$, $B^7$, $D^7$, $C^7$. These major/minor seventh chords help create a vibrant and rich harmonic sound that creates just enough tension that asks for a resolution. Adding to this tension is the return once again of the ½ step chromatic line that appears in the entire ensemble. Here, the ½ step chromatic line is used to help embellish the $^{b}$VII chord ($D^7$) as well as the $V^7$ chord ($B^7$) heard in the B phrase of the verse which begins with “Sleeps in a hole in the road” and goes until “Such a dirty old man” (see figure: 4.4).




Figure 4.4: “Mean Mr. Mustard” - ½ Step Chromatic Line (B Phrase)

When the ½ step chromatic line appears again at the end of the song, it has the function of helping transition into “Polythene Pam.” This is the first time on the album that the chromatic line has been used functionally to help transition not into a new section but in fact a new song (see figure: 4.5). In the past the ½ step line was used for more melodic or harmonic decoration, or to transition into a new phrase. In this song it is used for both a structural role as well as a harmonic embellishment. Furthermore, the pitches of the ½ step line are harmonized in this song and the result is a literal copy of the same notes that were used in both “Something” and “I Want You (She’s So Heavy).” Here in “Mean Mr. Mustard” it not only does the descending version of

the pitches A - G# - G - F# that was used in the other two songs, but it also reverses them in an ascending pattern as well.




Figure 4.5: "Mean Mr. Mustard" - ½ Step Chromatic Line (Ending)

## In Depth Analysis – Mean Mr. Mustard

The fourteen measure long verse consists of three phrases (ABC) that break down into a 4 + 6 + 4 structure. The B phrase can break down further into three sub phrases that are two measures long each and create a mini ABA' structure. The third phrase of the verse (C) can also be broken down further into a two-measure sub phrase structure of AA. The first phrase of the verse (A) is all sung over the tonic $E^7$. The B phrase breaks down into 2 + 2 + 2 where the first and third phrase is sung over a $B^7$ chord and the middle phrase is sung over a $D^7$ chord. Connecting to and from the middle phrase here is the ½ step chromatic line ascending up to $D^7$ and then back down afterwards, adding more harmonic embellishment to this chromatic mediant relationship. For the C phrase ("Such a mean old man") a chromatic relationship between $E^7$ and $C^7$ is used before landing on the dominant ($B^7$) at the end of each phrase to help transition back into the verse.

There is also an overall speeding up effect that the harmonic rhythm provides in this song that adds to the overall tension that is created. The A phrase uses one chord over the course of four measures. The B phrase uses one chord for every two measures, and the C phrase uses three chords within the span of two measures. Here in the C phrase the $E^7$ and $C^7$ chords are used in the first measure and the $B^7$ chord is used in the second measure.

What is interesting in the vocal melody is the amount of emphasis of non-chord tones that Lennon sings in the opening A phrase alone. In measure one he sings one beat on $C\#^5$, a non-chord tone, before he resolves to $B^4$ to fill out the $E^7$ chord. Measure two contains all non-chord tones (singing a ii-chord outline over $E^7$) until beat four where he resolves to $G\#^4$. The third measure contains two beats of non-chord tones (beats two and three) before resolving. This lends itself to creating subtle harmonic tension that asks to be resolved. This along with the chromatic ½ step descending/ascending lines and the metric modulation at the end all help keep the song interesting through subtle harmonic and rhythmic tension.

The second verse copies the first verse and adds a two-part vocal harmony where McCartney sings for the first two beats a fourth above Lennon's lead vocal before 'resolving' itself to singing in thirds thereafter. Also to note is Lennon using automatic double-tracking in the first verse and then replacing that with McCartney singing above him in the second verse.

Concluding the song is a metrical modulation that occurs during the C phrase at the end of the second verse ("Such a dirty old man"). The meter changes from 4/4 into a 12/8 measure where the eighth note remains constant between both meters. Here, the harmonic rhythm seems to slightly speed up even more by moving every three eighth notes now (from $E^7$ to $C^7$) rather than four, with the second half of each measure remaining on the $B^7$ chord for six eighth notes. However, because the beat has shifted from two eighth notes per beat to three eighth notes per

beat (dotted quarter note being the main pulse), the song is actually perceived as slowing down momentarily which helps provide a slightly conclusive feeling for an ending. With the ½ step chromatic line returning in the bass and guitar in an upward motion, the song transitions into the start of "Polythene Pam."

## IV. Polythene Pam

**Dates Recorded:** July 25, 28, 30; 1969
**Key:** E major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**John Lennon:** vocals (double-tracked), backing vocals, 12-string acoustic guitar
**Paul McCartney:** backing vocals, bass, piano, electric piano
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, tambourine, maracas, cowbell

**Form:**
Vamp – Verse – Vamp – Verse – Vamp – Outro

### Overview

Like "Mean Mr. Mustard," "Polythene Pam" was also written in 1968 while Lennon was in India. There is little connection between "Mean Mr. Mustard" and "Polythene Pam" in terms of its musical ideas, except that both are in the key of E major and the lyrics mention that both Pam and Mr. Mustard are siblings. Both songs are short and rather fragmentary in nature, although "Polythene Pam" seems to hold together as a more enclosed structure due to its repetition and alternation between the vamp, verse, and outro, which is based on the harmony of the vamp. This helps solidify a stronger musical structure than "Mean Mr. Mustard's" simple two-verse structure. Thus, the two tracks are more so separated from one another through the harmony, textures, and musical arrangements than related.

The arrangement of "Polythene Pam" uses similar instrumentation as "Mean Mr. Mustard" but removes the piano and adds acoustic guitar, while using the lead guitar for a solo during the outro section at the end of the track. Backup harmonies in thirds are added halfway through the verse singing scat sounds while Lennon has double-tracked vocals throughout. The shift in tempo from "Mean Mr. Mustard" into "Polythene Pam" is one that speeds up. The dotted quarter note pulse from the 12/8 meter in "Mean Mr. Mustard" becomes roughly the half note

pulse in “Polythene Pam.” While the kick drum emphasizes the half note pulse streams of eighth notes pound away on the toms with snare hits punctuating beat four every other measure.

The basis for the harmonic material in the song is the double plagal cadence of D - A - E ($^{b}$VII - IV - I) that occupies the vamp, outro, and most of the entire verses. The exception comes in the last phrases of the verse where a progression of G - $B^7$ - C - D - E rounds off the verses structure (“Well you should see her in drag…”). Unlike “Mean Mr. Mustard” that only uses major/minor seventh chords, “Polythene Pam” only contains one of these types of chords ($B^7$) and opts instead for using tertiary chords. Interestingly enough, no phrase in “Polythene Pam” ever begins on the tonic chord but instead leads back to tonic by the end of each phrase. It is also interesting to note how the role of the dominant chord ($B^7$) is used differently in both tracks. “Mean Mr. Mustard” has the dominant chord resolve as expected to tonic while “Polythene Pam” resolves the dominant deceptively into C major ($^{b}$VI) each time.

## In Depth Analysis – Polythene Pam

### Vamp

The intro to the track is a four-measure vamp that begins with the double plagal cadence of D - A - E with the acoustic guitar. The ensemble responds to this cadence in the second measure by playing four eighth notes in a similar declamatory manner that it had done in the opening verse of “I Want You (She’s So Heavy),” and the ending of the verses in “Octopus’s Garden.” This vamp alternates between repeats of the verse sections and appears unchanged three times before becoming the basis of the outro when the lead guitar solos over this double plagal cadence.

**Verses**

The length of the verse sections are ten measures long and breaks down into two-measure phrases forming an AABCC structure, of which both the A and C phrases repeat themselves twice nearly exactly. While the A and C phrases contain two chords in their first measure and one chord for their second measure, the B phrase ("Well you should see her in drag…") slows down its harmonic rhythm to one chord per measure. Additionally, while both the A and C phrases land on the tonic chord by their second measure, the B phrase ends on the dominant and through a deceptive cadence arrives on a $^{b}$VI (C major chord) at the start of the C phrase.

In looking at the melody of the vocal line it uses primarily the blues tri-chord [025] for its melodic material, and has an overall narrow range of a fourth ($B^4$ - $E^5$). The melody contains mostly repeating notes for the A phrases, alternates between two notes for the B phrase, and uses the pattern of a descending step followed by a descending third for the C phrase.

**Outro**

Perhaps one of the more striking features of this song is its rather long outro that takes up nearly 40% of the entire track. The outro is built out of the two-measure double plagal cadence and is repeated eight times. This does not include the four measures of the vamp material that precedes the outro. Therefore, this double plagal cadence is actually heard ten times before the song closes. Upon what would be the eleventh iteration of the cadence, the harmony instead stays on the tonic E major for two measures and concludes with a four-measure transition into the next track.

The harmony of these four measures moves through a descending E - D - C#m - $E^7$ progression, with the $E^7$ serving as a $V^7$ in the key of A for the upcoming track. Although these last four measures technically begin at the start of the next track "She Came In Through The

Bathroom Window," it sounds as if it is both concluding "Polythene Pam" as well as providing an introduction into the next track. Thus, The Beatles opted for another formal elision between the two tracks that provide a sense of continuity for the medley.

During the outro the lead guitar plays a lengthy seventeen-measure guitar solo based in an E-minor pentatonic scale. While "You Never Give Me Your Money" had a guitar solo in its outro as well that faded into "Sun King," here there is a better sense of resolution and completeness as it resolves into the four-measure transitional phrase. This also marks the last time that a lead guitar solo of any kind is heard until the last track of the medley "The End," where Harrison, McCartney, and Lennon will each have their last word playing two-measure long guitar solos to conclude the medley.

## V. She Came In Through The Bathroom Window

**Dates Recorded:** July 25, 28, 30; 1969
**Key:** A major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**John Lennon:** backing vocals, 12-string acoustic guitar
**Paul McCartney:** vocals (double-tracked), backing vocals, bass, piano, electric piano
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums, tambourine, maracas, cowbell
**Form:**
Intro – Verse – Middle Eight – Verse – Verse - Middle Eight

### Overview

"She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" has McCartney recounting a situation where crazed fans used a ladder to break into his home in St. John's Wood. The fan named Diane Ashley recalls the situation: "We found a ladder in his garden and stuck it up at the bathroom window which he'd left slightly open. I was the one who climbed up and got in."[55]

While the last four measures of "Polythene Pam's" outro is actually the beginning of "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window," one cannot help but feel these four measures as belonging to both songs. This technique of eliding sections together is used in this song as well between the verse and middle eight sections. The tempo in "…Bathroom Window" is at half the speed as "Polythene Pam" and keeps the same instrumentation of the previous track. However, unlike "Polythene Pam" this song contains no instrumental sections.

In this song, The Beatles elide sections together that, depending on what section comes after each verse, can change the interpretation of the length of the verse sections. After a four-measure introduction that serves as a transition between the previous track and this one, there is a

[55] Steve Turner, *The Beatles A Hard Day's Write: The Stories Behind Every Song* (New York: MJF Books, 1994), 318.

seven-measure verse. Although harmonically the song begins on A major (I) the vocals outline an $A^7$ chord ($V^7$/IV) which gives the feeling of a resolution on the IV chord (D) occurring on the downbeat of the next measure, of which the lyrics continue into the first beat of this measure which also adds to the feeling of resolution. This similar technique of having the harmony resolve into the next measure also occurs at the end of verse one, where the ending of the verse could be interpreted as eliding with the start of the middle eight section. Here, it feels as if the beginning measure of the middle eight "Didn't anybody tell her?" both concludes the verse harmonically on A major, and yet begins the middle eight section with a new vocal line. Similar to the way that the verse starts on tonic but feels as if it is leading to resolve into the next measure, the first two measures of the middle eight section does something similar. Since the second measure of the middle eight is a D minor chord our ears tend to hear the move from A major in measure one of the middle eight section to D minor in measure two as a V - i relationship, rather than a I - iv relationship.

Upon finishing the middle eight section that has a length of seven and a half measures, the song moves into the second verse. This time the verse feels like it is seven measures in length because by the end of the seventh measure ("Well I knew, what I could not say") it skips the middle eight entirely and goes into the third verse. This creates another type of elision except that the verse now elides with itself, in the sense that the ending of verse two ends on the downbeat of verse three. The eighth measure that the listener had expected to come at the end of verse one which would have elided with the middle eight's section ("Didn't anybody tell her?") is replaced instead by the beginning of the third verse. The third verse has the same structure as the first verse and by the end of the section elides into the middle eight section once again. For

this final middle eight section there is a sense of completion when the half measure (2/4) that had ended the section previously becomes a 4/4 measure and ends on the tonic A major chord.

Like every song thus far on the medley, "…Bathroom Window" makes use of two-measure 'musical tiles' that pattern themselves to build up entire sections. The verses contain mostly a two-measure harmonic progression of A - D, with the last measure of the verse prolonging the D major chord. The middle eight also contains a two-measure harmonic progression of an A - D minor pattern for its first half, and a $G^7$ - C pattern for its second half, at which point it feels as if the song has modulated briefly to the key of C major. This emphasis of C brings back the ongoing A and C key scheme battle.

## In Depth Analysis – She Came In Through The Bathroom Window

### Verses

As mentioned the verses are seven measures in length with a possibility of an eighth measure formed from the elision with the middle eight section on "Didn't anybody tell her?" Upon the ending of the second verse it skips the middle eight section and goes into the third verse. The phrase structure of the verses is broken down into an AAAB structure (2 + 2 + 2 + 1). The vocal line for the A phrases begins each time on the last sixteenth note of beat one, and each time finishes the lyrics within the first beat of the next measure. This is changed in the B phrase when the lyrics start on beat four of the sixth measure and finish by the end of the seventh measure. These syncopated vocal entrances are contrasted with the middle eight section where the vocals sing in rather straightforward eighth note rhythms that nearly all begin on the downbeat rather than a weaker beat.

There is also an antiphonal pattern that occurs between the vocal line and the lead guitar in the verses, where the vocals lead for a measure and the guitar responds in the next measure. Vocal harmonies are also present only in the first and third verses, singing scat pronunciation in both three and four-part harmonies. The melodic line for the A phrases begin with a leap up of a minor seventh ($A^4$ - $G^5$) before descending in mostly a stepwise motion that highlights at times both $^{b}3$ and $^{b}7$ scale degrees.

**Middle Eight**

Beginning on an A major chord the middle eight section is slightly deceptive in how it arrives on a minor iv chord (Dm) in the second measure, instead of a major IV chord which the verses had done. The middle eight's phrase structure breaks down into an AA'BB' pattern of 2 + 2 + 2 + 1½. This seven and a half measures long section plays with the listener's expectations by cutting off the last two beats of the last measure. In this section, the vocals and lead guitar begin another call and response pattern again in which the vocals lead and the guitar responds melodically thereafter (see figure: 4.6). Also note the bass guitar's rhythm in the sixth measure of this section that descends down in a stepwise motion through a syncopated 3 + 3 + 2 pattern that recalls the cross rhythm motive.

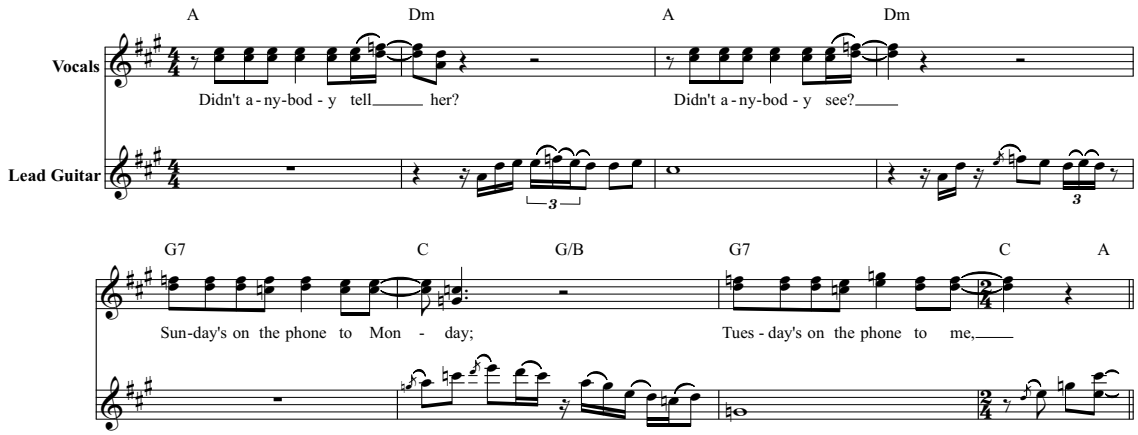



Figure 4.6: "…Bathroom Window" - Middle Eight (Vocal + Lead Guitar)

The B phrase in the second half of the middle eight's section ("Sunday's on the phone…") begins on a $G^7$ chord and briefly modulates to C major in the next measure. The D minor chord that had ended the A' phrase serves as a ii chord in the key of C, resulting in a ii - $V^7$ - I cadence. However, by the end of the middle eight there is an abrupt modulation back to the key of A major to begin the start of the next verse. For the last middle eight section the 2/4 measure at the end completes itself into a 4/4 measure, making this final section eight measures in length total.

Also interesting to note is the ending of this track which has about one and a half seconds of silence built in, as if to give the listener just a moment to adjust to the sudden modulation back to A at the very last minute. It also seems to help prepare the listener for the quiet and subtle opening of "Golden Slumbers." This is also the first time the medley has a 'complete ending' that does not fade into or segue into the next song. However, this is undermined by the abrupt change from C major to A major that concludes the song, and it feels as though the song has actually ended on a VI chord in the key of C major, even though it is in fact the tonic A major chord. The battle between C and A ensues.

## VI. Golden Slumbers

**Dates Recorded:** July 2, 3, 4, 30, 31; August 15; 1969
**Key:** C major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals (double-tracked), piano
**George Harrison:** bass
**Ringo Starr:** drums
**Orchestra:** 4 horns, 3 trumpets, trombone, bass trombone, 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 cellos, 1 double bass

**Form:**
Intro – Verse – Chorus - Verse

### Overview

One day in 1968, as McCartney was looking through a songbook that belonged to his stepsister, he came across "Golden Slumbers" from English Elizabethan writer Thomas Dekker. As McCartney recalls,

> "I was playing the piano in Liverpool in my dad's house, and my stepsister Ruth's piano book was up on the stand. I was flicking through it and I came to Golden Slumbers. I can't read music and I couldn't remember the old tune, so I just started playing my own tune to it. I liked the words so I kept them, and it fitted with another bit of song I had."[56]

Similar to the way that "You Never Give Me Your Money" begins with a solo piano that over the course of the song builds a momentum into a large rock beat, a similar mood is captured in "Golden Slumbers" followed by "Carry That Weight." There is a similar unfolding in "Golden Slumbers" where a solo piano leads into a lighter accompaniment of soft brass, bass, and strings that eventually transforms into a rock anthem in "Carry That Weight." In the latter song a more consistent backbeat is established as the full rock band kicks in with chants of "Boy, you're gonna carry that weight."

[56] Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, 337.

The vocal melody in "Golden Slumbers" is entirely diatonic and, save for a brief $E^7$ ($V^7$/vi) chord that occurs on the "sleep pretty darling," so is the harmony. The opening verse in "Golden Slumbers" draws a similar parallel to the opening section of "You Never Give Me Your Money" where a diatonic circle of fifths occurs. In "Golden Slumbers" there is a brief recap of that circle of fifths by using the same initial four chords of the sequence from "…Your Money": $Am^7$ - Dm - $G^7$ - C. The vocal melody also contains the motive of a leaping sixth that occurs throughout the entire song. This provides a nice contrast to the previous tracks that focused on a rather short and narrow melodic range.

The arrangement of "Golden Slumbers" consists of bass, drums, and piano with additional layers of strings and brass that are used as well. The opening piano texture is for the most part a consistent steady flow of eighth notes pulsating up and down, providing a rather smooth and steady beat that contrasts the series of syncopated rhythms heard in the previous tracks. This piano texture also helps smooth the transition into "Carry That Weight" by continuing to play this same eighth note rhythmic accompaniment into the next song. In the chorus of "Golden Slumbers" a bigger sound is created through expanding the instrumental and vocal ranges, and layering in drums along with thicker string and brass parts that helps brighten and open up the track momentarily. The brass and strings lightly continue into the second verse while the drums also continue with soft cymbal hits that gently accent the downbeat for most of the verse.

## In Depth Analysis – Golden Slumbers

### Intro

The intro is simply one measure of the opening piano texture that plays an $Am^7$ chord that alternates between C and G played together and the A note played separately (see figure - 4.7). Though the opening chord suggests A minor and intentionally left out the E of the chord so a reference to C major is not quite established, there is actually never a cadence in A minor that occurs. By the end of the verse a $V^7$ - I cadence in C major establishes the tonal center indefinitely.




Figure 4.7: "Golden Slumbers" - Piano Introduction

### Verses

The verse is an asymmetrical section length of ten and a half measures and breaks down into a 4 + 2 + 2½ + 2 phrase length (AA'BC). The harmonic rhythm begins with one chord per every two measures for the first two phrases that cycles through the circle of fifths sequence of $Am^7$ - Dm - $G^7$ - C. A subtle level of word painting occurs when McCartney finishes singing "To get back home" at which point the next measure lands on the tonic C major chord. The harmonic rhythm then moves to two chords per measure on the "sleep pretty darling" phrase (B) that moves through a I - $V^7$/vi - vi - $ii^7$ progression, before balancing out with one chord per measure for the last phrase that does a $V^7$ - I cadence to conclude the verse ("And I will sing a lullaby") (see figure: 4.8).

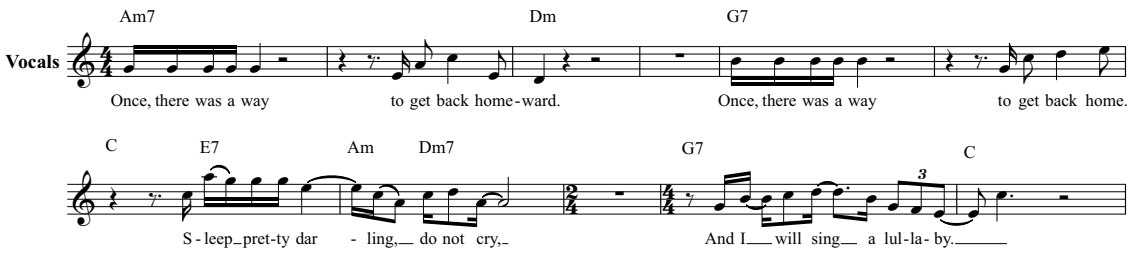



Figure 4.8: "Golden Slumbers" - Verse (Vocal Melody)

The vocal melody in the verse contains many jumps of a sixth. What is even more interesting is the overall trajectory of the first six measures of the vocal line, where the melody moves from its starting $G^4$ note and peaks at $E^5$ by the end of the sixth measure, resulting in an upwards trajectory of another interval of a sixth.

**Chorus**

The chorus is also asymmetrical in length, resulting in a nine and a half measure section that parses into a similar AA'BC phrase structure (3 + 2 + 2½ + 2) like the verse had. The last two phrases that conclude the chorus ("sleep pretty darling…") are the same phrases that were used at the ends of the verses and provide some unity for the song (see figure: 4.9). The harmony for the A phrases moves between C and $F^9$ while the harmony for the B and C phrases remains the same as it had in the verse.




Figure 4.9: "Golden Slumbers" - Chorus (Vocal Melody)

Leading into the chorus is a two-measure transitional drum fill that is also used at the end of the song to transition into "Carry That Weight." This drum fill is also nearly identical to the drum fill transition from "Sun King" into "Mean Mr. Mustard" as well. What is interesting is how this drum fill begins to develop over the remainder of the medley by growing into a two-measure drum solo and eventually an eight-measure solo heard in "The End."

Note how the rhythm in the brass and the bass underlying the two A phrases is the syncopated quarter dot/eighth note motive from "You Never Give Me Your Money." Here the brass rests for one and a half beats before playing on the '& of 2' while the bass accents both beat one and the '& of 2' to punctuate the syncopated rhythm. Also to note is the arrival of the $E^5$ pitch in the vocal line at the beginning of the chorus that remains present for most of the A phrases in this section, and is continuously touched upon in the remaining phrases of the chorus. It is as if the E pitch that was left out of the piano in the introduction makes its glorious return in the chorus where there is no doubt now that the song is in the key of C major.

# VII. Carry That Weight

**Dates Recorded:** July 2, 3, 4, 30, 31; August 15; 1969
**Key:** C major
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals (double-tracked), piano, rhythm guitar
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead guitar, bass
**Ringo Starr:** backing vocals, drums
**Orchestra:** 4 horns, 3 trumpets, trombone, bass trombone, 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 cellos, 1 double bass

**Form:**
Intro - Chorus (A) - Middle Eight (B) - Chorus (A) - Outro

## Overview

> "I'm generally quite upbeat but at certain times things get to me so much that I just can't be upbeat any more and that was one of the times. We were taking so much acid and doing so much drugs and all this Klein shit was going on and getting crazier and crazier and crazier. Carry that weight a long time: like for ever! That's what I meant."[57] – Paul McCartney

With the album coming to a close, nearly forty-five minutes passing since the start of "Come Together," one cannot help but feel a momentous grand finale approaching as the band raucously chants "Carry That Weight." This track also helps serve as a reprise for the medley by bringing back some of the music from the opening number "You Never Give Me Your Money," as well as referencing other musical ideas from both the medley as well as other songs on the album. The song is in an ABA structure with an outro, where the B section is a condensed reprise of the opening of "…Give Me Your Money," and the outro here is also a condensed version of the outro from the same opening track. This reprise provides nice symmetry to the medley's overall structure while also serving as a finale gesture to the entire album.

[57] Miles, *Many Years from Now*, 557.

What is also marvelous in "Carry That Weight" is the way in which the song is able to recap a few other musical ideas that have been presented both in the medley as well as from the other tracks on the album. The 3 + 3 + 2 cross rhythm from "Here Comes The Sun" makes a return again in the outro section heard in the bass guitar, strings, and left hand piano part, along with the syncopated motive introduced in "…Give Me Your Money" of the dotted quarter/eighth note figure which appears in the bass, strings, and the brass in the B section of "Carry That Weight" (see figure: 4.10). Adding to this sense of recapitulation is also the ½ step chromatic line that can be found in the bass line for the B section as well, being used here as a harmonic embellishment. With all of these musical figures being found in both "…Give Me Your Money" as well as songs heard before the medley, "Carry That Weight" helps function as a satisfactory reprise for both the medley itself as well as the entire album.




Figure 4.10: "Carry That Weight" - B Section (Instrumental Reprise)

There is also a beautiful way in which "Carry That Weight" and "The End" relate back to the first two songs of the medley through similarities in their formal structures, providing even more symmetry to the medley's overall structure. Both the opening track of the medley "…Give Me Your Money" and the closing track of the medley "The End" are three part songs that are through composed. This song relates back to the second track "Sun King" where both contain an ABA formal structure as well.

The transition into "Carry That Weight" uses the same tempo from "Golden Slumbers" as well as continues the piano accompaniment of even eighth notes into this song. A two beat drum fill aids in this transition and is in fact a nearly identical drum fill that was used to transition

"Sun King" into "Mean Mr. Mustard," once again referencing back to earlier formal structures of the medley. The key scheme of "Carry That Weight" also highlights the battle between C and A major once again. While the A sections of this song are in C major, the B section is in A minor. However, like the outro in "…Give Me Your Money" which concludes in A major by the end, this song uses an abbreviated version of that same outro for its ending and moves to A major to conclude the song. One difference though between the outro in this song and "…Give Me Your Money" is that, in the earlier song, the track had faded into "Sun King" which gave a somewhat rather inconclusive ending. Here, the song ends on the tonic before quickly jolting into "The End."

It should be noted that this back and forth movement between two keys a third apart also seems to recall a similar process that was heard on earlier tracks in the medley, and further reinforces the function of "Carry That Weight" as a reprise and finale gesture for the album. One of those earlier tracks was "Sun King," where its ABA form had the key of E major move to C major in its B section, and then back to E major for the return of the A' section. Another track that demonstrated this relationship of a third was the opening track of the medley "…Give Me Your Money," where its first part began in A minor, the second part modulated to C major, and its third part returned back to the tonic 'A' but this time in the key of the parallel, A major. Furthermore, outside of the medley there was also a similar back and forth movement between two keys a third apart that was heard in "Something," where the song moved from the key of C in the verses to the key of A in the middle eight section, and returned back to the key of C major for the remainder of the song.

The arrangement of the track is similar to "Golden Slumbers" which continues the backing track of bass, piano, drums and strings, while saving the brass and lead guitar to enter in

the B section when the song recaps "... Give Me Your Money." The A section is characterized by a steady and even backbeat drum pattern and contains a 2 + 2 phrase structure that moves in a I - V - I progression. In contrast, the B section contains irregular phrase lengths and a rather syncopated texture achieved through the dotted quarter/eighth note motive amongst other forms of rhythmic syncopation. The A sections of "Carry That Weight" contain no vocal harmonies but instead have a strong unison of McCartney, Harrison, and Ringo singing the vocal line "Boy, you're gonna carry that weight" in an almost chant-like fashion. This contrasts the B section that contains two-part harmony in thirds when the vocals enter.

## In Depth Analysis – Carry That Weight

### Chorus (A Section)

The chorus section (A) draws some similarities to the chorus section in "Golden Slumbers," providing more cross-track references. Both are characterized by a big sound that sustains a pitch in the vocal melody for two and a half beats at the start of its first phrase, and each contains a four-phrase structure for its section. The chorus in "Carry That Weight" is an eight-measure section that breaks down into an AB phrase structure of 2 + 2 that is repeated twice. McCartney, Harrison and Ringo sing unison vocals against a steady backbeat in the drums. The melody is diatonic and mostly stays within the range of a fifth. The melody is also mostly stepwise save for the leaps in the B phrase ("Carry that weight a long time") that outlines a C-major chord and has the vocal melody drop down to a $G^4$ that extends the vocal range to the span of an octave.

**Middle Eight (B Section)**

As mentioned the middle eight section (B) is an abbreviated recap of the opening (part one) of "…Give Me Your Money." Here, this section is developed further in comparison to its first appearance in "…Give Me Your Money." Whereas earlier in "…Give Me Your Money" this section had opened the track and provided an introduction to the song, here it is used as a contrasting middle section. Another difference is the amount of orchestration that is added in this section. The addition of both brass and strings adds more color and dimension than it had previously, as well as the electric guitar which plays a solo at the end of the opening instrumental phrase of this section and embellishes the musical material further.

The middle eight is in an AA' phrase structure where the A phrase is instrumental only and A' contains vocals that sing new lyrics this time in comparison to "...Give Me Your Money." The phrases are parsed into unequal lengths of 7 + 8; compare this to the original version that had three cycles of eight-measure long phrases. The additional measure here in the A' phrase allows a $G^7$ ($V^7$) chord to transition back into the chorus. As in the original track, the phrases move through a diatonic sequence of fifths, a device that has appeared not only in "…Give Me Your Money" but also "Here Comes The Sun" (as a descending fourths sequence in the middle eight section), and in the opening verse of "Golden Slumbers." Again this provides another type of reprise or recap of earlier musical material presented on the album, particularly side two.

**Outro**

The outro is an abbreviated recap of the same outro as "…Give Me Your Money," with a length of only four measures in which beat four of the fourth measure contains the pickup into "The End." The last measure of this outro technically starts at the beginning of the next track, though aurally and structurally it still belongs to the outro here in this song. This is a similar

effect that was seen in the transition between “Polythene Pam” and “She Came In Through The Bathroom Window,” where the four-measure transitional phrase ending “Polythene Pam” began at the start of the next track.

There is also a small elision that occurs in the first measure of this outro, where the lyrics that end the chorus (“long time”) finish within the first two beats of the outro. As mentioned earlier this section contains the 3 + 3 + 2 cross rhythm in the bass, rhythm guitar and left hand of the piano part. Whereas “…Give Me Your Money” had its last section in the key of A major, this outro modulates to the key of A major through a quick $^{b}$VII pivot on G major to arrive in the new key. The suddenness of this harmonic shift and the alternation between the C major and A major chords in the outro, still begs the question if the music has really modulated to the new key of A major, and the song moves forward into the closing track of the medley which begins in A major (see figure: 4.11).




Figure 4.11: “Carry That Weight” – Outro

# VIII. The End

**Dates Recorded:** July 23; August 5, 7, 8, 15, 18; 1969
**Key:** A Major, which modulates to C major by the end
**Meter:** 4/4
**Performers/List of Instruments:**

**Paul McCartney:** vocals (lead/backing), piano, lead guitar, bass
**John Lennon:** backing vocals, lead and rhythm guitar
**George Harrison:** backing vocals, lead (via Leslie speaker) and rhythm guitar
**Ringo Starr:** drums
**Orchestra:** 4 horns, 3 trumpets, trombone, bass trombone, 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 cellos, 1 double bass

**Form:**
Three Part form (through composed)

## Overview

"The End" can be seen as The Beatles' final curtain call and farewell to their beloved fans. Not only does it feature guitar solos from McCartney, Harrison, and Lennon, but Ringo also gets a drum solo for the first time ever on any Beatles album.

> "The thing that always amused me was how much persuasion it took to get Ringo to play that solo. Usually, you have to try to talk drummers out of doing solos! [laughs] He didn't want to do it, but everybody said, 'No, no, it'll be fantastic!' So he gave in – and turned in a bloody marvelous performance!
>
> It took a while to get right, and I think Paul helped with some ideas, but it's fantastic. I always want to hear more – that's how good it is. It's so musical, it's not just a drummer going off."[58] - Geoff Emerick

Geoff Emerick also recalls how the three guitarists spontaneously decided to record the solos for "The End."

> "The idea for guitar solos was very spontaneous and everybody said, 'Yes! Definitely' – well, except for George, who was a little apprehensive at first. But he saw how excited John and Paul were so he went along with it. Truthfully, I think they rather liked the idea of playing together, not really trying to outdo one another per se, but engaging in some real musical bonding.

[58] Joe Bosso, "Geoff Emerick on The Beatles in the Studio," Musicradar, February 6, 2014. https://www.musicradar.com/news/tech/geoff-emerick-on-the-beatles-in-the-studio-219542.

> Yoko was about to go into the studio with John – this was commonplace by now – and he actually told her, 'No, not now. Let me just do this. It'll just take a minute.' That surprised me a bit. Maybe he felt like he was returning to his roots with the boys – who knows?
>
> The order was Paul first, then George, then John, and they went back and forth. They ran down their ideas a few times and before you knew it, they were ready to go. Their amps were lined up together and we recorded their parts on one track.
>
> You could really see the joy in their faces as they played; it was like they were teenagers again. One take was all we needed. The musical telepathy between them was mind-boggling."[59]

In comparison to the other types of transitions between tracks of the medley, the shift from the previous track into "The End" comes off as a little rough, given that the tempo of "The End" is faster than "Carry That Weight." The result is an immediate shift into a faster tempo that carries the song all the way to the finish line. Similar to the opening track of the medley "…Give Me Your Money," "The End" is a through composed three-part structure that, like the opening track, relies on the repetition of phrases and chord progressions to create any sense of unity within the song itself. There is some relation between parts one and two of this song in that both parts feature solo instruments and the repeated chord progression of $A^7$ - $D^7$. Parts one and three also share a similar length of time of thirty-five seconds while part two is nearly doubled that to approximately fifty-five seconds.

Like "Carry That Weight" this song contains a few more reprises of some musical elements that have been present on the album, including the syncopated quarter dot/eighth rhythm from "…Give Me Your Money," an embellishment of the "Here Comes The Sun" 3 + 3 + 2 cross rhythm motive, as well as the ½ step chromatic line that is used to embellish and heighten the harmonic tension in the first section of this song. In fact, these same pitches of the ½ step chromatic line (B - C - C# - D) are the exact same pitches used in the ½ step chromatic

[59] Joe Bosso, "Geoff Emerick… Studio," 2014.

line of “Mean Mr. Mustard” (see figure: 4.12). If you compare that to the ½ step chromatic lines seen in “Something” and “I Want You (She’s So Heavy”), where both songs use the exact same descending ½ step chromatic line of A - G# - G - F#, you see The Beatles using two instances of the exact same copies of this motive on the album, in addition to the numerous transpositions of this idea heard throughout. Whether conscious of this or not, The Beatles ability to have musical ideas embedded and interconnected between the songs in these significant ways provides a sense of unity and continuity on this album that rivals any of their other previous albums before.

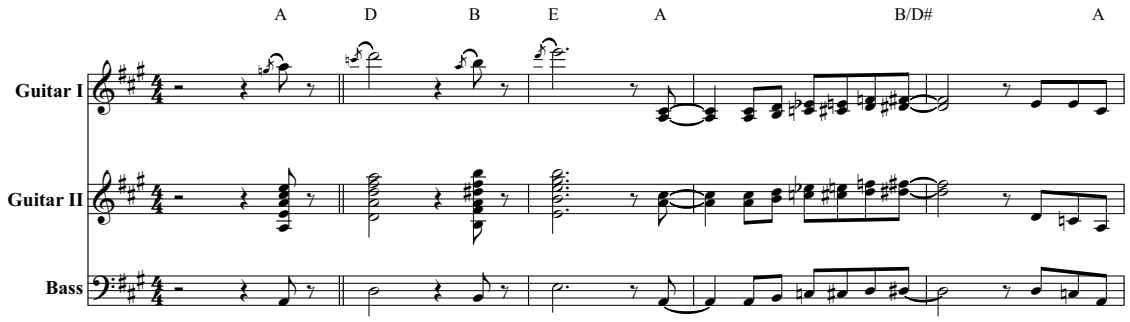



Figure 4.12: “The End” – Introduction

The amount of singing in this song is quite minimal which allows the musicianship and technical skill of the group to be highlighted. With the first two sections of the song using vocal lines in a chant-like fashion, the third part delivers its final message in beautiful three-part harmony to conclude the song. McCartney sings the lead vocals in sections one and three, while sections two and three contain three-part harmony. Additionally, while the song remains mostly in A major throughout a quick modulation to C major occurs at the end of the song right after the Beatles sing their final words: “Is equal to the love you make.”

It also seems fitting that the instrumentation for the last song conforms to the traditional rock band ensemble of bass, drums and guitar, while the orchestra of strings and brass is saved

for the very end as the song modulates to C major. It also seems appropriate that the last track on this rock album contains the longest amount of instrumental solos heard on *Abbey Road*. The length of the drum solos (there are two of them) plus the three guitar solos in part two makes it the longest amount of airtime given to solo instruments on this album, as if they were saving the best for last. There are approximately fifty-five seconds total of instrumental solos in this song which equals almost 40% of the entire track!

## In Depth Analysis – The End

### Part One

Part one consists of eighteen measures that are broken down into an ABA'B' phrase structure of, once again, unequal lengths. A four-measure intro (A) leads into a two-measure drum solo (B), wherein a repeat occurs of the A phrase with lyrics added, and is then followed by an extended drum solo of eight-measures (B'). The harmony for the A phrases begin with two pairs of chords that are in a relationship of a fourth: A - D; B - E. When the ½ step chromatic line starts in the third measure on beat 3, a B/D# chord underlies the harmony and resolves back into A major on the '& of 4' in the fourth measure. It is clever how the two-measure drum solo interrupts the flow of what could have been a straightforward 4 + 4 (AA') phrase structure. Additionally, rather than having the two measure drum solo be some sort of a musical anomaly or musical effect, its development into an eight-measure solo to close out part one turned the two-measure drum fill interjection into a strong and powerful musical event.

The extended drum solo for the eight-measure phrase develops in a similar fashion as the guitar solo had in the instrumental section of "Something," in that short rhythmic motives develop into longer figures over time. What begins as brief drum fills occurring on beat four and

then beats three and four in the first two measures ends up developing into busy drum fills by measures seven and eight. Meanwhile, a pulsing eighth note kick drum pummels away and the ending of the drum solo leads into the beginning of part two.

**Part Two - Guitar Solos**

Three guitar solos dominate part two of the song where McCartney, Harrison, and Lennon take two-measure solos that alternate between all three of them. This section of twenty-eight measures is composed of a two-measure harmonic progression of $A^7$ - $D^7$ that repeats itself fourteen times over the course of the section in the syncopated quarter dot/eighth note rhythm taken from "…Give Me Your Money." This two-measure 'tiling' effect of repeating small phrases or progressions has also been seen in most of the tracks on the medley: "…Give Me Your Money," "Sun King," "Mean Mr. Mustard, "Polythene Pam," and "She Came In Through the Bathroom Window." The first two cycles of this progression only have the instrumental accompaniment playing. At the start of the third cycle the vocal chants enter singing "Love you" in three-part harmony and remain throughout the rest of this section. At the end of the fifth cycle the first guitar solo enters on the '& of 3' and begins the two-measure rotation between McCartney, Harrison, and Lennon within an embellished A-minor pentatonic scale for the remainder of the section.

**Part Three**

Part three begins with an abrupt shift in texture when the ensemble drops out and a solo piano begins playing an eighth note pulsing figure on an A major chord. The length for this section is fifteen measures long and contains two metrical modulations before the track concludes. After two measures of solo piano the lead vocal enters singing "And, in the end…" with a response in the next measure from the other two guitarists. This is followed by another

two-measures where the vocals sing “The love you take” in three-part harmony and includes another brief response from the two guitars. Meanwhile, a G major chord plays over a continuing pedal of A in the left hand piano part. The melodic contour for the vocal line also reaches its highest peak when the vocal harmonies sing the word “Love.” The rhythm of these words is also once again in the 3 + 3 + 2 cross rhythm from “Here Comes The Sun,” as if to provide one last recap of that motive on the album. Upon moving to an F major chord which serves as a pivot to IV in the upcoming key of C major, the song shifts into a 3/8 meter where the eighth note remains constant and the vocals sing “is equal to the” and upon the word “love” shifts back into a 4/4 meter. This phrase too is also sung over a pedal point of A/C# that is being played in the piano parts’ eighth note rhythm. I also see a parallel in this switch to compound meter at the end of the song with the ending of “Mean Mr. Mustard,” where a similar metrical switch from 4/4 to a 12/8 meter also occurs. In that regards there is even a parallel of this metrical shift in “I Want You (She’s So Heavy)” which makes a similar switch to a 6/8 meter in its outro from the 4/4 meter of the verses, although that metrical shift had occurred between the verses and refrains throughout the entire song.

Upon arriving back in the 4/4 meter on the word “love,” the tempo slows down where the quarter note in this new measure equals the dotted quarter note of the previous 3/8 meter, and a $ii^7$ - $V^7$ - I progression solidifies the modulation to C major as the vocals finish singing “you make.” The slowing down effect here adds a dramatic and conclusive touch to the ending as the strings enter in the 4/4 measure followed by brass in the next measure upon the arrival of C major. The vocals follow suit by splitting into four-part harmony singing “Ah,” and the track ends in a glorious $^{b}$III - IV - I progression. The short one measure guitar solo in the second to last

measure seems to briefly recall the solos of the song's second section, and provides one last unifying gesture to conclude the track.

## 6. Coda - Her Majesty

**Date Recorded:** July 2; 1969
**Key:** D major
**Meter:** 2/2
**Performers/List of Instruments:**
**Paul McCartney:** vocals, acoustic guitar

The twenty-five second little tune "Her Majesty" was another fragment of a song that McCartney had written and initially tried to include in the medley, placing it in between "Mean Mr. Mustard" and "Polythene Pam." Feeling that it didn't belong McCartney requested that the song be tossed away. Engineer John Kurlander decided to cut the track and place it after the medley instead and, to McCartney's liking, ended up remaining there to close out the album. It enters after a nineteen second gap of silence following "The End." Kurlander recalls the process:

> "We did all the remixes and crossfades to overlap the songs, Paul was there, and we heard it together for the first time. He said 'I don't like 'Her Majesty', throw it away,' so I cut it out – but I accidentally left in the last note. He said 'It's only a rough mix, it doesn't matter', in other words, don't bother about making a clean edit because it's only a rough mix. I said to Paul 'What shall I do with it?'. 'Throw it away,' he replied.
>
> I'd been told never to throw anything away, so after he left I picked it up off the floor put about 20 seconds of red leader tape before it and stuck it onto the end of the edit tape."[60]

The loud chord that begins "Her Majesty" is actually the decay of the final chord from a rough take of "Mean Mr. Mustard" that was left over from cutting "Her Majesty" from the medley.[61] The song consists of four phrases in an AA'BA'' structure that breaks down into 4 + 4 + 4 + 6 measures. Both of the A phrases begin with the tonic chord D major. The first phrase resolves to the tonic chord by the fourth measure, while the second phrase ends on the dominant chord ($A^7$). The B phrase begins on the vi chord (B minor) and by the end of the phrase tonicizes the IV chord through a $V^7$/IV - IV progression. The C phrase begins on a ii chord

[60] Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions*, 183.

[61] Everett, *Revolver through the Anthology*, 269.

(E minor) and concludes with two iterations of a $ii^7$ - $V^7$ - I progression before it abruptly ends on the pitch A, the dominant scale degree of the song.

One interesting feature of the mix to note is how the audio track is panned in the song. In the beginning it is heard on the right side but by the end of the song has moved to the left side. This 'bonus' track was initially unlisted on the LP and serves as the first instance of a 'secret song' on any Beatles album.

# 7. Epilogue

*"We shall not cease from exploration*
*And the end of all our exploring*
*Will be to arrive where we started*
*And know the place for the first time."*[62]

- T.S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," from *Four Quartets*

## Abbey Road Viewed As A Tribute

One of the remarkable things about *Abbey Road* is the way in which The Beatles appear to pay tribute to their identity of the early days of their career, and provide a sense of farewell and acknowledgement to their fans and idols from where it all began. One of these tributes is seen in the group returning to their roots as a rock band ensemble. Even with all of the colorful layering of the orchestra, organ, and Moog synthesizer on *Abbey Road* it never overpowered or dominated The Beatles' sound as a rock ensemble, but instead was integrated in a way that supported this foundation to help create something that was both familiar and yet new.

The Beatles also seem to pay tribute to some of the group's idols of their early days including Chuck Berry as seen in "Come Together" and Little Richard as seen in "Oh! Darling." Even using Billy Preston seemed to harken back to their beginnings since The Beatles had met him as early as 1962 in Liverpool when he was touring with Little Richard. Recollections of the group's early days is also apparent in some of their songs. One example is in "You Never Give Me Your Money" as they describe "that magic feeling" of an earlier time where they felt a freedom to be whoever they wanted to be. Other aspects of wanting to return to their roots can be seen in "Golden Slumbers." Here the lyrics seem to show a desire for the band to find their grounding once again but are unsure of what that path is or where it will lead them to: "Once

[62] T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, (New York: Harcourt, Inc, 1943), 59.

there was a way, to get back homeward." However, they seem to reassure the listener that regardless of what path they take everything will be alright: "Sleep pretty darling do not cry/And I will sing a lullaby."

Perhaps the most important tribute that The Beatles make on this album is to their fans. So much of their identity of the early days and the Beatlemania craze was centered on their fans. Many of the songs on their first few albums and singles such as *Please Please Me* (*1963), With The Beatles (1963),* and *A Hard Day's Night (1964)* seem to address the fans directly and involve them in the narrative of their songs. Often this came from lyrics that addressed the listener ("you") in their songs in connection with the Beatle(s) singing. Examples of this can be seen in "P.S. I Love You," "From Me to You," I Want To Hold Your Hand," "She Loves You," and "If I Fell" to name a few. In these early songs there was an involvement between "you" the fan and a Beatle, the "I." This began to shift during their middle period when they quit touring and became almost entirely studio musicians. Beginning with *Rubber Soul (1966), Revolver (1966),* and into their later albums, more lyrics seemed to turn inwards in a reflective way that exposed The Beatles' inner worlds and included stories about their relationship with another person, rather than directly addressing the listener. The lyrics also began to shift from simple love stories of teen romance into exploring more complex issues surrounding love, life, and relationships. This could be seen in songs such as "Drive My Car," "Norwegian Wood," "Girl," "I'm Looking Through You," "I'm Only Sleeping," "She Said She Said," "Tomorrow Never Knows," "Penny Lane," "Strawberry Fields," "I Am A Walrus," and "Fool On A Hill" to name a few.

After *Magical Mystery Tour (1967),* the psychedelic period for the group seemed to diminish, and beginning with the 'White Album' in 1968 and then the *Get Back* sessions of

January 1969, their focus seemed to shift back in certain ways to their roots and sounds of their earlier days. This was achieved not only with the stripped down rock ensemble that they began to use again on these later albums, but there also seemed to be a return to addressing their fans once again. On *Abbey Road* The Beatles seem to acknowledge this identity and connection with their fans primarily in the last song "The End." Here the band chants "Love you" over and over while the three guitarists solo as if they are giving their final bow and thanking the fans for their fame and career.

**The Bigger Picture**

As a composer, there is much to learn from the music of The Beatles and in particular the songs on *Abbey Road*. This paper provided an in depth analysis that looked at how the music on *Abbey Road* was constructed, developed, and interconnected to one another. In looking at the bigger picture there are several key points to take away that reveal the imagination and creative genius of this group, and their ability to create music that is continuously interesting, innovative, and transcendent of their time.

One of the biggest strengths of The Beatles is their ability to always stay curious with their music. They were continuously pushing the boundaries of what was possible for a rock and vocal group throughout their entire career. Their curiosity led them to explore new sounds and effects, find interesting ways to relate and connect material to one another, and even expand their ability to think in larger formal structures as seen in the medley and the interconnected relationships between the songs on the album overall. Creating a medley of fragmented songs was something quite new for the group, and came from a desire to explore large-scale forms that breaks away from the traditional concept of isolated tracks moving from one to the next on an

album. Their curiosity also led them to incorporating non-traditional instruments into a rock band ensemble. On *Abbey Road* their curiosity with instrumental timbres manifested through the use of the orchestra in its various configurations, the Hammond and Lowery organs, the electric harpsichord, as well as the Moog synthesizer that was used melodically in a rock environment rather than an electronic one. Their curiosity allowed them to take the ordinary and turn it into something extraordinary, such as using a Leslie speaker to both sing into and run a guitar through it to create new sounds and colors that simply went against the primary use of the speaker itself.

With The Beatles constant curiosity combined with their creative and imaginative desires they were able to continuously reinvent themselves and their sound into something that was fresh, interesting and innovative. Their ability to write a variety of musical textures, rhythms, melodies, and harmonies often transcended the boundaries of belonging to any singular musical genre or style. Thus, The Beatles were often defying the norms of pop and rock music in service for their higher creativity and imagination which resulted in a personal and unique sound that was always evolving, developing, and sustaining continual interest in their music throughout their entire career.

Another great strength of The Beatles that is demonstrated on *Abbey Road* is their ability to have a variety of musical material that keeps their music continuously interesting and satisfying to listen to, while also having an album where the individual tracks are interconnected to one another in various ways to create an overall cohesive work. These unifying connections are apparent in the use of recurring themes, motives, rhythms, key schemes, and formal structures. There is also a sense of unity that is achieved by having a similarity in the process of structuring and creating the musical material between the tracks on the album. Examples of this

can be seen through the shortening or lengthening of phrases and sections upon repeats, call and response, re-occurrence of instrumental solo sections, and the ability to construct phrases and sections by repeating and piecing together short 'musical tiles.'

What this reveals is that The Beatles were able to create a variety of musical material on the album that is able to sustain the listeners' interest and play with their expectations, while also being unified enough so that the music seems to belong to one another to make up a larger work; rather than having the tracks on the album be a series of isolated events. Having a certain level of unpredictability (variety) plays with the listener's expectations that can help sustain interest and intrigue over the course of the album. And yet, being able to fulfill some of those expectations through a sense of continuity and unity within the work, such as the return of musical material throughout, can create a deeper level of satisfaction for the listener as they are able to relate the music to a larger whole while being able to follow along to some degree the development and evolution of the music.

For example, if there was too much diversity of musical material, styles, or instrumentation with no connections to the other tracks, the album might be interesting but perhaps not as satisfying because the listener cannot perceive an overall concept or framework that ties the diversity together. If the audience feels they cannot follow along then this could create a sense of feeling lost or the album feeling too random. Likewise, too much unity, sameness, or predictability of the musical material might help the listener perceive the work as belonging together and might be easier to follow, but it may not be very interesting because it is so homogenized and runs the risk of becoming boring.

Thus, *Abbey Road* seems to contain the right balance of familiarity and variety, development and continuity, unity and diversity. At times the references with other tracks are

explicit, such as the reprise in "Carry That Weight" of the opening track of the medley or the re-occurring ½ step chromatic line as well as other rhythmic or melodic motives that were used. Other times the connections between the songs are more implicit, such as using similar key relationships which provide a sense of familiarity to the music even though the specifics of the song might be different than another song, or the constant use of unequal phrase lengths and section lengths which seem to provide an overall character or quality to the music that helps define the sound on *Abbey Road*. In either case this sense of unity and interconnectedness provides a structural foundation for which the variety and unpredictability of musical elements can play itself out without becoming to random or convoluted.

In conclusion, all of this creative genius reveals how The Beatles were not just writing music of their time but rather writing music that transcended time, style and genre. They were able to be both inspired by the artists and sounds around them while also filtering it through their own imagination to create something new that went beyond what had been. This same ability to transcend the norm can be seen in the music of classical composers like Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and others who often defied the expectations of the status quo to create music that was often progressive and ahead of its time.

You also see similar compositional principles at play in the music of The Beatles as you would see in the music of these classical composers, such as having themes and motives develop and recapitulate, the manipulation of musical elements such as harmony, rhythm, form, and phrase lengths to play with the listener's expectations, and finding the right balance of unity and variety in the music to help sustain continual interest. This is why I feel The Beatles are the 'classical music' of rock. Their music exemplifies timeless compositional principles that transcend stylistic boundaries by processing the sounds and inspirations that were around them

through their own creative lens. In doing so they were able to create music that not only was unique, new, and innovative for their time but also something that continues to live on far beyond their time.

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