



Gravity (John Mayer song)

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"**Gravity**" is a song by American singer-songwriter guitarist John Mayer and is featured on three of his releases: the 2005 live album *Try!* by the John Mayer Trio, his 2006 studio album *Continuum*, and his 2008 live album *Where the Light Is: John Mayer Live in Los Angeles*. In 2007, the song was released as the third single from *Continuum*.

"Gravity"

Song

Background and production

Mayer suggested in an interview with the magazine *Performing Songwriter* that "Gravity" was the song he was always trying to write, using the example of "Come Back to Bed" (from *Heavier Things*) as being an early attempt at "writing *Gravity*". Along with "Vultures", the song is one of only two songs featured on the John Mayer Trio's debut album, *Try!*, that carried over into the release of *Continuum*. Alicia Keys provides background vocals at the end of the song.

Personnel

- John Mayer - singing, lead guitar
- Pino Palladino - bass, backing vocals
- Steve Jordan - drums, percussion
- Mehdi Marjan - keyboards

Song meaning

In a concert performed in December 2005, Mayer explained the significance and meaning of the song:

This is the most important song I've ever written, it's a time capsule song. I will listen to it every day of my life if I need to. It's honest to God the most important song I've ever written in my life, and it has the fewest words. I was in LA, and I was there for the summer, just writing tunes, and I was in the shower. And I don't know where it came from, but it's the damn truth you know, and I just sang, "gravity...is working against me."

And I just want to say that my full-time job, being—this is true—being a musician is almost a side job to my full-time job of not screwing up. Because the world was devised to be pretty damn even, except for terminal illness, and things that people just absolutely... They're just flukes and they're... You know, I don't know if they're making up for something else way far away that they don't deserve, but it all pretty much evens out.

And if you're gonna do this thing and get paid, and you know, get a car over the phone, if you're gonna do this stuff, something else is gonna happen that is gonna be a temptation to pull you off of it because the people that don't have that going on, they're hoping for that, cause that makes the world even. That makes them even, it makes you even, and where I am now in my life, I'm on a track where as soon as you get in a room, the room is full of things to take you out of the room. "Now that you've made it, here are a plethora of things you can do to not make it. Here are a... Here's the Out door..." and... It's a fill-in-the-blank you know. It's like mad libs. It's like:

[puts hand up to ear like a telephone] "Oh hey John, this is [person that plays... person in the room]... Umm, [person's name, famous person's name] wants to meet you, they want to meet at the top of [famous restaurant] umm, they're really into ya, come on down, you know, in [number] minutes"

and you go... "no." And inside you go... "yeah," but outside you go, "n-n-no." Because those are all ways to take you out. They exist as soon as you get... Even if you're not successful, when you get successful... It's like...

I got successful when I was 23, and that's a crazy looking arc if you chart it out... And all I gotta do is stay up. And sometimes coming down is something to do, because staying up is really boring. If I go out to a party, most people who ask me to a party ask me there so I can be the famous guy at the party, not so I can meet famous people at the party. I am now... When I'm on a plane from New York to LA or LA to New York, and I go [looking around the room], "there are no famous people on the plane, there's usually always one famous person on a plane from New York to LA..." and I go, "ahh shit that's me!! That's not right!"

Umm, this is a song about... making sure you still love yourself... making sure you still have your head on, making sure you still say no the way your mom would say no. And I will need it every damn day of my life because it's easier to mess up than it is to stay here.^{[1][2]}

Reception

Billboard called the single "an easygoing, bluesy number, convincingly conjuring the spirit of his idol Buddy Guy".^[3]

On February 22, 2007, "Gravity" entered *Billboard*'s Hot 100 singles chart at #71;^[4] at that time, Mayer had two singles charting on the Hot 100 (the other song was "Waiting on the World to Change"). It also entered *Billboard*'s Hot 100 Digital Songs Chart at #63

Grammy Awards performance

At the 49th Annual Grammy Awards on February 11, 2007, Mayer performed "Gravity" with Corinne Bailey Rae and John Legend as the end of a medley. The set began with Rae's "Like a Star", and continued with Legend's "Coming Home", before concluding with "Gravity".

Stevie Wonder introduced the trio's performance, and each artist performed some aspect of every song through the entire medley. For Rae's "Like a Star", Mayer performed various backing guitar licks, while during Legend's "Coming Home" he performed little. For "Gravity", both Rae and Legend performed backing vocals and Legend played piano.

At the awards, Mayer won Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance for the first single from *Continuum*, "Waiting on the World to Change".

At the 51st Annual Grammy Awards, the live version of "Gravity" that appears on Mayer's *Where The Light Is: John Mayer Live In Los Angeles* won the award for Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance.

Cultural influence

The tune was #84 on *Rolling Stone*'s list of the 100 Greatest Guitar Songs Of All Time.^[5] The family of astronaut Pilot Charles O. Hobaugh chose "Gravity" as the wake-up call for the astronauts aboard the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* on August 11, 2007.^[6] (The wake-up call is a tradition for NASA spaceflights since the days of Project Gemini.)^[7]

The song was featured in the *House* episode, Cane and Able, that aired on September 12, 2006, the day *Continuum* was released in the United States.

Cover versions

- Overboard (Stranded, 2008)
- Steph Jones on his album "Gravity" 2009
- On season 13 of American Idol; C.J. Harris performed Gravity for his song in the Top 7 theme Competitor's choice
- On season 7 of The Voice, Chris Jamison auditioned with "Gravity" before choosing Adam Levine as his coach.

Charts

Chart (2007)	Peak position
Netherlands (<u>Single Top 100</u>) ^[8]	66
Spain (<u>PROMUSICAE</u>) ^[9]	39
US <i>Billboard</i> Hot 100 ^[10]	71
US Adult Alternative Songs (<i>Billboard</i>) ^[11]	18
US Adult Top 40 (<i>Billboard</i>) ^[12]	10

See also

- 2007 in music

References

1. Youtube video. *"John Mayer Gravity History"* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlBu49FpBol>) (2006). [Online video].
2. Online forum entry. *"Eddie's Attic, Night 1, 12.20.05"* (<http://johnmayer.yuku.com/topic/542/t/Eddie-s-Attic-Night-1-12-20-05.html?page=16>).
3. Taylor, Chuck (2007-01-27), "Gravity". *Billboard*. **119** (4):55
4. Cohen, Jonathan (2007-02-22). "Timberlake Scores Third Hot 100 No. 1 From 'FutureSex'" (<http://www.billboard.com/articles/news/1054624/timberlake-scores-third-hot-100-no-1-from-futuresex>). *Billboard.com*.
5. No byline (2008-05-28), "100 Greatest Guitar Songs Of All Time" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080530224802/http://www.rollingstone.com/news/coverstory/20947527/page/34>). *RollingStone.com*. Retrieved on 2011-01-24. "The two sides of Mayer — blues virtuoso and pop star — never met in the same song until this impeccable soul ballad. The rhythm guitar is an understated take on Curtis Mayfield, and the Claptonesque leads are as gorgeous as anything Slowhand himself has recently recorded."
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9. "John Mayer – Gravity" (<https://spanishcharts.com/showitem.asp?interpret=John+Mayer&titel=Gravity&cat=s>) *Canciones Top 50*. Retrieved September 5, 2017.
10. "John Mayer Chart History (Hot 100)" (<https://www.billboard.com/artist/John-Mayer/chart-history/HSI>). *Billboard*. Retrieved September 5, 2017.
11. "John Mayer Chart History (Adult Alternative Songs)" (<https://www.billboard.com/artist/John-Mayer/chart-history/AAA>). *Billboard*. Retrieved January 9, 2018.
12. "John Mayer Chart History (Adult Pop Songs)" (<https://www.billboard.com/artist/John-Mayer/chart-history/ATF>). *Billboard*. Retrieved September 5, 2017.

External links

- "Gravity" (<http://music.yahoo.com/John-Mayer/Gravity/lyrics/40017512>) lyrics, at Yahoo! Music
- Template:MetroLyrics song

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