

= Take On Me =

" Take On Me " is a song by Norwegian new wave / synthpop band A @-@ ha . Written by the band members , the original version was produced by Tony Mansfield and remixed by John Ratcliff . The second version of the song was produced by Alan Tarney for the group 's debut studio album Hunting High and Low ( 1985 ) . The song combines synthpop with a varied instrumentation that includes acoustic guitars , keyboards and drums .

The original " Take On Me " was recorded in 1984 and it took two versions and three releases to finally chart in the United Kingdom , reaching number two on the UK Singles Chart in October 1985 . In the United States in October 1985 , the song became the only A @-@ ha song to reach the top position of the Billboard Hot 100 , due in no small part to the wide exposure on MTV of its innovative music video , directed by Steve Barron . The video features the band in a pencil @-@ sketch animation method called rotoscoping , combined with live action . The video won six awards and was nominated for two others at the 1986 MTV Video Music Awards .

= = Background = =

Pål Waaktaar and Magne Furuholmen began their music careers playing in a band called Bridges , together with Viggo Bondi and Øystein Jevanord . In 1981 , the band produced Fakkeltog ( Torch @-@ light parade ) , an LP for which all of the music was composed by the group themselves , most of it being written by Waaktaar . One of the tracks rehearsed at this time ( although not included on the LP ) was called " The Juicy Fruit Song " . It included elements of the future " Take On Me " , including an early version of the central riff . Soon after , Bridges disbanded . Waaktaar and Furuholmen relocated to London to try their hand in the music industry there , but after six months of disappointment they returned to Norway .

The duo then decided to try to get Morten Harket to join them as lead singer . At the time , Harket was singing in a band called Souldier Blue , but he felt that his band was stagnating , and decided to join Waaktaar and Furuholmen . They stayed together for six months , writing some songs and working on demo tapes , including " Lesson One " , a new song based on " The Juicy Fruit Song " which would in turn evolve into " Take On Me " . In January 1983 , the trio returned to London in search of a recording contract .

= = Recording and production = =

The band moved into an apartment in London and began calling on record companies and publishing houses . After a few meetings with various A & R personnel , the band signed with a publishing house called Lionheart . A @-@ ha then returned to Norway to earn some money . When they returned to London , they left Lionheart out of frustration . They decided to record new demos , and chose the studio of musician and producer John Ratcliff , intending to re @-@ record five songs . The band signed with Ratcliff , who in return introduced them to his manager , Terry Slater . With this encouragement , the band managed to complete some songs , including " Take On Me " . After a few meetings , Slater signed them with Warner Bros. Records .

The band met with producer Tony Mansfield , an expert in the use of the Fairlight CMI , who mixed the demos with electronic instrumentation . The sound was not what A @-@ ha had hoped to achieve , and the album was remixed again . The band rushed to release " Take On Me " as a single in the United Kingdom but the single only charted at 137 , the lowest @-@ charted of all A @-@ ha songs . After this , Warner Brothers ' main office in the United States decided to invest in the band , and gave them the opportunity to re @-@ record the song . Terry Slater convinced Alan Tarney to produce the new version . The song was soon completed and re @-@ released in the United Kingdom , but the record label 's office in London gave them little support , and the single flopped for the second time .

In the United States , Warner Bros. put the group on high priority , and made the move to invest significant money in a revolutionary video for " Take On Me " using the audio version produced by

Tarney . The single was released in the United States a month after the music video , and immediately appeared in the Billboard Hot 100 .

Magne played the main melody on a Roland Juno @-@ 60 " MIDI 'd up " to a Yamaha DX7 . The drum machine used on the second and third releases ( rotoscoped video version ) was a Linn LinnDrum - Paul overdubbed real cymbals and hi @-@ hat using this drum machine . Morten sang " Take On Me " using a Neumann U47 microphone as well as a Neve microphone pre @-@ amp and Neve equaliser .

Allmusic journalist Tim DiGravina described " Take On Me " as being " a new wave classic laced with rushing keyboards , made emotionally resonant thanks to Morten Harket 's touching vocal delicacy . "

= = Composition = =

" Take On Me " is a synthpop song that includes acoustic guitars and keyboards . It moves at a very quick tempo of 169 beats per minute . The lyrics are a plea for love , and are constructed in a verse @-@ chorus form with a bridge before the third and final chorus . With the chord progression of Bm @-@ E @-@ A @-@ D--E , the song is written in the key of A Major . Harket demonstrates a vocal range of over two and a half octaves . He sings the lowest pitch in the song , A2 ( the tonic ) , at the beginning of the chorus , on the first syllable of the phrase " Take On me " .

As the chorus progresses , Harket 's voice hits ever higher notes , reaching a falsetto and hitting the song 's highest note ( E5 , the dominant note ) at the end . There is a temporary change of markings in the drum pattern in the chorus , where for two bars the drums play in half time , returning to the same rhythm as before for the climax of the vocal line . A mix of a drum machine , the LinnDrum , acoustic guitars and electronic instrumentation serves as the song 's backing track .

= = Music videos = =

The first release of " Take On Me " in 1984 includes a completely different recording , and was featured in the first video , which shows the band singing with a blue background .

The second video was directed by Steve Barron , and filmed at Kim 's Café ( now called " Savoy " cafe ) and on a sound stage in London , in 1985 . The video used a pencil @-@ sketch animation / live @-@ action combination called rotoscoping , in which the live @-@ action footage is traced over frame by frame to give the characters realistic movements . Approximately 3 @, @ 000 frames were rotoscoped , which took 16 weeks to complete .

The video 's main theme is a romantic fantasy narrative . It begins with a montage of pencil drawings in a comic @-@ book style representing motorcycle sidecar racing , in which the hero , played by Morten Harket , is pursued by two opponents , one of whom is played by English actor Philip Jackson . It then cuts to a scene in a cafe , in which a young woman , played by Buntty Bailey ( Harket 's girlfriend at the time ) , is seen drinking coffee and reading the comic book in a coffee shop . As the girl reads , the waitress brings her the bill . The comic 's hero , after winning the race , seemingly winks at the girl from the page . His pencil @-@ drawn hand reaches out of the comic book , inviting the girl into it . Once inside , she too appears in the pencil @-@ drawn form , as he sings to her and introduces her to his black @-@ and @-@ white world which features a sort of looking @-@ glass portal where people and objects look real on one side and pencil @-@ drawn on the other .

Meanwhile , back in the restaurant , the waitress returns to find that the girl is not there . Believing that the girl has left without paying the bill , she angrily crumples and throws the girl 's comic book into a bin . This makes Harket 's two opposing racers reappear , armed with a large pipe wrench and apparently aggressive . The racers smash the looking glass with the pipe wrench , evidently trapping the girl in the comic book . Harket punches one of the thugs and retreats with the girl into a maze of paper . Arriving at a dead end , he tears a hole in the paper wall so that the girl can escape as the menacing opposing racers close in on him . The girl , now back in the real world and found lying beside the bin to the surprise of restaurant guests and staff , grabs the comic from the bin and runs

home , where she attempts to smooth out the creases to learn what happens next .

The next panel shows Harket lying seemingly lifeless , and the girl begins to cry . But he wakes up and tries to break out of his comic @-@ book frames . At the same time , his image appears in the girl 's hallway , seemingly torn between real and comic form , hurling himself repeatedly left @-@ and @-@ right against the walls as he attempts to shatter his two @-@ dimensional barrier . ( This scene is largely patterned after a climactic scene in the 1980 film *Altered States* ) . He escapes from the comic book by becoming human and stands up . Smiling , the girl runs towards him and he embraces her . The video story is effectively concluded in the intro sequence of its successor , " *The Sun Always Shines on T.V.* " .

At the 1986 MTV Video Music Awards , the video for " *Take On Me* " won six awards ? Best New Artist in a Video , Best Concept Video , Most Experimental Video , Best Direction , Best Special Effects , and Viewer 's Choice ? and was nominated for two others , Best Group Video and Video of the Year . It was also nominated for Favorite Pop / Rock Video at the 13th American Music Awards in 1986 .

The second music video was produced by Limelight Productions . The crew of the video were director Steve Barron , producer Simon Fields , cinematographer Oliver Stapleton , editor Richard Simpson from Rushes Film Editing , and animators Michael Patterson and Candace Reckinger .

= = Chart performance = =

" *Take On Me* " was originally released in 1984 , and was mixed by Tony Mansfield , but failed to make an impact in the United Kingdom . This release peaked at number three in Norway but failed to reach audiences abroad . The group re @-@ recorded the song with the help of producer Alan Tarney , releasing the new version in 1985 .

In the United States , Warner Bros. invested in the revolutionary second video for " *Take On Me* , " which used Tarney 's version of the song . The new video was released to dance clubs and television a month before the record was available in stores or played on the radio . Wide exposure on MTV made the song quickly soar to the top position of the Billboard Hot 100 on 19 October 1985 . It remained on the chart for twenty @-@ three weeks , and ended up at the tenth position of the 1985 year @-@ end chart . As of June 2014 , the song has sold 1 @,@ 463 @,@ 000 digital copies in the US after it became available for download in the digital era .

" *Take On Me* " was released for the third time in the United Kingdom in September 1985 . The song debuted on the UK Singles Chart at number fifty @-@ five , peaked at number two for three consecutive weeks , held off the top spot by Jennifer Rush 's " *The Power of Love* " , and received a gold certification by the British Phonographic Industry ( BPI ) .

In Norway , A @-@ ha 's native country , " *Take On Me* " reentered the VG @-@ lista singles chart , reaching a new peak of number one , a year after it was first released . The single was largely successful elsewhere , reaching the top of the Eurochart Hot 100 for nine weeks , topping the singles charts in 36 countries , including Austria , Belgium , Germany , Italy , the Netherlands , Sweden , and Switzerland , and reaching the top three in France and number two in Ireland . The success of " *Take On Me* " lies also in its sales , as the single would go on to sell over 7 million copies worldwide , making it one of the best @-@ selling singles of all time .

= = Formats and track listing = =

7 " : Warner Bros. / W 9146 United Kingdom ( 1984 )

" *Take On Me* " ( Original version ) ? 3 : 18

" *And You Tell Me* " ? 1 : 48

Track 1 is produced by Tony Mansfield and remixed by John Ratcliff with A @-@ ha .

12 " : Warner Bros. / W 9146T United Kingdom ( 1984 )

" *Take On Me* " ( Long version ) ? 3 : 46

" *And You Tell Me* " ? 1 : 48

" *Stop ! And Make Your Mind Up* " ? 2 : 57

Track 1 is produced by Tony Mansfield and remixed by John Ratcliff .

7 " : Warner Bros. / W 9006 United Kingdom ( 1985 )

" Take On Me " ( Single version ) ? 3 : 49

" Love Is Reason " ? 3 : 04

Track 1 is produced by Alan Tarney .

Track 1 is the same version as the album version .

12 " : Warner Bros. / W 9006T United Kingdom ( 1985 )

" Take On Me " ( Extended version ) ? 4 : 50

" Love Is Reason " ( LP version ) ? 3 : 04

" Take On Me " ( Single version ) ? 3 : 49

Track 1 & 3 is produced by Alan Tarney .

Track 3 is the same version as the album version .

7 " : Warner Bros. / 7 @-@ 29011 United States ( 1985 )

" Take On Me " ? 3 : 46

" Love Is Reason " ? 3 : 04

Track 1 is produced by Alan Tarney .

Track 2 is produced by John Ratcliff with A @-@ ha .

12 " : Warner Bros. / PRO @-@ A @-@ 2291 ( Promo ) United States ( 1985 )

" Take On Me " ( Long version ) ? 4 : 47 ( a.k.a. " Extended Version " )

" Take On Me " ( Single version ) ? 3 : 46

Track 1 & 2 is produced by Alan Tarney .

= = 2015 remix = =

On August 27 , 2015 Norwegian DJ Kygo released a remixed version via iTunes . His version drops the iconic keyboard riffs and features a new one . The style of his version is described as " tropical house " .

= = Personnel = =

Morten Harket ? lead vocals

Magne Furuholmen ? synthesizer , backing vocals

Pål Waaktaar ? guitars , backing vocals

Neill King ? engineering

Alan Tarney ? production

John Ratcliff - production and re @-@ mixing

Barry Grint ? mastering

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = Reel Big Fish version = =

In 1998 , ska punk band Reel Big Fish covered " Take On Me " for the film BASEketball . The song was later released on the BASEketball soundtrack and the international version of their album Why Do They Rock So Hard ? . The band also performed the song at concerts . Reel Big Fish released a video clip for " Take On Me " , directed by Jeff Moore , and features the band playing the song while walking down an aisle in the stadium , and playing a game of BASEketball interlaced with clips from the film . An alternative video for the song 's international release that contained only the stadium aisle footage was also released . Reel Big Fish also included a live version of the song in their live album Our Live Album Is Better than Your Live Album and live DVD 's You 're All in This Together and Reel Big Fish Live ! In Concert ! .

This song was released on Billboard and Sirius in 1999 ? 2000 .

=== Track listing ===

CD single

" Take On Me " ? 3 : 02

" Alternative Baby " ? 2 : 56

" Why Do All the Girls Think They 're Fat ? " ? 2 : 22

=== Personnel ===

Aaron Barrett ? celesta , guitar , lead vocals , synthesizer

Grant Barry ? trombone

Andrew Gonzales ? drums

Scott Klopfenstein ? celesta , keyboards , trumpet , vocals

Dan Regan ? screams , trombone

Tavis Werts ? flügelhorn , trumpet

Matt Wong ? bass guitar , vocals

== A1 version ==

In August 2000 , British @-@ Norwegian boy band A1 released a cover of " Take On Me " for their second studio album The A List . Despite being panned by music critics , who called it a " lame cover version " , and a " note for note copy " that seems like " a re @-@ release of the original " ; it was commercially successful , topping the charts in the United Kingdom and Norway ,

=== Music video ===

The music video was directed by Stuart Gosling . It features A1 entering the computer world by putting on virtual reality glasses after finding out about a deadly computer virus . After flying for a distance , they find the virus and destroy it , saving the world . The video was inspired by the 1982 science fiction film Tron .

=== Formats and track listings ===

CD , Maxi @-@ single , Enhanced , CD1

" Take On Me " ? 3 : 31

" Beatles Medley ( I Feel Fine / She Loves You ) " ? 3 : 20

" I Got Sunshine " ? 3 : 41

CD , Maxi @-@ single , Enhanced , Limited Edition , CD2

" Take On Me " ( UK 2K Mix ) ? 3 : 25

" Take On Me " ( Metro Extended Club Mix ) ? 6 : 02

" Take On Me " ( D @-@ Bop Saturday Night Mix ) ? 7 : 52

=== Charts ===

=== Year @-@ end charts ===

=== Certifications ===

== In popular culture ==

= = = Other cover versions = = =

Despite being notoriously difficult to sing , the song has inspired many cover versions , including the following :

In the Lips Karaoke advertisement for Xbox 360 , a pair of lips animated in the music video 's style sang the song .

In 1986 Yomi , a drinking yogurt from Yomo Italia , used the video to explain that cartoons also like to drink yogurt .

Italian multi colored watches " Hip Hop " have used the song in their advertising .

In 1995 , punk rock band MxPx included this song on their album of covers , On the Cover .

In 1996 , German Eurodance duo Captain Jack covered the song for their first album The Mission .

In 1998 , American band Cap 'n Jazz cover the song for their two @-@ disc set Alphabetapolothology .

In 2000 , German punk band Wohlstandskinder covered the song on the compilation Punk Chartbusters Vol . 3 .

In 2000 , Belgian punk band Janez Detd. covered the song for their first major label release Janez Detd .

In 2001 , German rock band Emil Bulls covered the song for their studio album Angel Delivery Service .

In 2002 , Italian progressive power metal Vision Divine covered the song on their album Send Me an Angel .

In 2004 , Trinidadian soca musician Destra Garcia uses a cover of the instrumental in her song , " Bonnie and Clyde " .

In 2006 , Spanish folk metal band Mägo de Oz made a cover of the song , which was included in their compilation album The Best Oz .

In 2007 , Latvian instrumental cello rock trio Melo @-@ M included a cover version for their album Singalongs .

In 2008 , Finnish symphonic metal cover group Northern Kings covered the song for their album , Rethroned .

In 2008 , American boy band the Jonas Brothers covered this song during their When You Look Me in the Eyes Tour and on an episode of Dancing with the Stars .

In 2008 , American R & B duo Zo ! and Tigallo ( Phonte , formerly of Little Brother ) recorded a cover for their EP entitled Zo ! & Tigallo Love the 80s .

In 2008 , Danish experimental band Slaraffenland covered the song on their Sunshine EP .

In 2009 , Spanish artist Anni B Sweet made an acoustic cover version of the song .

In 2009 , Carl Newman of The New Pornographers recorded a cover of the song on the Starbucks @-@ sponsored compilation album Sweetheart : Our Favorite Artists Sing Their Favorite Love Songs .

In 2010 , South Korean pop singer Seo In @-@ guk covered and released the song on 22 November of that year as a single . The verses of the song were re @-@ written into Korean while the chorus kept the original English lyrics . The song was re @-@ titled as " Take " .

In 2010 , Italian gothic metal singer Lord Vampyr , famous for being the former frontman of the extreme metal band Theatres des Vampires , covered the song on his third studio solo album , Horror Masterpiece .

In 2011 , Norwegian jazz singer Inger Marie Gundersen released a cover version of the song on her album For You .

In 2011 , Christian punk pop band Eleventyseven released a cover of " Take On Me " on their Quota EP in April and on the Japan edition of their full @-@ length 2011 album , Sugarfist , in November .

American duo Letters Lost released a version of the song on its album You Are My Biggest Fan .

In 2011 , accordion players of the Kum Song School of Music of Pyongyang , North Korea

performed a cover for Morten Traavik , a Norwegian cultural event organizer . Traavik 's video of the first performance was a YouTube hit in February 2012 , and the quintet subsequently performed at a cultural festival in Kirkenes , Norway , a few days after the YouTube video gained widespread attention .

In 2012 , Mexican musical group OV7 included the cover of Take On Me titled " Prisioneros . " It was the second single of the bands Forever 7 album .

Also in 2012 , American alternative rock band Lazlo Bane released a cover on Guilty Pleasures the 80 's Volume 1 EP . Their version was used in ABC 's Private Practice episode " Short Cuts " two years before its release .

In 2013 , " Feel This Moment " , by Pitbull featuring Christina Aguilera , was a global hit and although not a cover version , throughout the song it heavily sampled the hook from Take On Me .

In 2013 , Webank 's advertising uses a cover by German singer Graziella Schazad .

In 2014 , Inverse Phase released a chiptune version titled " Take on XE " on his album Chiplust . The title is a portmanteau of the original title and the Atari XE console it was created on .

In 2015 , the song was covered on the second episode of the sixth and final season of the American television series Glee . It was sung by Naya Rivera , Mark Salling , Amber Riley , Chris Colfer , Heather Morris , Dianna Agron , Kevin McHale , Lea Michelle , Jenna Ushkowitz and Chord Overstreet .

In 2015 , an instrumental version was released on YouTube by violinist Steve Bingham and arranger Phil Toms , performed on live violins with synth programming with a music video paying homage to the iconic original .

In 2015 , the song was used for the Toronto International Film Festival 's 2015 volunteer trailer ( which was played before each film being screened that year ) .

In 2016 , band Ninja Sex Party released their own cover version of the song as part of their album Under the Covers .

In 2016 , American J @-@ Pop singer Joshua P. Wood made a Japanese cover of the song , which he uploaded to YouTube on July 14 , 2016 . The video depicts the currently tentative art of the album that the song will be released on , titled " Just Being Me " outside of Japan .

= = = Live cover performances = = =

Japanese American singer Hikaru Utada covered the song on her " Bohemian Summer 2000 Tour " . It was included on the Bohemian Summer 2000 DVD .

Argentinian electropop band Miranda ! included a cover of the song in their 2005 live album En Vivo Sin Restricciones .

American singer Sara Bareilles has performed acoustic versions of the song in live concerts .

The protagonist of Sleeping Dogs , Wei Shen , can choose to sing this during the game 's Karaoke minigame .

= = = Parodies = = =

Dustin McLean 's literal version cover of " Take on Me " was the first @-@ known example of the " literal music video " meme .

In the Family Guy episode Breaking Out is Hard to Do , Chris gets dragged into the music video while in the dairy section of the grocery store . The music video in the episode is nearly identical to the actual video , albeit much shorter and with minor differences . Towards the end of the video , the two hostile racers appear with the pipe wrench and pursue Chris and Harket , causing the chase scene through the maze of paper . When he escapes the video , Lois asks where he 's been , to which Chris replies in a panicked tone , " I don 't know ! " .

In the Psych episode American Duos , Shawn Spencer and Burton Guster performed a rendition of " Take On Me " for their audition .

The Weebl and Bob episode " Paper " parodies both the song " Take On Me " and its music video . Choking Victim parodies " Take On Me " with their song " Corporate Tra \$ h " on their Crack Rock

Steady Demo . The song Corporate Tra \$ h is mocking mainstream music and how it is written to simply make money .

Harry Hill did a parody of the song and video for Children in Need 2013 .

= = = Media = = =

A cover recording was used in the episode " Asspen " ( 2002 ) of the animated TV series South Park .

A GEICO commercial features the song being played by a dog with a synthesizer and a singing cockatoo .

The Wohlstandskinder cover recording was used over the closing credits of the George Romero directed film Bruiser ( 2000 ) .

The song was featured on the soundtrack of the video game Saints Row 2

The song was sung by Jeffster ! in the series finale of Chuck , Chuck vs. the Goodbye .

The song was featured in the movie This Is 40 ( 2012 ) in the scene where Leslie Mann 's character is singing in the car with her family .

The song and its music video were featured in the Family Guy episode Breaking Out is Hard to Do .

The song Amarillion by Norwegian duo Datarock pays homage to the song with the lines " Take me on / Take On me " .

The melody of the song was used in the opening sequence of the second season of the Israeli TV show Danny Hollywood ( 2009 ) , which its plot is set on the year 1986 .

During the 2012 Major League Baseball season , Washington Nationals player Michael Morse used a portion of the song for his walk @-@ up music prior to late @-@ game at @-@ bats . By the end of the season , fans at Nationals Park were singing along , enjoying the final falsetto . After the season , Morse was traded to the Seattle Mariners , but the song remained a part of the in @-@ game entertainment at Nationals Park in 2013 , being played over the public @-@ address system during the seventh @-@ inning stretch after the traditional " Take Me Out to the Ballgame . "

It is heard in a 2013 TV commercial for Volkswagen . The video was recreated , with a Volkswagen Passat NMS inserted as one of the cars . The video cuts to a man in an office drawing the photos for the animation while singing the falsetto note ( E5 ) out of tune ( referencing the song 's difficulty ) as everyone in the room stares at him . He then walks outside to his Volkswagen Passat , with the narrator stating that the car 's offer of " no @-@ charge scheduled maintenance " makes people " feel carefree " .

The song played in one episode of The CW 's The Carrie Diaries .

The musical comedy act The Axis of Awesome featured the song in their medley " Four Chords " ( 2012 ) accompanied by dozens of other songs that use the same chord progression .

A re @-@ recorded version was used in the Blu @-@ ray trailer for The Lego Movie .

This song is in Just Dance 3 .

The song was used in a 2015 ad by Ryanair celebrating 30 years of the airline .

The track is used in the video game Metal Gear Solid V : The Phantom Pain as an obtainable addition to the player 's music collection .

The song makes an appearance in the 2016 film Whiskey Tango Foxtrot , starring Tina Fey . It is used during the karaoke party scene .