

= Try Some , Buy Some =

" Try Some , Buy Some " is a song written by English musician George Harrison , first released in 1971 as a single by former Ronettes lead singer Ronnie Spector . The latter recorded this and other Harrison compositions , such as " You " and " When Every Song Is Sung " , in London for a planned comeback album on the Beatles ' Apple Records . The project was co -@-@ produced by her husband at the time , Phil Spector , whose temporary withdrawal from music @-@ making in 1966 had forced Ronnie to reluctantly abandon her own career . After the single became only a minor hit , and following recording sessions that had been hampered by the producer 's erratic behaviour , the proposed album was cancelled . In 1973 , Harrison added his own vocal onto a new mix of the instrumental track and included the result on his album Living in the Material World .

Harrison wrote " Try Some , Buy Some " during sessions for All Things Must Pass , his successful 1970 triple album , also co @-@ produced by Spector . The song 's austere melody was influenced by Harrison composing on a keyboard instrument rather than guitar . The lyrics reflect his perception of God amid temptations associated with the material world and take the form of a recollection of his first spiritual awakening . Ronnie Spector later admitted to being unable to understand the concept and disliking the song , and commentators have duly noted its unsuitability as a vehicle for her comeback . " Try Some , Buy Some " is notable for the extent to which Phil Spector employed his Wall of Sound production , as well as for being a significant commercial failure for Spector , in the manner of his ambitious 1966 production " River Deep ? Mountain High " , by Ike & Tina Turner . The recording features a choir and long , lavishly orchestrated instrumental passages , the musical arrangement for which was supplied by John Barham . Besides Harrison , the backing musicians include Leon Russell , Pete Ham , Klaus Voormann and Jim Gordon . The single 's B @-@ side was " Tandoori Chicken " , an upbeat song in the rockabilly style .

Some commentators question the inclusion of Harrison 's reading of " Try Some , Buy Some " on Living in the Material World and view it in an unfavourable light , citing his struggle to sing in a key suited to the former Ronette . Having long been unavailable following its 1971 release ? during which time she divorced Spector and attempted to relaunch her career without him ? Ronnie Spector 's version was reissued in 2010 on the compilation Come and Get It : The Best of Apple Records . A longtime admirer of the song , David Bowie covered " Try Some , Buy Some " on his 2003 album Reality and performed it on his tours in support of the album .

= = Background and composition = =

George Harrison 's song " Try Some , Buy Some " dates back to the recording sessions for his 1970 triple album All Things Must Pass , and was one of a number of tracks left over from that project . In his autobiography , I , Me , Mine (1980) , Harrison recalls writing the tune on an organ and , not being an accomplished keyboard player , having difficulties doing the correct fingering in both hands . It was only when his friend Klaus Voormann took over the left @-@ hand part , to play the bass line , that he was able to hear the piece as he had imagined it .

Harrison musical biographer Simon Leng describes the tune as " the most extreme example " of its composer 's " circular melodic " style , " seeming to snake through an unending series of harmonic steps " . As reproduced in I , Me , Mine , Harrison 's handwritten lyrics show the opening chord as E minor and the bass line descending through every semitone from E down to B , followed by a change to a B7 chord ; the second part of the verse , beginning on an A minor chord , then follows a descending sequence that he writes as " A ? A flat ? G ? F ? ? E ? A " , before arriving at D major . Harrison acknowledges in his autobiography that the melody and " weird chords " came about through experimentation on a keyboard instrument , which allowed him more harmonic possibilities than are available on a guitar . The song 's time signature is a waltz @-@ like 3 / 4 , similar to the verses of his composition " I Me Mine " , the last track recorded by the Beatles , in January 1970 .

Lyrically , former Melody Maker editor Richard Williams describes " Try Some , Buy Some " as " a typically Harrisonian hymn to his Lord " , in keeping with the religiosity of All Things Must Pass tracks such as " My Sweet Lord " , " Awaiting on You All " and " Hear Me Lord " . Harrison

biographer Elliot Huntley writes of " Try Some , Buy Some " delivering Harrison 's Hindu @-@ aligned devotional message " in television evangelist terms " .

The song begins with the lines " Way back in time / Someone said try some , I tried some / Now buy some , I bought some ... " before Harrison states that he opened his eyes " and I saw you " . According to Christian theologian Dale Allison , the lyrics are a " reflection on some sort of conversion experience " , in which Harrison provides " before and after " comparisons . Before his spiritual awakening , Harrison sings of variously possessing , seeing , feeling and knowing " [n] ot a thing " until , Allison writes , " he called upon God 's love , which then came into him . "

As in his later compositions " Simply Shady " and " Tired of Midnight Blue " , Harrison refers to the drug culture prevalent in the music industry , in the verse @-@ two lines " I 've seen grey sky , met big fry / Seen them die to get high ... " Author Joshua Greene writes of Harrison 's concern during the 1970s for friends who " wasted their time chasing sex and drugs and money " , while Allison suggests John Lennon and Eric Clapton as being among the people on whom Harrison " personally witnessed the toll [that] drugs and drink took " .

In addition to the song echoing the " lost and then found " message of many Christian conversions , Allison writes that " Try Some , Buy Some " demonstrates Harrison 's incarnation among the " twice @-@ born " in Bhagavad Gita terminology . The same theme of salvation through reconciliation with his deity is present in Harrison 's 1968 song " Long , Long , Long " and would continue to feature throughout his solo career , in compositions such as " That Which I Have Lost " and " Heading for the Light " .

= = Planned Ronnie Spector solo album = =

Following their successful partnership on All Things Must Pass in 1970 , Harrison and co @-@ producer Phil Spector turned their attention to resurrecting the career of Spector 's wife Ronnie , formerly lead singer of the Ronettes . Since the break @-@ up of the Ronettes in 1967 , Ronnie Spector 's only musical release had been " You Came , You Saw , You Conquered " , a 1969 single on A & M Records . Her signing to the Beatles ' Apple record label was a condition of Phil Spector 's deal with the company , one that Harrison and Lennon , as avowed fans of the Ronettes , were happy to honour . The plan was to produce a comeback album , with Harrison providing many of the songs , and issue it on Apple Records . In his book Phil Spector : Out of His Head , Williams quotes music publisher Paul Case as having said during this period : " Phil wants a hit record with Ronnie again more than anything in the world . I think he 'd give up all his worldly possessions for that . "

Speaking to Phil Symes of Disc and Music Echo in May 1971 , Ronnie Spector admitted that she had hated being away from the music industry . The situation had been forced on her by her husband 's semi @-@ retirement in 1966 , following the failure in America of Ike & Tina Turner 's single " River Deep ? Mountain High " , a production that Phil Spector had considered his masterpiece . Ronnie Spector told Symes : " For four years Phil and I completely detached ourselves from everyone in the business and settled down in California . I was so bored and missed the stage so much I nearly had a nervous breakdown . If I hadn 't had a kid I don 't know what I would have done . "

= = = Recording = = =

Sessions for the proposed album took place at London 's Abbey Road Studios , beginning on 2 February 1971 . In addition to his own contribution as guitarist , Harrison enlisted some of the musicians with whom he had recorded All Things Must Pass : Gary Wright , on keyboards ; Derek and the Dominos drummer Jim Gordon ; Voormann and Carl Radle (the latter another member of the Dominos) , alternating on bass ; and Badfinger 's Pete Ham on second guitar and percussion . Another participant was Leon Russell , familiar to Phil Spector as a regular member of the Wrecking Crew during the mid 1960s . Recording continued at Abbey Road on 3 February , during which Lennon joined the proceedings , allegedly on piano .

Aside from " Try Some , Buy Some " , the first songs selected were ones that Harrison had routined

for All Things Must Pass but not used : " You " and " When Every Song Is Sung " . The latter was originally titled " Whenever " and was intended for Shirley Bassey , and Harrison had written " You " as what he called " a Ronettes sort of song " . The other tracks recorded were " Lovely Laddy Day " ; a Harrison ? Spector collaboration titled " Tandoori Chicken " ; and , according to authors Chip Madinger and Mark Easter , " I Love Him Like I Love My Very Life " , which they suggest was another Harrison composition . In a 1987 interview with Musician magazine , Harrison spoke of Spector having written some songs for the project , one of which was " very good , in his pop vein " .

The planned comeback album ended there , due to the same erratic behaviour from Spector ? or " health issues " , as Madinger and Easter have described it ? that had hindered work on All Things Must Pass . According to Harrison 's recollection in I , Me , Mine : " we only did four or five tracks before Phil fell over ... " Of those songs , rather than the more obviously commercial " You " , Spector chose " Try Some , Buy Some " to complete for release as a single by his wife . Williams highlights Spector 's role in taking " a pleasant but essentially ordinary tune " and turning it into a " wholly magnificent " example of his Wall of Sound production style , on which " the essence is in the sound of the voice against the orchestra " . The heavy orchestration ? including string , brass and woodwind sections , mandolins and cymbals ? together with the choral parts , were arranged by John Barham , Harrison 's regular musical arranger during this period .

For the single 's B @-@ side , the two producers chose " Tandoori Chicken " , " a friendly impromptu rocker " , Williams writes , which came about after Spector despatched Beatles aide Mal Evans to get food during the session . Just over two minutes in length , " Tandoori Chicken " is in the rockabilly style of Carl Perkins , with Spector playing blues piano and Harrison on overdubbed dobro . Harrison recalled that the performance was recorded in a single take , with " a lot of improvised scat singing in the middle " .

= = = Single release = = =

Apple Records issued " Try Some , Buy Some " on 16 April 1971 in Britain (as Apple 33) , and three days later in America (as Apple 1832) . Apple 's print advertisement for the release carried the simple tagline : " A New Single " . Among the interviews she gave to the UK music press , Ronnie Spector admitted to Symes that it took a long time to learn the song " as it was hard for me to understand " , but she added : " I love the record . It 's completely different for me ; it 's more of a music thing than vocal . " In America , Billboard magazine 's reviewer described " Try Some , Buy Some " as a " powerful production ballad " that had " all the ingredients to break through big " , while suggesting that Ringo Starr and Eric Clapton had contributed to the recording .

Despite Disc and Music Echo endorsing it as a " terrific first solo single " , " Try Some , Buy Some " failed to place on the UK Top 50 . The song debuted on the Billboard Hot 100 on 8 May and reached number 77 , remaining on the chart for just four weeks . In Canada , it peaked at number 63 on the RPM Top 100 . Williams writes of the reaction to " Try Some , Buy Some " : " although people were awed by it , the radio would hardly touch it ... " In the UK , radio stations opted instead for " Tandoori Chicken " , which author Bruce Spizer praises for its " infectious party @-@ style " quality .

As with " River Deep ? Mountain High " , the single 's lack of success was one of the " crushing disappointments " of Phil Spector 's career , author Nicholas Schaffner wrote in 1977 , the producer having " [outdone] himself to transform it into a masterpiece of his patented ' wall of sound ' production " . Spector had been sure that the song would become " a giant smash " , according to Williams , who describes the outcome as a challenge to " Phil 's eternal trust in his own judgment of excellence " .

Spector biographer Mark Ribowsky comments on the single 's commercial failure : " [The song] was completely wrong for her ? another of George 's mystic chants , it forced Ronnie to try to appeal to the spirit instead of the flesh ... " In his book Tearing Down the Wall of Sound , Mick Brown also notes the unsuitability of Harrison 's " hymn about rejecting materialism and embracing Krishna " and describes the former Ronette 's comeback as being " over before it had begun " .

= = = Reissue = = =

Ronnie Spector 's " Try Some , Buy Some " remained out of print for almost 40 years , until its reissue on the 2010 Apple compilation Come and Get It : The Best of Apple Records . In the ensuing years , she filed for divorce in 1973 and resumed her career that year by playing live dates with a new line @-@ up of the Ronettes and recording for Buddah Records . In 1990 , she wrote an autobiography , titled Be My Baby : How I Survived Mascara , Miniskirts , and Madness , in which she offers a damning verdict of her only Apple single . The song " stunk " , she admits in the book , and its meaning was lost on her . " Religion ? Drugs ? Sex ? I was mystified , " Spector writes . " And the more George sang , the more mystified I got . " In light of this statement , Dale Allison opines of her performance on the 1971 recording : " she didn 't understand the song at all and sang it accordingly . " Reviewing the Come and Get It compilation for BBC Music , Mike Diver commented on the overindulgence behind many of the Beatles ' Apple projects but viewed Spector 's " Try Some , Buy Some " as being " worthy of praise " .

Of the other tracks recorded during the Abbey Road sessions , " Tandoori Chicken " remains a rarity , while Spector 's versions of " When Every Song Is Sung " and " You " have never received a release . A bootleg compilation known as The Harri @-@ Spector Show includes " Lovely Laddy Day " , as well as two instrumental versions of " You " . One of these recordings of " You " is the basic track that Harrison later used for his 1975 album Extra Texture , while the other is a slower , alternate take .

= = George Harrison 's version = =

Following the abandoned Ronnie Spector sessions in 1971 , Harrison 's relief effort for the refugees of the Bangladesh Liberation War kept his musical activities to a minimum for over a year . After starting recording for his second post @-@ Beatles solo album , Living in the Material World , in the autumn of 1972 , he revisited " Try Some , Buy Some " , replacing her vocal with his own , on top of the original instrumental track . He later admitted that the key was higher than he would have preferred , as with " You " .

Whereas the mix on the 1971 single had favoured instrumentation such as the mandolins , which Williams views as " the record 's trademark " , Harrison 's treated the balance of backing instruments differently ; Madinger and Easter describe the original version as having a " clearer " sound . John Lennon later said that the descending melody played by the string section was an inspiration behind his 1974 song " # 9 Dream " . Before then , he based the musical backing of his 1971 single " Happy Xmas (War Is Over) " (also co @-@ produced by Spector) on that of " Try Some Buy Some " , in particular , asking that his acoustic guitarists replicate the mandolin parts of the earlier song . Neither Russell nor Ham were listed in the musician credits for Harrison 's version of " Try Some , Buy Some " ? Badfinger having recently signed with Warner Bros. Records , which the band would join in September 1973 upon the expiry of their Apple contract .

= = = Release and reception = = =

Apple released Living in the Material World in May 1973 , with " Try Some , Buy Some " sequenced on side two of the original LP format . Reflecting the album content , Tom Wilkes 's design for the record 's face labels contrasted a devout spiritual existence with life in the material world , by featuring a painting of Krishna and his warrior prince Arjuna on side one and a picture of a Mercedes stretch limousine on the reverse .

The inclusion of " Try Some , Buy Some " on Harrison 's otherwise self @-@ produced 1973 album has confused some critics and reviewers . Writing in 1981 , NME critic Bob Woffinden noted : " This was considered an underhand trick in some quarters . However , since the single had clearly not received the attention it merited , it could be argued that George was simply husbanding his resources carefully . " On release , in an otherwise highly favourable review for Material World ,

Stephen Holden of Rolling Stone called the song " an overblown attempt to restate the [album 's] spiritual message in material terms : ' Won 't you try some / Baby won 't you buy some . ' " In Melody Maker , Michael Watts wrote that the song fitted the album @-@ wide description of Harrison 's personal journey to " musical iconographer " status from his Beatle past . Watts considered the arrangement the " most imaginative " on Material World and described the recording as " a fairground sound , using harpsichord and couched in waltz @-@ time " .

Simon Leng dismisses the Ronnie Spector album project as " self @-@ indulgence " on the part of the two producers and views the inclusion of " Try Some , Buy Some " on Material World as having " achieved nothing , except to prove that Spector 's Wall of Sound was an anachronism " by 1973 . Leng writes of Harrison 's " straining " vocal on the track and " banks of trilling ' Long and Winding Road ' mandolins " that are at odds with the more subtle mood found elsewhere on the album . Ian Inglis describes Harrison 's singing as one of his " least impressive performances " and writes of the composition generally : " It may be a love song or a hymn of salvation but , unlike songs where this duality strengthens their impact (such as ' Isn 't It a Pity ') , here it sits uneasily between the two . " With a different musical arrangement and the " melodramatic delivery " of a singer like Shirley Bassey , Inglis suggests , " Try Some , Buy Some " might have found some success .

In a 2006 review for Mojo magazine , Mat Snow described the track as " [a] n anti @-@ heroin song so seductively melodic it might induce the opposite effect " . Elliot Huntley praises Harrison 's " yearning " vocal as " one of the many highlights " of Living in the Material World . Huntley considers the " hymn @-@ like song cycle " represented by this " superb " track and the album 's final two songs , " The Day the World Gets ' Round " and " That Is All " , the equal of anything on All Things Must Pass . Beatles biographer Chris Ingham pairs " Try Some , Buy Some " with " Sue Me , Sue You Blues " , as two " wry , reasonable digs at symptoms of what Harrison sees as symptoms of a diseased world " . Reviewing the 2014 Apple Years Harrison reissues , for the Lexington Herald @-@ Leader , Walter Tunis includes " Try Some , Buy Some " among the " stunners " on Material World and describes the song as an " achingly beautiful awakening anthem " .

= = Cover versions = =

According to Huntley , " Try Some , Buy Some " is " an all @-@ time favourite " of English singer David Bowie . The latter covered the song on his 2003 album Reality , co @-@ produced by his longtime collaborator Tony Visconti . Bowie had originally intended to record it for a planned follow @-@ up to Pin Ups , his 1973 collection of cover versions . Talking to Rolling Stone shortly before the release of Reality , he said of his recording : " We were pretty true to the original arrangement , but the overall atmosphere is somewhat different . It 's a dense piece . "

Bowie occasionally performed " Try Some , Buy Some " live on his 2003 ? 04 Reality Tour . In a review for the limited @-@ edition box set David Bowie Box (2007) , critic Thom Jurek described Reality as a " schizophrenic recording " , on which the covers of " Try Some , Buy Some " and the Modern Lovers song " Pablo Picasso " " [distinguish] this set more than anything else " .

= = Personnel = =

Ronnie Spector ? vocals (1971 single)
George Harrison ? acoustic guitar ; vocals (1973 release)
Leon Russell ? piano
Gary Wright ? electric piano
Pete Ham ? acoustic guitar
Klaus Voormann ? bass
Jim Gordon ? drums , tambourine
John Barham ? orchestral and choral arrangements