

= Sunshine of Your Love =

" Sunshine of Your Love " is a 1967 song by the British rock band Cream . With elements of hard rock , psychedelia , and pop , it is one of Cream 's best @-@ known and most popular songs . Cream bassist and vocalist Jack Bruce based it on a distinctive bass riff or repeated musical phrase he developed after attending a Jimi Hendrix concert . Guitarist Eric Clapton and lyricist Pete Brown later contributed to the song . Recording engineer Tom Dowd suggested the rhythm arrangement in which drummer Ginger Baker plays a distinctive tom @-@ tom drum rhythm , although Baker has claimed it was his idea .

The song was included on Cream 's second album Disraeli Gears in November 1967 , which was a best seller . Atco Records , the group 's American label , was initially unsure of the song 's potential . After recommendations by other label @-@ affiliated artists , it released an edited single version in January 1968 . The song became Cream 's first and highest charting American single and one of the most popular singles of 1968 . In September 1968 , it became a modest chart hit after being released in the UK .

Cream performed " Sunshine of Your Love " regularly in concert and several live recordings have been issued , including on the Royal Albert Hall London May 2 @-@ 3 @-@ 5 @-@ 6 , 2005 reunion album and video . Hendrix performed faster instrumental versions of the song , which he often dedicated to Cream . Several rock journals have placed the song on their greatest song lists , such as Rolling Stone , Q magazine , and VH1 . The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame included it on its list of the " 500 Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll " .

= = Composition = =

In early 1967 , Cream were writing and rehearsing songs for their second album . Their December 1966 debut album , Fresh Cream , was a mix of updated blues numbers and pop @-@ oriented rock songs . Inspired by recent developments in rock music , they began pursuing a more overtly psychedelic direction . " Sunshine of Your Love " began as a bass phrase or riff developed by Cream bassist Jack Bruce . Cream attended a concert on 29 January 1967 by the Jimi Hendrix Experience at the Saville Theatre in London . Cream guitarist Eric Clapton elaborated in a 1988 Rolling Stone magazine interview :

He [Hendrix] played this gig that was blinding . I don 't think Jack [Bruce] had really taken him in before ... and when he did see it that night , after the gig he went home and came up with the riff . It was strictly a dedication to Jimi . And then we wrote a song on top of it .

Music writers Covach and Boone describe the riff as blues @-@ derived , which uses a minor blues pentatonic scale with an added flattened fifth note (or common blues scale) . The song follows a blues chord progression (I ? IV ? I) during the first eight bars . Brown had a difficult time writing lyrics that fit the riff . After an all @-@ night session , Bruce played it on a standup bass while lyricist Pete Brown was staring out the window . Slowly , he started to write " It 's getting near dawn and lights close their tired eyes " , which is used in the first verse . Later , to break up the rhythm , Clapton wrote a refrain which also yielded the song 's title . It consists of eight @-@ bar sections using three chords , when the key shifts to the V chord (I = V) :

A bootleg recording from the Ricky @-@ Tick club in London before Cream recorded the song in the studio , shows " Sunshine of Your Love " with a beat common to rock for the period . Cream drummer Ginger Baker compared it to the uptempo " Hey Now , Princess " , another Bruce / Brown composition Cream recorded in March . He has claimed that he advised Bruce to slow it down and came up with the distinctive drum pattern which emphasises beats one and three (typical rock drumming favours beats two and four and is known as the backbeat) . However , Bruce and recording engineer Tom Dowd dispute Baker 's claim , which they say he only made much later . Dowd later explained

Where all the other songs that they [Cream] played were prepared , [but] this one song , they never found a pocket , they were never comfortable ... I said , ' You know , have you ever seen any American Westerns [films that have] the Indian beat , where the downbeat is the beat ? ' ... And

when he [Ginger] started playing it that way , all of the parts came together and right away they were elated .

= = Recording = =

Cream performed their first American concerts in New York City in 1967 . Robert Stigwood , the group 's manager , booked them for a Murray the K package show at the RKO Manhattan Theatre from 25 March to 2 April 1967 . When it was finished , Stigwood arranged for a recording session with Ahmet Ertegun at Atlantic Studios . Bruce and Brown had a number of new songs in various stages of development and entered the studio on 3 April . Initially , Ertegun assigned Dowd to work with the trio . Dowd had worked with many of the biggest jazz and rhythm and blues musicians in the 1950s and 1960s . However , Cream was his first exposure to extreme volume levels . The group arrived at Atlantic with their concert setup of multiple Marshall amplifiers (each 100 watts) . Dowd was surprised by the amount of equipment accompanying the trio : " They recorded at ear @-@ shattering level ... Everyone I 'd worked with before was using Fender Deluxes [about 20 watts] or Twins [about 80 watts] ? six- and seven @-@ piece bands that didn 't play as loud as this three piece did . "

Ertegun brought in producer Felix Pappalardi , whom he believed could work as a go @-@ between with the group and Dowd . They began with " Strange Brew " , " Tales of Brave Ulysses " , and " Sunshine of Your Love " . Ertegun previewed the demos and was unhappy , expecting more blues @-@ based material that was found on Fresh Cream . Jerry Wexler , Ertegun 's Atlantic Records partner , reportedly went as far as to call it " psychedelic hogwash " . However , Booker T. Jones (producer and keyboardist of Booker T. & the M.G. ' s) and Otis Redding (both whose Stax recordings at the time were distributed by Atco parent Atlantic) gave " Sunshine of Your Love " their wholehearted approval . Differences were smoothed over by the time Cream returned in May 1967 to finish recording the songs for Disraeli Gears .

With Pappalardi and Dowd , work continued on " Sunshine of Your Love " . For his guitar solo , Clapton used a sound known as the " woman tone " on his 1964 Gibson SG Standard . Author Mitch Gallagher describes it as a " smooth , dark , singing , sustaining sound " . It is one of the best @-@ known examples of the woman tone and quotes the melody from the perennial pop standard " Blue Moon " . By using the song 's major pentatonic scale , Clapton provides a contrast with the riff 's blues scale . A writer for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame describes this as " creating a balance between the sun and the moon " . Baker plays much of the song on the tom @-@ toms , described as sounding African (Schumacher) and Native American (Shapiro) . Covach and Boone note he " concentrates on the lower tom sounds and uses an articulation and sound reminiscent of the jazz drumming in the Woody Herman or Benny Goodman bands " .

= = Releases and charts = =

" Sunshine of Your Love " was included as the second track on Disraeli Gears , which was released in November 1967 by Reaction Records in the UK and Atco Records in the US . At first , Atco did not see the song as a single (" Strange Brew " , backed with " Tales of Brave Ulysses " had been released as a single in June 1967) . However , in January 1968 , the label issued an edited version of the song as the second single from the album , backed with " SWLABR " (the running time was trimmed from 4 : 08 to 3 : 03) . It entered Billboard magazine 's Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart on 6 January 1968 and eventually reached number five in the Hot 100 . In the UK , the single was not released until September 1968 , after Cream had announced their impending breakup . Polydor Records issued the UK single , which reached number 25 in the charts .

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certified the single gold on 26 September 1968 , signifying sales in excess of 500 @,@ 000 copies . In the US , it became one of the biggest selling singles of 1968 and one of the best @-@ selling at the time for the Atlantic group of labels .

As one of Cream 's most popular songs , several of the group 's compilation albums include the full @-@ length studio recording , such as Best of Cream , Heavy Cream , The Very Best of Cream ,

and the boxed set *Those Were the Days* .

= = Recognition and influence = =

In 2004 , the song ranked number 65 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the " 500 Greatest Songs of All Time " . In March 2005 , Q magazine placed " Sunshine of Your Love " at number 19 on its list of the " 100 Greatest Guitar Tracks Ever ! " In 2009 , VH1 included it at number 44 on its list of the " Top 100 Hard Rock Songs " . The song is on the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 's list of the " 500 Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll " .

Ertegun later admitted that , while his tastes ran more to Robert Johnson (Clapton had recorded Johnson 's " Ramblin ' on My Mind " with John Mayall , " Crossroads " with the Powerhouse , and " Four Until Late " with Cream) , Cream 's and Pappalardi 's vision resulted in songs which had a much larger impact on the rock audiences of the time . Covach and Boone have identified " Sunshine of Your Love " as foreshadowing future trends in rock :

'Sunshine of Your Love ' , Cream 's best @-@ known song , is a culmination of the British adaptation of blues into rock and also the direct precursor of Led Zeppelin and heavy metal , where this type of blues @-@ based motivic riff and harmonic motions like A ? C ? G or E ? G ? A (as in " Whole Lotta Love ") serve as the basis for a seemingly endless number of songs .

= = Other recordings = =

Several live recordings of " Sunshine of Your Love " have been issued on Cream albums . These include a 24 October 1967 recording by the BBC (BBC Sessions) , 9 March 1968 at the Winterland Ballroom (Live Cream Volume II) , and 26 November 1968 at the Royal Albert Hall (Cream 's Farewell Concert) . A recording from Cream 's reunion show on 3 May 2005 is included on Royal Albert Hall London May 2 @-@ 3 @-@ 5 @-@ 6 , 2005 . During their post @-@ Cream careers , Clapton and Bruce have recorded several live performances of the song .

A variety of musicians have recorded " Sunshine of Your Love " . After Cream announced their breakup , Hendrix often performed it in concert as a tribute to the group , apparently unaware that they had dedicated the song to him . He played it as an instrumental and sometimes as part of a medley . A performance by the Experience on 4 January 1969 is one of the best @-@ known . During the live broadcast of A Happening for Lulu , a music variety show hosted by pop singer Lulu on BBC Television , the Experience suddenly broke with the programme . Hendrix announced , " We 'd like to stop playing this rubbish [" Hey Joe "] and dedicate a song to the Cream , regardless of what kind of group they may be in ? dedicate this to Eric Clapton , Ginger Baker , and Jack Bruce " . As their performance of " Sunshine of Your Love " ran into the time allotted for Lulu 's closing number , the show 's producer and staff were frantically signalling for the Experience to stop . However , they continued playing and the show ended on a fade . Hendrix later apologised to Lulu , who thought the performance made for a great television moment .

Other artists include Spanky Wilson in 1968 and Ella Fitzgerald in 1969 (on her album of the same name) .