

= Mind Games ( John Lennon album ) =

Mind Games is the fourth studio album by John Lennon . It was recorded at Record Plant Studios in New York in summer 1973 . The album was released in the US 29 October 1973 and the UK 16 November 1973 . The album was Lennon 's first self @-@ produced recording without help from Phil Spector . Like his previous album , the politically topical and somewhat abrasive Some Time in New York City , Mind Games was poorly received by some music critics upon release . It reached number 13 in the UK and number 9 in the US , where it was certified gold .

The album was recorded while Lennon was having difficulties with US immigration and at the beginning of his 18 @-@ month separation from Yoko Ono . The title track was released as a single at the same time as the album . The album itself was later reissued several times throughout the 1970s and 1980s .

= = Background = =

By the start of 1973 , John Lennon began distancing himself from the political and social issues he had embraced in the previous 18 months . It was also around this time that he and his wife , Yoko Ono , were going through marital problems . As Ono was completing her fourth album , Feeling the Space , Lennon decided he also wanted to record a new album , and liked the studio musicians that their assistant and production coordinator May Pang had assembled for Ono 's album . Shortly thereafter , he asked Pang to book them for his sessions . Wanting to produce an album that would be more accepted than his previous politically charged commercial flop Some Time in New York City , Lennon began writing and demoing a few songs for Mind Games in his Greenwich Village apartment . He began composing after a period of almost a year of not writing any material .

Amid frequent court appearances battling to stay in the United States , Lennon became stressed , a situation that was only worsened by constant surveillance by the FBI , due to his political activism . Lennon said " I just couldn 't function , you know ? I was so paranoid from them tappin ' the phone and followin ' me . " All this combined made Lennon begin to feel emotionally withdrawn . Lennon put his suffering aside to write the songs for Mind Games , writing all the songs for it in a week .

Under the moniker of " The Plastic U.F.Ono Band " , Lennon engaged the services of session drummer Jim Keltner , guitarist David Spinozza , Gordon Edwards on bass , Arthur Jenkins on percussion , Michael Brecker on saxophone , Ken Ascher on piano and organ , and the vocal backing of a group called Something Different . Difficulties between Lennon and Ono became more and more noticeable around this time . Just as the sessions were to get under way in June at New York 's Record Plant Studios , John and Yoko separated . At Ono 's urging , Pang became Lennon 's companion and lover in what would become an 18 @-@ month relationship later renowned as Lennon 's ' lost weekend ' .

= = Recording and content = =

Mind Games was recorded between July and August 1973 in Lennon 's characteristic quick fashion , and was mixed over a two @-@ week period . Lennon produced the album by himself , following his previous three @-@ year partnership with Phil Spector . When the album was remixed in 2002 , many audio anomalies hidden in the original mixing were uncovered . Some rough mixes appear on bootlegs and on 1997 's John Lennon Anthology .

The album continued Lennon 's previous attempts to chronicle his life through his songs , the tone of which displays a range of mixed feelings . Among the sombre and melodic songs directed to Ono , " Aisumasen ( I 'm Sorry ) " was originally titled " Call My Name " , a song in which Lennon was offering to comfort someone , whereas the final version sees him asking for forgiveness . In " One Day ( At a Time ) " , Lennon sings about his devotion to Ono . " Out the Blue " also reflects Lennon 's devotion to his wife , and reflects its author 's self @-@ doubt as a result of their separation . " Out the Blue " incorporates several musical genres , starting with a gentle , melancholy acoustic guitar and moving through gospel , country and choral music portions . Another love song , " You Are Here

" took its title from Lennon 's one @-@ off art exhibition at the Robert Frazer Gallery . By the time of the Mind Games sessions , the composition had gone through several different themes , before Lennon settled on the theme of love and peace . The original master take of " You Are Here " featured an extra verse , that was about Japan and England .

Other songs on the album are more light @-@ hearted and optimistic , marking the return of Lennon 's humour and wit after the uncompromising doctrine espoused on Some Time in New York City . These tracks include " Intuition " , in which Lennon relates how life experience has honed his instincts and how it 's good to have gotten through it . While demoing the song on piano in early 1973 , with the lyrics still incomplete , he added a few lines from two previously released tracks ? " How ? " , from Imagine ( 1971 ) , and " God " , from John Lennon / Plastic Ono Band ( 1970 ) . " Only People " reflects his and Ono 's personal philosophy . Lennon later said that it failed as a song , however ; in an interview with Playboy Magazine , he remarked : " It was a good lick , but I couldn 't get the words to make sense . "

Also appearing on Mind Games are songs that indulged Lennon 's affinity for pure rock ' n ' roll , such as " Tight A \$ " , the title of which was a pun on the expressions " tight as " and " tight ass " . The track is in the rockabilly style with a 1950s sound , along the lines of songs that inspired Lennon in his youth . Another rock track , " Meat City " contains lyrics more in keeping with Lennon 's earlier penchant for obscure imagery over the personal . The song was a boogie piece until late in 1971 , when it began to take its final form , although with improvised lyrics . By late 1972 , Lennon had rewritten the words and finished developing the melody .

The song " Mind Games " , with its " love is the answer " refrain and call to " make love not war " , recalls Lennon 's work with the Beatles in 1967 . He started writing the track during the band 's Get Back sessions , in early 1969 , with the title " Make Love , Not War " . Lennon finished it after reading the book Mind Games : The Guide to Inner Space . Lennon had recorded demos of the retitled " Mind Games " on 28 and 29 December 1970 , at his home studio , Ascot Sound Studios .

" Bring on the Lucie ( Freeda Peeple ) " dated from late 1971 , having started out as little more than a chorus , after Lennon acquired a National guitar . Once he had worked on the lyrics , the song went from a simple political slogan to a full @-@ blown statement that hints at his earlier work , such as " Imagine " and " Power to the People " . " Only People " and the three @-@ second silent " Nutopian International Anthem " were the only political tracks on the album . The latter referred to " Nutopia : The Country of Peace " , a conceptual country which the Lennons had announced at a press conference in New York City on April Fool 's Day 1973 . " I Know ( I Know ) " features lyrics in which Lennon apologises for his thoughtlessness and discusses the causes of his insecurity . On some of the rough mixes available on bootlegs , the time @-@ consuming overdubbing on the song is apparent , as Lennon gradually refined the arrangement . The final track on Mind Games , " Meat City " contains a Lennon curse , " Fuck a pig ! " , sped up and backwards , while the mix used as the B @-@ side to the " Mind Games " single gave the same treatment to the phrase " Check the album ! " .

" Rock and Roll People " was also recorded during the album 's sessions and given to Johnny Winter for his John Dawson Winter III album . Lennon 's version remained unreleased until 1986 's posthumous Menlove Ave. album .

= = Release and promotion = =

Tony King , vice @-@ president of Apple Records in Los Angeles at the time , convinced Lennon to promote Mind Games , arranging interviews for Lennon with Billboard and Record World . He also persuaded Lennon to do a television commercial in which King dressed up as the Queen of England and waltzed with Lennon ( the commercial session can be seen in the 1988 film Imagine : John Lennon ) . King reprised his role as the Queen for two radio spots promoting the album .

Lennon created the Mind Games album cover himself , hand @-@ cutting the photos . The front and back covers are similar ; on the back sleeve Lennon is more toward the foreground , representing his symbolic walking away from Ono and her apparent mountainous influence on him .

Mind Games was released on 29 October in America and 16 November in Britain , around the

same time as Ono 's Feeling the Space . Apple Records issued the title track as a single , with the release dates matching those of the album in the US and UK . The single reached number 26 in the UK , and peaked at number 18 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US . The album charted at number 13 in the UK and peaked at number 9 on Billboard 's Top LP 's listings . Although Mind Games sold better than Some Time in New York City , its release " came and went with barely a ripple " , according to Beatles biographer Chris Ingham . Author Peter Doggett similarly writes that the album " did nothing to alter [ Lennon 's ] status as the least commercially successful Beatle " .

= = Reception = =

Jon Landau of Rolling Stone magazine assessed the songs on Mind Games as " his worst writing yet " and considered that Lennon was " helplessly trying to impose his own gargantuan ego upon an audience ? [ that ] is waiting hopefully for him to chart a new course " . While finding the music " listenable " , Landau identified the album 's lyrics as " misguided in so underrating his audience 's intelligence " and added : " But then , perhaps Lennon 's didacticism , preaching and banality are part of the mind game of the album 's title ? " More impressed , Melody Maker 's Ray Coleman found that " The raw nerves of a Lennon battered by America 's curious logic and sheer hard @-@ heartedness seem to have spurred him to write incisively ? " Coleman concluded of Mind Games : " Musically or melodically this may not be a stand @-@ out album , but if you warm to the rasping voice of Lennon and , like me , regard him as the true fulcrum of much of what came from his old group , then like any new Lennon album , it will be enjoyable and even important . " In a mixed review , Robert Christgau described the album as " A step in the right direction , but only a step " . He complimented " Mind Games " as well as the songs " One Day ( At a Time ) " and " You Are Here " , but criticised Lennon for " falling back on ideas that have lost their freshness for him " .

Writing in their 1975 book The Beatles : An Illustrated Record , NME journalists Roy Carr and Tony Tyler opined that Mind Games " bears all the hallmarks of being made without any definite objective in mind ? other than to redeem the unpleasantness of Some Time In New York City " . While noting the singer 's attempts to re @-@ create " the lyricism and melodic inventiveness " of Imagine , Carr and Tyler continued : " The reason the total album is not more effective can be laid at the door of Lennon 's personal situation , and on his tendency to react to events , instead of initiating them . " In The Beatles Apart ( 1981 ) , Bob Woffinden considered that , aside from the " excellent " title track and " Bring on the Lucie " , Mind Games " consisted of so @-@ so songs that hardly lodged in the memory " , and that " The best one can say of the album is that it 's exceptionally well produced . "

In a more recent review , for AllMusic , critic Stephen Thomas Erlewine writes that " confusion ? lies at the heart of the album . Lennon doesn 't know which way to go , so he tries everything . " Erlewine adds : " While the best numbers are among Lennon 's finest , there 's only a handful of them , and the remainder of the record is simply pleasant . "

= = Reissues = =

The album was reissued in the US on Capitol Records in 1978 and 1980 , with the latter being a budget reissue . In the UK , the album was reissued on EMI 's budget label , Music for Pleasure ( MFP ) , on 28 November 1980 , featuring a different album cover . After Lennon 's death in December 1980 , the album , along with seven other Lennon albums , was reissued by EMI as part of a box set , which was released in the UK on 15 June 1981 . It was first issued on CD on 3 August 1987 , this time on the Parlophone label , and several months later on 22 March 1988 in the US on the Capitol label .

In 2002 , a remixing of Mind Games for its remastered reissue , containing three previously unreleased demo recordings , was overseen by Allan Rouse , which was released on 21 October 2002 in the UK , and almost a month later in the US , on 5 November 2002 . It was reissued again by Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab in 2004 on CD and LP . In 2010 , the original mix was remastered as part of the re @-@ release of Lennon 's entire catalogue , the album was available separately or as part of the John Lennon Signature Box .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by John Lennon .

Side one

" Mind Games " ? 4 : 13

" Tight A \$ " ? 3 : 37

" Aisumasen ( I 'm Sorry ) " ? 4 : 44

" One Day ( At a Time ) " ? 3 : 09

" Bring on the Lucie ( Freda Peeple ) " ? 4 : 12

" Nutopian International Anthem " ? 0 : 03

Side two

" Intuition " ? 3 : 08

" Out the Blue " ? 3 : 23

" Only People " ? 3 : 23

" I Know ( I Know ) " ? 3 : 49

" You Are Here " ? 4 : 08

" Meat City " ? 2 : 45

Bonus tracks

= = Personnel = =

Personnel per album sleeve and Bruce Spizer .

John Lennon ? lead , harmony and backing vocals ; rhythm , slide and acoustic guitars ; clavichord ; percussion

Ken Ascher ? piano , Hammond organ , Mellotron

David Spinozza ? lead guitar

Gordon Edwards ? bass

Jim Keltner ? drums

Rick Marotta ? drums on " Bring on the Lucie " and " Meat City " ( with Keltner )

Michael Brecker ? saxophone

Sneaky Pete Kleinow ? pedal steel guitar

Something Different ? backing vocals

Roy Cicala , Dan Barbiero ? engineers

Tom Rabstanek ? mastering

= = Charts = =