

= Beck 's Bolero =

" Beck 's Bolero " is a rock instrumental recorded by English guitarist Jeff Beck in 1966 . It is Beck 's first solo recording and has been described as " one of the great rock instrumentals , epic in scope , harmonically and rhythmically ambitious yet infused with primal energy " . " Beck 's Bolero " features a prominent melody with multiple guitar parts propelled by a rhythm inspired by Ravel 's Boléro .

The recording session brought together a group of musicians , including Jimmy Page , Keith Moon , John Paul Jones , and Nicky Hopkins , who later agreed that the line up was a first attempt at what became Led Zeppelin . However , there is an ongoing disagreement over the composer as well as producer credits . Despite being credited solely to Page , Beck claims that he made significant contributions to the composition . Likewise , Page and Simon Napier @-@ Bell each claim to have produced it , while Mickie Most received the credit .

" Beck 's Bolero " was not released until ten months after recording and then only as the B @-@ side to Beck 's first single . When it finally received greater exposure on Beck 's debut album Truth in the latter part of 1968 , it was still considered quite advanced even though it was over two years old . Beck continues to perform it and several renditions have been recorded by other musicians .

= = Background = =

The recording session for " Beck 's Bolero " was conceived of as a side project for Jeff Beck while he was a member of the Yardbirds . " It was decided that it would be a good idea for me to record some of my own stuff ... partly to stop me moaning about the Yardbirds " , Beck recalled . Also , the Yardbirds ' management was encouraging individual band members to bring attention to the band through success in solo projects . Studio time was booked for May 1966 at the IBC Studios in London . To prepare for the session , Beck called on long @-@ time friend and studio guitarist Jimmy Page , who had recommended Beck as Eric Clapton 's replacement in the Yardbirds , to work up some ideas for songs to record .

Although there is a disagreement over credits for the composition , both Beck and Page agree that Page began by playing some chords on a twelve @-@ string guitar using a rhythm based on Boléro . Boléro is a one @-@ movement orchestral piece composed by Maurice Ravel in 1928 and is " built on a persistent , repeating motif supported by a snare drum ... re @-@ creating the Spanish ' bolero ' dance pattern for full orchestra " , according to Beck biographer Martin Power . A melody line for guitar was developed along with a middle section to break up the rhythm , reminiscent of the Yardbirds ' arrangements for " For Your Love " and " Shapes of Things " .

With at least the outline of one song and Page on board to play guitar , Beck approached Keith Moon of the Who , whom he considered one of his favourite drummers . Moon was unhappy with the Who at the time and readily agreed to participate . To avoid a confrontation with Pete Townshend and Kit Lambert , the Who 's manager , Moon wished to do so incognito . He recommended bandmate John Entwistle , who was similarly discontented with the Who , to provide the bass .

= = Recording = =

The recording session took place at IBC Studios on 16 and 17 May 1966 (although a date after Beck left the Yarbirds in November 1966 has also been suggested) . Moon arrived at the studio disguised in sunglasses and a Russian cossack hat . When Entwistle did not show , studio musicians John Paul Jones and Nicky Hopkins were brought in at the last minute to provide bass and piano . Although there is an unsubstantiated account that Ritchie Blackmore may have been somehow involved at the studio , his participation has not been acknowledged by Beck , Page , or the others at the session . Napier @-@ Bell , the Yardbird 's producer who had originally promoted the idea , was present for the recording .

For the guitar parts , Beck used a Gibson Les Paul played through a Vox AC30 amplifier and Page played a Fender Electric XII twelve @-@ string electric guitar . Half way through the song , Moon smashed the drum microphone with his stick ? " You can actually hear him screaming as he does it "

, Beck remembered , " so all you can hear from then on is cymbals ! " After Moon and Napier @-@ Bell left , Beck and Page added overdubs and sound treatments to complete the track . According to Beck , two or three songs were recorded at the session , but " Beck 's Bolero " was the only track released .

= = Composition = =

" Beck 's Bolero " is roughly divided into three parts . The first begins with a reworking of Ravel 's two @-@ chord progression , transposed to the key of A. Power points out that by using a 12 @-@ string guitar , Page is able to take advantage of the instrument 's " rich chiming quality to emulate the distinct , orchestral ' bolero ' sound " . Beck then introduces the melody line on electric guitar with a fuzz @-@ tone effect producing indefinite sustain ; alternating between major and minor modes , it is described as " haunting " by Power and as a " distinctive piercing , sinister tone " by critic Richie Unterberger . In the second section , the piano , bass , and drums come in and the tension builds . Unterberger describes the third section as " suddenly set [ting] off from the main motif into a beautiful serene section highlighting slide @-@ glissando guitars " , with Beck 's echo @-@ laden slide sounding similar to a steel guitar . The fourth section returns to the main melody with overlaid drawn @-@ out descending slide . According to Beck , " the phasing was Jimmy 's idea ... I played a load of waffle and he reversed it " . The tension mounts as Moon adds drum flourishes , climaxing with a break .

The second part begins with Moon 's simultaneous drum break and scream and launches in different , hard rock direction . " It was my idea to cut off in the middle , Yardbirds @-@ style " , Beck commented , " Keith upped the tempo and gave it an extra kick . It 's like a bit of the Who , a bit of the Yardbirds and a bit of me " . The amply @-@ distorted guitar provides " a thick @-@ toned , descending riff " , according to Power . He also describes the break , inspired by the Yardbirds ' rave @-@ up technique , as " eerily presag [ing] the coming era of hard rock and heavy metal " . The third part returns to the main motif with added guitar fills . The melody line is abandoned in the second section and replaced with multiple interwoven takes of guitar effects , including phasing , echo , and controlled feedback . It concludes with a few bars of hard blues rock @-@ style lead guitar and an abrupt ending .

= = Releases = =

The record release of " Beck 's Bolero " was delayed for ten months , when Jeff Beck began his solo career after leaving the Yardbirds . It appeared as the B @-@ side of his first single , " Hi Ho Silver Lining " , which was released on 10 March 1967 in the UK (Columbia DB 8151) and 3 April 1967 in the US (Epic 5 ? 10157) . The initial UK pressing of the single listed the title as " Bolero " with Jeff Beck as the composer , while later pressings showed " Beck 's Bolero " and " J. Page " . The single reached number fourteen in the UK Singles Chart , and number 123 in the US Billboard 's Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart . " Hi Ho Silver Lining " was ignored by American underground FM radio , but " Beck 's Bolero " became a staple of the new radio format .

In 1968 , the instrumental gained wider exposure when it was included on the Jeff Beck Group debut album , Truth . Released in the US in July , the album reached number 15 in the Billboard 200 album chart one month later . Truth was issued in October in the UK , but it did not appear in the album charts . On the British monaural releases , " Beck 's Bolero " has a fifteen @-@ second backwards guitar coda . This version is included as a bonus track on the 2006 remastered Truth CD and on the Sundazed Records reissue of the original mono vinyl album . The original album liner notes do not list the personnel for " Beck 's Bolero " ? Jones ' and Hopkins ' contributions are noted for other songs along with " Timpani by ' You Know Who ' " , the " Who " being Moon .

" Beck 's Bolero " remains one of Beck 's favourites pieces and he has performed it numerous times , often as his opening number . A live version in 2008 appears on his Live at Ronnie Scott 's album and video . On 4 April 2009 , Page formally inducted Beck into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and together they performed " Beck 's Bolero " at the induction ceremony , with Page playing the original

1965 Fender XII electric twelve @-@ string guitar which he used for the 1966 recording session .

= = Disagreement over credits = =

= = = Production = = =

Beck 's later producer , Mickie Most , the Yardbirds ' producer , Simon Napier @-@ Bell , and Jimmy Page have each claimed to be the recording 's producer . At the time of the release of " Beck Bolero " , Beck was under contract to producer Most . Although he was not involved in the recording , under the terms of the contract , Most received a " mandated production credit " and it is his name that appears on the single and album credits . Napier @-@ Bell , who was at least present for the recording , has claimed that his involvement was substantial :

I produced it , but I was naïve about ' Bolero ' . When Mickie Most took Jeff , he asked if there were any productions knocking around and I said ' Yes , we 've got ' Bolero ' . ' So it eventually came out as a Mickie Most production , which has always pissed me off because it was such a great record . My fault , no one else 's .

However , according to Jimmy Page , " the track was done and then the producer , Simon Napier @-@ Bell , just disappeared ... [he] just sort of left me and Jeff to do it . Jeff was playing and I was [at the recording console] . " Page asserts that he in fact was the instrumental 's actual producer .

= = = Composition = = =

The initial Columbia Records pressing of the single listed the title as " Bolero " and " Jeff Beck " as the composer . However , Jimmy Page filed for the composer credit for " Beck 's Bolero " and it is his name that appears on the credits for all but the initial release . Nonetheless , Beck has claimed credit for his contributions to the composition . Both Beck and Page agree that Page came up with the Boléro @-@ influenced chords and rhythm . However , Beck specifically claims that key features of the instrumental ? the haunting melody line and the second part " hard @-@ rock " break ? are his . Beck adds that the break contains " the first heavy metal riff ever written and I wrote it " . While not addressing the specifics , Page asserts " I wrote it , played on it , produced it ... and I don 't give a damn what [Jeff] says . That 's the truth " , but adds " the slide bits are his " . Beck later put it behind him , " No , I didn 't get a songwriting credit , but you win some and lose some down the years " . Over the years , he and Page have made several appearances together in concerts and for interviews .

= = Legacy = =

Beck , Page , Hopkins , Jones , and Moon were pleased with the outcome of the recording session and there was talk of forming a working group and additional recordings . This led to the famous quip , " Yeah , it 'll go down like a lead zeppelin " , which Page later used , with a slight spelling change , for his new group . Page ascribed it to Moon , while Beck 's and Led Zeppelin 's later manager Peter Grant claimed Moon used the phrase " go down like a lead balloon " , to which Entwistle added " more like a lead zeppelin " . Entwistle , on the other hand , insists that he came up with the name independently along with the idea of using an image of " a Zeppelin going down in flames " for an album cover . Led Zeppelin biographer Keith Shadwick notes that forming an actual group at the time " was never a realistic option " , due to existing contractual obligations .

For all their attempts at secrecy , Townshend learned of Moon 's move . Beck recalled , " I remember [Pete] Townshend looking daggers at me when he heard it ... because it was a bit near the mark . He didn 't want anybody meddling with that territory [his band , the Who] at all " . Townshend also took to referring to Beck and Page as " flashy little guitarists of very little brain " for their perceived subterfuge (Page responded with " Townshend got into feedback because he couldn 't play single notes ") . In a later interview , Townshend explained

The thing is when Keith did Beck 's ' Bolero ' , that wasn 't just a session , that was a political move . It was at a point when the group was very close to breaking up . Keith was very paranoid and going through a heavy pills thing . He wanted to make the group plead for him because he 'd joined Beck .

Differences with Moon were resolved and he returned to the Who shortly after the recording . One month later , Page joined the Yardbirds and together with Beck became one of the first dual @-@ lead guitar teams in popular rock . In 1968 , Hopkins became a member of the Jeff Beck Group and for performances of " Beck 's Bolero " during their first US tour in June , singer Rod Stewart played the rhythm guitar part . Also in 1968 , Page started Led Zeppelin with Jones . Page incorporated some of the melody line and bolero rhythm into the medley portion of " How Many More Times " for the Led Zeppelin debut album .

" Beck 's Bolero " appears on various " best of " lists and in Guitar Masters : Intimate Portraits , Alan di Perna describes it as " one of the great rock instrumentals , epic in scope , harmonically and rhythmically ambitious yet infused with primal energy " . The May 1966 recording pre @-@ dated other mid @-@ 1960s hard rock / psychedelic rock milestones , such as the formation of Cream , Jimi Hendrix 's arrival in England , the Beatles ' Revolver album , and the rise of the San Francisco Sound . Guitarist Mike Bloomfield recalled that " Beck 's Bolero " had a " significant impact on Jimi Hendrix , who named it among his favorite tracks " . Beck recalled performing a live version with Hendrix on lead guitar , but a recording has not been forthcoming .

According to Paul Hornsby , who played with Duane Allman in Hour Glass in 1967 ? 1968 before the Allman Brothers Band , " Beck 's Bolero " inspired Allman to take up slide guitar . After hearing Beck 's record , Allman " loved that slide part and told me he was going to learn to play it " , Hornsby recalled . In 1970 , Joe Walsh adapted the slide @-@ guitar section of " Beck 's Bolero " for a James Gang song . Titled " The Bomber " , the multi @-@ part suite also includes a rendition of Ravel 's Boléro and appears on the James Gang Rides Again album . Several artists have recorded renditions of " Beck 's Bolero " , including SRC , the Posies , Les Fradkin , Eric Johnson , and Return to Forever .