

george harrison what is life

george harrison what is life is a phrase that resonates with fans of The Beatles and music lovers alike, evoking curiosity about the song and its deeper meanings. Written by George Harrison, "What Is Life" is more than just a catchy tune; it encapsulates themes of love, existence, and spiritual awakening. This article delves into the significance of the song, its background, and the impact it has had on listeners and the music industry. We will explore George Harrison's musical journey, the philosophical implications of the lyrics, the song's production details, and its legacy. Join us as we unravel the layers behind one of Harrison's most iconic works.

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Background of George Harrison

George Harrison, often referred to as the "quiet Beatle," was a pivotal figure in the world of music during the 1960s and beyond. Born on February 25, 1943, in Liverpool, England, he rose to fame as the lead guitarist of The Beatles, a band that changed the landscape of popular music. Harrison's songwriting skills began to shine during the band's later years, with songs like "Here Comes the Sun" and "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" showcasing his unique perspective.

After The Beatles disbanded in 1970, Harrison embarked on a successful solo career, exploring themes of spirituality, love, and self-discovery. His music often reflected his interest in Eastern philosophy and religion, which he began to study in depth during the 1960s. This exploration of spirituality greatly influenced his songwriting and is evident in tracks such as "My Sweet Lord" and, of course, "What Is Life."

Understanding the Song: What Is Life?

"What Is Life" was released in 1970 as part of Harrison's triple album "All Things Must Pass." This song stands out not only for its upbeat melody but also for its thought-provoking lyrics. The phrase "What is life?" serves as a central theme, prompting listeners to reflect on their own existence and the

nature of love. The song was written during a period of personal and artistic transformation for Harrison, as he sought to express his feelings about love and spirituality.

The lyrics convey a sense of joy and devotion, addressing the complexities of life and relationships. Harrison's use of repetition in the chorus emphasizes the importance of love as a guiding force, suggesting that true fulfillment comes from genuine connections with others. The song's exuberance is matched by its sincerity, making it a powerful anthem for love and self-discovery.

Musical and Lyrical Analysis

The musical composition of "What Is Life" is characterized by its vibrant instrumentation and infectious rhythm. The song features a rich arrangement that includes horns, strings, and backing vocals, contributing to its uplifting feel. Harrison's guitar work is prominent, showcasing his signature style that blends rock and Indian influences, a testament to his diverse musical background.

In terms of lyrics, "What Is Life" can be dissected into various themes and motifs:

- **Love and Devotion:** The lyrics express a deep sense of commitment and affection, suggesting that love is central to understanding life's purpose.
- **Existential Inquiry:** The recurring question, "What is life?" invites listeners to ponder their own existence and the meaning behind their experiences.
- **Spiritual Awakening:** Harrison's exploration of spiritual themes is evident, reflecting his quest for enlightenment and understanding through love.

This combination of lyrical depth and musical brilliance has allowed "What Is Life" to resonate with audiences across generations, making it a timeless classic.

Production Details

The production of "What Is Life" was a collaborative effort that involved several notable figures in the music industry. The song was recorded at Abbey Road Studios, known for its state-of-the-art facilities and association with The Beatles. Harrison worked closely with producer Phil Spector, who was known for his "Wall of Sound" technique, which added depth and richness to the track.

The recording process involved a large ensemble of musicians, including members of The Wrecking Crew, a group of session musicians known for their

contributions to numerous hits in the 1960s. The lush instrumentation and harmonies in "What Is Life" reflect Spector's influence, creating a sound that is both grand and intimate.

The Legacy of What Is Life

"What Is Life" has left an indelible mark on music history and popular culture. The song has been covered by various artists, and its themes continue to inspire new generations of musicians and listeners. Its enduring popularity is a testament to Harrison's songwriting prowess and the universal appeal of its message.

The song has also been featured in numerous films, television shows, and commercials, further solidifying its place in the cultural zeitgeist. The infectious energy of "What Is Life" makes it a favorite at celebrations and gatherings, evoking feelings of joy and togetherness.

Conclusion

George Harrison's "What Is Life" stands as a remarkable achievement in the realm of music, blending profound existential questions with vibrant melodies and heartfelt lyrics. The song's exploration of love, existence, and spiritual awakening continues to resonate with listeners, making it a timeless anthem of devotion and inquiry. As we reflect on the legacy of George Harrison, it becomes clear that his contributions to music and culture will endure, inviting us all to ponder the deeper meanings of life.

Q: What inspired George Harrison to write "What Is Life"?

A: George Harrison was inspired by his experiences with love and spirituality, seeking to express the joy and devotion he felt in relationships. The song reflects his quest for understanding life's purpose through love.

Q: In what album did "What Is Life" appear?

A: "What Is Life" was released in 1970 as part of George Harrison's triple album "All Things Must Pass," which marked his first major solo project after The Beatles disbanded.

Q: How has "What Is Life" influenced modern music?

A: "What Is Life" has been covered by various artists and featured in films and commercials, influencing many musicians with its themes of love and existential inquiry, showcasing Harrison's songwriting legacy.

Q: What are the main themes of "What Is Life"?

A: The main themes of "What Is Life" include love and devotion, existential inquiry, and spiritual awakening, inviting listeners to reflect on their own lives and relationships.

Q: Who produced "What Is Life"?

A: "What Is Life" was produced by Phil Spector, known for his "Wall of Sound" production style, which contributed to the rich and layered sound of the song.

Q: What musical elements are prominent in "What Is Life"?

A: The song features vibrant instrumentation, including horns, strings, and backing vocals, with George Harrison's signature guitar work blending rock and Indian influences.

Q: Why is "What Is Life" considered a timeless classic?

A: "What Is Life" is considered a timeless classic due to its infectious melody, profound lyrics, and universal themes of love and existence, allowing it to resonate across generations.

Q: How did "What Is Life" perform commercially?

A: "What Is Life" achieved commercial success, charting in several countries and becoming one of George Harrison's most recognizable and beloved songs.

Q: What impact did The Beatles have on George Harrison's music?

A: The Beatles significantly influenced George Harrison's music, shaping his songwriting style and introducing him to diverse musical genres, which he continued to explore in his solo career.

Q: How do the lyrics of "What Is Life" reflect George Harrison's philosophy?

A: The lyrics of "What Is Life" reflect George Harrison's philosophy by emphasizing the importance of love and connection, as well as his spiritual beliefs, inviting listeners to explore deeper meanings in their own lives.

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