

recording earned a Grammy for Album of the Year in 1972. But, more importantly, as a reaction to human catastrophe, the concert itself emblemized the manner in which George engaged with the world: Alert, empathetic, alive to what was around him. The success and power of the album—and its energy crackles, as “While My Guitar Gently Weeps,” “Here Comes the Sun,” and “Something” ably demonstrate—have everything to do with the positive associations attached to Harrison at that time. For the people watching it all go down, it seemed for a moment that the ideals of the sixties had survived beyond their time. The concert was a shot of hope.

Heading into the mid-1970s and 1980s, George Harrison embraced certain freedoms that had often been difficult to access as a Beatle. He pursued personal interests outside the studio with the same intensity he brought to all of his passions, but the constant remained songwriting. It was a practice that, for Harrison, was habitual, irrepressible. *Dark Horse*, *Extra Texture*, and *Thirty Three & 1/3* came out in quick succession, one each year between 1974 and 1976.

“Blow Away,” from 1979’s self-titled *George Harrison*, pulls close to the territory that best exemplifies the recordings of that middle period. So well crafted are many of these songs that one doesn’t always pick up on the complexity, the odd time signatures and unexpected chord progressions. A lover of what he called “the naughty chords,” Harrison may have been raised on skiffle and