

Melodies and messages

Business



Throughout our world, people share similar goals in life. Fame, glory, and fortune are just a few materialistic ones. Then there are those souls who aim for something that will benefit the whole human race, like positive change in the world. These people look forward to a brighter, more prosperous future. But, since each individual is unique, one may see the same aspiration in a different light as someone else.

Songwriters are just another one of these people, with their own hopes and dreams to fulfill, many of which are not so different from ours. In the 21st century, a time when music has become a universal language, these artists can spread universal messages. Songs like “Imagine” by John Lennon and “Waiting on the World to Change” by John Mayer have lyrics that provide a vision for beneficial change in our world. Lennon and Mayer both stand for a better future, but take different approaches when addressing it in their songs. These artists have a vision for a more pleasing world that has undergone a major makeover. Their aspirations are embedded in the lyrics in each of their songs.

In “Imagine”, the lyrics “imagine all the people living life in peace...” explain how the singer hopes that people in the future are not living their lives in war, but rather living together in harmony. That itself would suffice to help the world move towards a brighter future. When people live in peace, no innocent souls die, no mothers weep over their children’s graves, and no countries are completely torn apart by war. John Lennon’s words paint a picture of a world that mankind would flourish in, a world where we live together... our hands not holding guns, but holding the hands of others. In comparison to “Imagine”, “Waiting on the World to Change” sings a similar

tune. The artist in the second song sings, “ now if we had the power to bring our neighbors home from war...” That string of words shows how John Mayer views war.

He does not want to see his neighbors have to leave their families and head off to the battlefield. Instead, he would pull them out of the bloodshed, if he could, before they are victims themselves. Like the previous song, these lyrics sing out against power-hungry leaders raging war every day. Why do we need to pry families apart by sending our youth to war, when we can very well be living peacefully? Peace, that simple idea can bring the color back into our black and white world. This is the aim of these songwriters. If there was ever a key called peace major, it would be apparent that these two songs are written in it.

The artists’ voices sing of abolishing war and reestablishing the amity that was lost for so long. The components of both songs weave together an idealistic ambition, peace. With wars and battles taking place every day, anyone who believes that peace will join us once again is condemned for their farfetched ideas. Lennon and Mayer are no exception. They are so well aware of public opinion that they blatantly state how they are misjudged.

To start off the chorus in “ Imagine”, Lennon sings, “ you may say I’m a dreamer” and then goes on “ but I’m not the only one...” Basically, he is admitting to his listeners that many may perceive him to be a dreamer conjuring up impossible visions. World peace may seem to be such a beautiful thought, but it is not that easy to execute. No matter how hard you try, there will always be someone having strife with someone else. The

problems lay in how you deal with issues. The understanding that declaring war whenever you are upset is not the better path to follow will take a while to achieve. Many have waited for peace for so long that they have lost hope, so they discourage others to dream of a peaceful world in the future.

But the singer knows that there are some people in the world who support his cause, and that he is not alone. That belief of his is completely accurate. Mayer stands in the same boat as Lennon when it comes to how he is viewed by the public. He begins the song with the lines, “ me and all my friends, we’re all misunderstood...” In those lines, he is making it obvious to the listeners that the majority of people do not understand the cause they stand for. Like the previous singer, Mayer experiences a plethora of criticism from others questioning his cause.

Some have given up so early on a peaceful world that they just cannot wrap their minds around the thought that anyone would stand for it. In such a war torn planet, peace is just considered a figment of the imagination. It would only make sense to criticize someone who promotes such a “ fictitious” idea. So both artists are being reviewed in a similar manner. What they stand for and believe in brings them great amounts of condemnation. Peace has now become a fantasy, not a reality to many of the people on our planet.

They do not sing the same tune as Lennon and Mayer. Although these singers’ songs follow nearly identical melodies, but if one looks closely at the background harmonies, one can see distinct differences in their sounds. It is true that both songs spread the same message about peace and harmony. It is also true that both artists are heavily criticized for their faith in a better

future. But the greatest truth of all is how these men share the same goals but express their beliefs quite diverse manners.

When listening to “Imagine”, a person is hearing the voice of a hopeful dreamer. Lennon labels himself as a dreamer and repeats the word “imagine” throughout the song. He is trying to fabricate this positive environment of the future by imagining. With a voice coated with hope, he sings, “I hope someday you’ll join us, and the world will be as one...” It is clear that he desires this utopia that he has created in his mind to become reality. On the other hand, the voice in “Waiting for the World to Change” is one of a more passive activist.

Mayer strongly supports peace in the world, but is waiting for the right opportunity. His most significant repeating line, “waiting on the world to change...” shows that he is being patient for change to come its way and peace to touch all the four corners of the earth. He is justifying why he is not taking much action now when he sang the words, “it’s not that we don’t care, we just know that the fight ain’t fair, so we keep on waiting, waiting on the world to change...” In some sense, he has accepted the fact that peace cannot come at this point, but will continue awaiting its presence. Lennon’s attitude towards promoting peace is filled with hopes and dreams. There is no line between imagination and reality for him. Mayer, on the other hand, has a much more practical approach.

He believes in the same cause with equal passion, but patiently waited for the perfect time to make his vision come true. For the time being, all he is doing is waiting, nothing else. These two songwriters both share an identical

goal when it comes to envisioning the future, but they express their similar opinions from different stand points. Peace in the near future is undoubtedly a beautiful cause to sing for. Not everyone may set such a virtuous goal in their lifetime.

Each individual has their own accomplishments to strive for, some may be identical to another person's and others may be different. But one thing is for sure, every human on this planet has something to aim for in his or her own unique manner.