John Lennon: Rock 'N' Roll Rebel [B2]

Icona assoluta del XX secolo, ha contribuito, prima come membro fondatore del gruppo di maggior successo di tutti i tempi e poi come artista solista, a rivoluzionare la musica pop sfruttando al contempo la sua fama come instancabile attivista per la pace nel mondo.

John Lennon was the founder, co-songwriter, co-lead **vocal**ist and rhythm guitarist of The Beatles, the most popular band in the history of music. His songwriting **partnership** **wit**h Paul McCartney is the most successful of all time. Lennon's songs often involved **painfully** honest truths about himself as well as radical **cries** for peace in the world.

A **WIT**TY REBEL

Lennon was famous for his rebellious nature and **acerbic wit**. When he said, in March 1966, in **playful** provocation, that The Beatles were "more popular than Jesus", furious Americans burnt the group's records in their thousands. John Lennon was born in Liverpool on October 9, 1940. By the age of five, he was separated from both parents and living **wit**h his aunt, Mimi. He had a

troubled, violent childhood. Aged seventeen, he lost his **beloved** mother in a traffic accident. These events would influence his songwriting.

THE BEATLES

In 1956 Lennon formed a band called The **Quarrymen**, which became The Beatles in 1962. The other members were Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr. In just one year, The Beatles conquered Britain **wit**h a series of **upbeat**, **catchy tunes**. In 1964, Beatlemania **reached** the US, and then the rest of the world! Many of Lennon's songs for The Beatles **featured** sad, mysterious, **offbeat** lyrics about alienation, most notably Strawberry Fields Forever, Norwegian Wood, Lucy in the Sky **wit**h Diamonds and I Am The **Walrus**. His All You Needis Love became an anti-war **anthem**. By the time The Beatles **split up** on December 31, 1970, they had sold over two billion singles and around 800 million albums.

SOLO CAREER

Lennon then began his solo career. He also embarked on years of activism, mainly campaigning for world peace. He spent these years in New York **wit**h the Japanese multimedia artist Yoko Ono, whom he had married in 1969. A **vocal** critic of the Vietnam War, several of Lennon's songs became anti-war **anthem**s and US President Richard Nixon spent three years trying to deport him. Lennon's hymn of hope Imagine became one of the most popular songs of the second half of the 20th century.

HOUSEHUSBAND

In September 1973, Lennon separated from Yoko Ono and began **drinking heavily**. Reunited in 1975, **wit**h Lennon now a **committed** feminist, he and Ono had a son, Sean. Lennon spent the next five years as a **househusband**. He returned to music in 1980 **wit**h the LP Double Fantasy. Three weeks after its **release**, on December 8, 1980, Lennon was shot dead by a **deranged** fan outside his New York apartment. His death **sent shock waves** across the world.

I've never claimed to have the answers to life. I only put out songs and answer questions as honestly as I can … But I still believe in peace, love and understanding.

A GENERATION'S SOUNDTRACK

The songs of The Beatles, and of Lennon as a solo artist, provided the **soundtrack** for a generation. As one critic put it, the band "revolutionized the sound, style and attitude of popular music." They also helped lead the counterculture movement of the 1960s. Lennon himself was an icon, a model for young people and, for many, a hero.

Glossary

- **drinking heavily** = bere eccessivamente
- **househusband** = casalingo
- **sent shock waves** = scioccare
- **cries** = messaggi
- **beloved** = amata
- **catchy tunes** = ritmi orecchiabili
- **featured** = raffigurare
- **Walrus** = tricheco
- **split up** = separarsi
- **release** = rilascio
- **acerbic** = acerbo
- **upbeat** = ottimisti
- **reached** = raggiungere
- **anthem** = inno
- **vocal** = apertamente
- **committed** = deciso
- **deranged** = impazzito
- **soundtrack** = colonna sonora
- **wit** = intelligenza
- **playful** = giocoso
- **Quarrymen** = cavatori
- **partnership** = collaborazione
- **painfully** = dolorosamente, estremamente
- **offbeat** = anticonformista