

= The Beatles in the United States =

The Beatles' rise to prominence in the United States in February 1964 was a significant development in the history of the band's commercial success. In addition to establishing the Beatles' international stature, it changed attitudes to popular music in the United States, whose own Memphis @-@ driven musical evolution had made it a global trend @-@ setter.

The Beatles' first visit to the United States came at a time of great popularity in Britain. The band's UK commercial breakthrough, in late 1962, had been followed by a year of successful concerts and tours. The start of the Beatles' popularity in the United States, in early 1964, was marked by intense demand for the single "I Want to Hold Your Hand" which sold one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half million copies in under three weeks and the band's arrival the following month. The visit, advertised across the United States on five million posters, was a defining moment in the Beatles' history, and the starting @-@ point of the British Invasion.

Following popular television appearances and concerts during their February 1964 visit, the Beatles returned to the United States in August 1964, and again in August 1965, for tours. In August 1966 they returned once more, and although this tour was commercially successful, it coincided with a storm of U.S. public protest after publication of a quote from John Lennon's remarks about Christianity. The 1966 U.S. tour marked the end of the Beatles' concert days. The band ceased to perform commercial concerts, instead devoting their efforts to creating new material in the recording studio.

= = Background = =

= = Impact of Beatlemania = =

In the United Kingdom, the Beatles had experienced popularity since the start of 1963. But in the United States, Capitol Records, owned by the band's record company EMI, had for most of the year declined to issue any of the singles. The phenomenon of Beatlemania in the UK was regarded with amusement by the U.S. press, once it made any comment. When newspaper and magazine articles did begin to appear towards the end of 1963, they cited the English stereotype of eccentricity, reporting that the UK had developed an interest in something that had come and gone a long time ago in the United States: rock and roll. Headlines included "The New Madness" and "Beatle Bug Bites Britain", and writers employed word @-@ play linking "beetle" with the "infestation" afflicting the UK. In late 1963, Capitol Records agreed to release the single "I Want to Hold Your Hand" with a large accompanying promotional campaign, due to Ed Sullivan's agreement to headline the Beatles on The Ed Sullivan Show. The Beatles' American television debut was on 18 November 1963 on The Huntley @-@ Brinkley Report, with a four @-@ minute long piece by Edwin Newman. On 22 November 1963, the CBS Morning News ran a five @-@ minute feature on Beatlemania in the UK which heavily featured their then current UK hit "She Loves You." The evening's scheduled repeat was cancelled following the assassination of John F. Kennedy the same day. On 10 December, Walter Cronkite decided to transmit the piece again on the CBS Evening News, and the resulting interest led to the rush @-@ release of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and only weeks before the Beatles' arrival a U.S. commercial breakthrough.

= = American political climate, early 1964 = =

Eleven weeks before the Beatles' arrival in the U.S. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. The nation was in mourning, in fear, and in disbelief. The assassination came after a fifteen @-@ year build @-@ up of Cold War tension. The motivation and identity of the assassin would be doubted by many Americans for decades, despite the Warren Commission's issued report in September 1964. As the United States tried to restore a sense of normality, teenagers in particular struggled to cope, as their disbelief began to be replaced by a personal

reaction to what had happened : in school essays , teenagers wrote that " then it became real " , and " I was feeling the whole world is going to collapse on me " , and " I never felt so empty in all my life " .

= = = Musical influences = = =

The music industry in Memphis had large role in bringing bands to the attention of the American public , and in the 1960s , many British bands , among them the Beatles , aspired to emulate the sounds of Memphis musicians including Elvis Presley ? without whom , according to Lennon , " there would not have been the Beatles " . The sudden popularity of the Beatles , and the British Invasion triggered by their arrival , became a major new influence in the United States , which not only established the popularity of British bands , but also affected the musical style of U.S. bands ? including those subsequently formed in Memphis .

During their U.S. tours , the Beatles were introduced to both Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan . Strongly influenced by Presley since before their formation , the band had tried to meet him in the past , but arrangements had fallen through . At Presley 's suggestion , guitars were set up in his living room and the gathering played music for an hour , following which they discussed the music business and exchanged anecdotes . The other meeting , with Dylan , influenced the music subsequently produced by the Beatles as well as shaping Dylan 's own musical style . This was made evident both in Dylan 's controversial adoption of electric guitar , and in changes that were apparent in Lennon 's vocal and guitar @-@ playing styles .

However , before their visits to United States in 1964 the Beatles still doubted that they could bring anything new to the country . In apprehensive conversation among the Beatles on board the aircraft to New York February 1964 , McCartney had questioned , " They 've got their own groups . What are we going to give them that they don 't already have ? " .

= = The Beatles ' U.S. performances = =

= = = February 1964 ? First U.S. Concerts = = =

An estimated four thousand Beatles ' fans were present on 7 February 1964 as Pan Am Flight 101 left Heathrow Airport . Among the passengers were the Beatles , on their first trip to the United States as a band , with their entourage of photographers and journalists , and Phil Spector . When the group arrived at New York 's newly renamed John F. Kennedy Airport , they were greeted by a second large crowd , with Beatles fans again estimated to number four thousand , and journalists , two hundred . From having so many people packed in a little space , a few people in the crowd got injured . The airport had not previously experienced such a large crowd .

After a press conference , where they first met disc jockey Murray the K , the Beatles were put into limousines ? one per Beatle ? and driven to New York City . On the way , McCartney turned on a radio and listened to a running commentary : " They have just left the airport and are coming to New York City ... " After reaching the Plaza Hotel , the Beatles were besieged by fans and reporters . Harrison had a fever of 102 ° F ( 39 ° C ) the next day and was ordered to stay in bed , so Neil Aspinall , the band 's personal assistant , replaced Harrison on guitar during the Beatles ' first rehearsal for The Ed Sullivan Show . On 9 February 1964 , the Beatles made their first live U.S. television appearance . 73 million viewers ? about two @-@ fifths of the total American population ? watched the group perform on The Ed Sullivan Show at 8 P.M. According to the Nielsen ratings audience measurement system , the show had the largest number of viewers that had been recorded for a U.S. television program .

Two days after the television appearance , on 11 February 1964 , the Beatles ' first U.S. concert took place , at Washington Coliseum , a sports arena in Washington , D.C. The concert was attended by eight thousand fans . The Beatles performed on a central stage in the arena , with the audience on all sides , and there were regular pauses to enable the band to turn their equipment

around and perform facing in another direction . The concert generated intense excitement . The following day , the Beatles performed a second concert , in Carnegie Hall , New York , which was attended by two thousand fans . The concert was again well received . Following the Carnegie Hall concert , the Beatles flew to Miami Beach and on Sunday 16 February 1964 made their second television appearance on The Ed Sullivan Show , which this time was broadcast live from the Napoleon Ballroom of the Deauville Hotel in Miami Beach . As it had done on 9 February , the television broadcast attracted around 70 million viewers . On 22 February 1964 , the Beatles returned to the UK . Arriving at Heathrow airport at 7 am , they were met by an estimated ten thousand fans .

= = = August 1964 ? First U.S. Tour = = =

In August 1964 , the Beatles returned to the United States for a second visit , this time remaining for a month @-@ long tour . A request was received from the White House press office , which asked for the Beatles to be photographed with the new President of the United States , Lyndon B. Johnson , laying a wreath on the grave of John F. Kennedy . The request was politely declined by Epstein , as it was not the group 's policy to accept " official " invitations . During the tour , the Beatles performed at thirty concerts , starting in San Francisco and ending in New York , twenty @-@ three cities in all . One of the major stipulations for the tour was that the band would not perform for segregated audiences or at venues that excluded African Americans .

At each venue , the concert was treated as a major event by the local press and attended by between ten and twenty thousand fans , whose enthusiastic response to the Beatles produced sound levels that left the music only semi @-@ audible . The tour earned the Beatles over a million dollars in ticket sales . It also stimulated a further increase in record sales , and resulted in the sale of a considerable quantity of Beatle @-@ related merchandise .

By this point in the year , the British Invasion ? started by the Beatles ' previous U.S. visit ? was gathering momentum , and several more UK acts had come to the United States , including The Dave Clark Five , Billy J. Kramer , and Gerry & the Pacemakers . One third of all U.S. top ten hits in 1964 were by British acts . After the tour 's final concert in New York , the Beatles were introduced to Bob Dylan , a meeting brought about at the instigation of the New York journalist Al Aronowitz , who arranged for Dylan to visit the Beatles at their hotel before they returned to the UK .

= = = August 1965 ? Second U.S. Tour = = =

In June 1965 , after completing a two @-@ week European tour of France , Italy and Spain , the Beatles attended the London premiere of Help ! , their second film , and then returned to the United States for another two @-@ week tour . The tour commenced at Shea Stadium , New York City on Sunday 15 August 1965 . The circular stadium had been constructed the previous year , opening on 17 April 1964 , with seating arranged in four ascending decks , all of which were filled for the concert . It was the first time in history that a large outdoor stadium had been used for such a purpose , and the event sold out in seventeen minutes .

The 1965 tour was highly successful , with well @-@ attended concerts on each of its ten dates . The opening concert at Shea Stadium attracted an audience of fifty @-@ five thousand , the largest of any live concert that the Beatles would perform . The band arrived by armoured car . After the 1965 tour 's final concert , which took place at Cow Palace , San Francisco , the Beatles accepted an invitation to visit Elvis Presley before returning to the UK .

= = = August 1966 ? Third U.S. Tour = = =

Following the UK and U.S. releases of their new album Revolver in August 1966 , the Beatles returned to the United States for what would be their last tour . The tour coincided with a storm of U.S. public protest against the Beatles , caused by a published quote from a remark Lennon had made about Christianity . Because of the severity of the protests , which included Beatles ' records

being publicly burned and claims being made that the Beatles were " anti @-@ Christ " , Epstein had considered cancelling the fourteen @-@ concert tour , fearing for their lives . Nevertheless , the tour went ahead .

In Memphis , the city council decided not to let " municipal facilities be used as a forum to ridicule anyone 's religion " , and voted to cancel their Beatles concert , although it did in fact take place . There were disturbances during the tour , and one performance was brought to a temporary halt when a member of the audience threw a firecracker , leading the Beatles to believe they were being shot at . In other incidents , telephone threats were received , and the Ku Klux Klan picketed the Beatles ' concerts . The tour ended with a concert at Candlestick Park . Although commercially successful , the tour had been affected by the prevailing mood of controversy , and there had been rows of empty seats at some venues .

= = After the United States = =

The Beatles ' arrival in the United States in 1964 marked the spread of Beatlemania from the UK to the wider world , established the group 's international stature , and , triggering the British Invasion , caused changes in U.S. popular culture . The Candlestick Park concert at the close of the 1966 U.S. tour marked the end of a four @-@ year period dominated by touring and concerts , including nearly sixty U.S. appearances , and over one thousand four hundred internationally . The Beatles , from the end of their 1966 U.S. tour until their break @-@ up in 1970 , gave no further commercial concerts , instead devoting their efforts to creating new material in the recording studio .