

= The Beatles =

The Beatles were an English rock band , formed in Liverpool in 1960 . With members John Lennon , Paul McCartney , George Harrison and Ringo Starr , they became widely regarded as the foremost and most influential act of the rock era . Rooted in skiffle , beat , and 1950s rock and roll , the Beatles later experimented with several musical styles , ranging from pop ballads and Indian music to psychedelia and hard rock , often incorporating classical elements in innovative ways . In the early 1960s , their enormous popularity first emerged as " Beatlemania " , but as the group 's music grew in sophistication , led by primary songwriters Lennon and McCartney , they came to be perceived as an embodiment of the ideals shared by the counterculture of the 1960s .

The Beatles built their reputation playing clubs in Liverpool and Hamburg over a three @-@ year period from 1960 , with Stuart Sutcliffe initially serving as bass player . The core of Lennon , McCartney and Harrison went through a succession of drummers , most notably Pete Best , before asking Starr to join them . Manager Brian Epstein moulded them into a professional act , and producer George Martin guided and developed their recordings , greatly expanding their popularity in the United Kingdom after their first hit , " Love Me Do " , in late 1962 . They acquired the nickname " the Fab Four " as Beatlemania grew in Britain the next year , and by early 1964 became international stars , leading the " British Invasion " of the United States pop market . From 1965 onwards , the Beatles produced increasingly innovative recordings , including the widely influential albums Rubber Soul (1965) , Revolver (1966) , Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967) , The Beatles (commonly known as the White Album , 1968) and Abbey Road (1969) .

After their break @-@ up in 1970 , they each enjoyed successful musical careers of varying lengths . McCartney and Starr , the surviving members , remain musically active . Lennon was shot and killed in December 1980 , and Harrison died of lung cancer in November 2001 .

According to the RIAA , the Beatles are the best @-@ selling music artists in the United States , with 178 million certified units . They have had more number @-@ one albums on the British charts and sold more singles in the UK than any other act . In 2008 , the group topped Billboard magazine 's list of the all @-@ time most successful " Hot 100 " artists ; as of 2016 , they hold the record for most number @-@ one hits on the Hot 100 chart with twenty . They have received ten Grammy Awards , an Academy Award for Best Original Song Score and fifteen Ivor Novello Awards . Collectively included in Time magazine 's compilation of the twentieth century 's 100 most influential people , they are the best @-@ selling band in history , with estimated sales of over 600 million records worldwide . The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988 , and all four were inducted individually from 1994 to 2015 .

= = History = =

= = = 1957 ? 62 : Formation , Hamburg , and UK popularity = = =

In March 1957 , John Lennon , then aged sixteen , formed a skiffle group with several friends from Quarry Bank school . They briefly called themselves the Blackjacks , before changing their name to the Quarrymen after discovering that a respected local group was already using the other name . Fifteen @-@ year @-@ old Paul McCartney joined as a rhythm guitarist shortly after he and Lennon met that July . In February 1958 , McCartney invited his friend George Harrison to watch the band . The fourteen @-@ year @-@ old auditioned for Lennon , impressing him with his playing , but Lennon initially thought Harrison was too young to join them . After a month of Harrison 's persistence , they enlisted him as their lead guitarist . By January 1959 , Lennon 's Quarry Bank friends had left the group , and he began studies at the Liverpool College of Art . The three guitarists , billing themselves at least three times as Johnny and the Moondogs , were playing rock and roll whenever they could find a drummer . Lennon 's art school friend Stuart Sutcliffe , who had recently sold one of his paintings and was persuaded to purchase a bass guitar , joined in January 1960 , and it was he who suggested changing the band 's name to Beatal , as a tribute to Buddy Holly and

the Crickets . They used the name until May , when they became the Silver Beetles , before undertaking a brief tour of Scotland as the backing group for pop singer and fellow Liverpudlian Johnny Gentle . By early July , they had changed their name to the Silver Beatles and by the middle of August to the Beatles .

Allan Williams , the Beatles ' unofficial manager , arranged a residency for them in Hamburg , but lacking a full @-@ time drummer they auditioned and hired Pete Best in mid @-@ August 1960 . The band , now a five @-@ piece , left four days later , contracted to club owner Bruno Koschmider for what would be a 3 ½ -month residency . Beatles historian Mark Lewisohn writes : " They pulled into Hamburg at dusk on 17 August , the time when the red @-@ light area comes to life ... flashing neon lights screamed out the various entertainment on offer , while scantily clad women sat unabashed in shop windows waiting for business opportunities . "

Koschmider had converted a couple of strip clubs in the district into music venues , and he initially placed the Beatles at the Indra Club . After closing the Indra due to noise complaints , he moved them to the Kaiserkeller in October . When he learned they had been performing at the rival Top Ten Club in breach of their contract , he gave the band one month 's termination notice , and reported the underage Harrison , who had obtained permission to stay in Hamburg by lying to the German authorities about his age . The authorities arranged for Harrison 's deportation in late November . One week later , Koschmider had McCartney and Best arrested for arson after they set fire to a condom in a concrete corridor ; the authorities deported them . Lennon returned to Liverpool in early December , while Sutcliffe remained in Hamburg through late February with his German fiancée Astrid Kirchherr , who took the first semi @-@ professional photos of the Beatles .

During the next two years , the Beatles were resident for periods in Hamburg , where they used Preludin both recreationally and to maintain their energy through all @-@ night performances . In 1961 , during their second Hamburg engagement , Kirchherr cut Sutcliffe 's hair in the " exi " (existentialist) style , later adopted by the other Beatles . When Sutcliffe decided to leave the band early that year and resume his art studies in Germany , McCartney took up the bass . Producer Bert Kaempfert contracted what was now a four @-@ piece group through June 1962 , and he used them as Tony Sheridan 's backing band on a series of recordings for Polydor Records . As part of the sessions , the Beatles were signed to Polydor for one year . Credited to " Tony Sheridan & the Beat Brothers " , the single " My Bonnie " , recorded in June 1961 and released four months later , reached number 32 on the Musikmarkt chart .

After the Beatles completed their second Hamburg residency , they enjoyed increasing popularity in Liverpool with the growing Merseybeat movement . However , they were also growing tired of the monotony of numerous appearances at the same clubs night after night . In November 1961 , during one of the group 's frequent performances at the Cavern Club , they encountered Brian Epstein , a local record @-@ store owner and music columnist . He later recalled : " I immediately liked what I heard . They were fresh , and they were honest , and they had what I thought was a sort of presence ... [a] star quality . " Epstein courted the band over the next couple of months , and they appointed him as their manager in January 1962 . Throughout early and mid @-@ 1962 , Epstein sought to free the Beatles from their contractual obligations to Bert Kaempfert Productions . He eventually negotiated a one @-@ month @-@ early release from their contract in exchange for one last recording session in Hamburg . Tragedy greeted them on their return to Germany in April , when a distraught Kirchherr met them at the airport with news of Sutcliffe 's death the previous day from what would later be determined to have been a brain hemorrhage . Epstein began negotiations with record labels for a recording contract . In order to secure a UK record contract , Epstein negotiated an early end to the band 's contract with Polydor , in exchange for more recordings backing Tony Sheridan . After a New Year 's Day audition , Decca Records rejected the band with the comment " Guitar groups are on the way out , Mr. Epstein . " However , three months later , producer George Martin signed the Beatles to EMI 's Parlophone label .

Martin 's first recording session with the Beatles took place at EMI 's Abbey Road Studios in London on 6 June 1962 . Martin immediately complained to Epstein about Best 's poor drumming and suggested they use a session drummer in his place . Already contemplating Best 's dismissal , the Beatles replaced him in mid @-@ August with Ringo Starr , who left Rory Storm and the Hurricanes

to join them . A 4 September session at EMI yielded a recording of " Love Me Do " featuring Starr on drums , but a dissatisfied Martin hired drummer Andy White for the band 's third session a week later , which produced recordings of " Love Me Do " , " Please Please Me " and " P.S. I Love You " . Martin initially selected the Starr version of " Love Me Do " for the band 's first single , though subsequent re @-@ pressings featured the White version , with Starr on tambourine . Released in early October , " Love Me Do " peaked at number seventeen on the Record Retailer chart . Their television debut came later that month with a live performance on the regional news programme People and Places . After Martin suggested rerecording " Please Please Me " at a faster tempo , a studio session in late November yielded that recording , of which Martin accurately predicted , " You 've just made your first No.1. "

In December 1962 , the Beatles concluded their fifth and final Hamburg residency . By 1963 , they had agreed that all four band members would contribute vocals to their albums ? including Starr , despite his restricted vocal range , to validate his standing in the group . Lennon and McCartney had established a songwriting partnership , and as the band 's success grew , their dominant collaboration limited Harrison 's opportunities as a lead vocalist . Epstein , in an effort to maximise the Beatles ' commercial potential , encouraged them to adopt a professional approach to performing . Lennon recalled him saying , " Look , if you really want to get in these bigger places , you 're going to have to change ? stop eating on stage , stop swearing , stop smoking ... " Lennon said : " We used to dress how we liked , on and off stage . He 'd tell us that jeans were not particularly smart and could we possibly manage to wear proper trousers , but he didn 't want us suddenly looking square . He 'd let us have our own sense of individuality . "

= = = 1963 ? 66 : Beatlemania and touring years = = =

= = = Please Please Me and With the Beatles = = =

On 11 February 1963 , the Beatles recorded ten songs during a single studio session for their debut LP , Please Please Me . The album was supplemented by the four tracks already released on their first two singles . Martin originally considered recording the Beatles ' debut LP live at the Cavern Club , but after deciding that the building 's acoustics were inadequate , he elected to simulate a " live " album with minimal production in " a single marathon session at Abbey Road " . After the moderate success of " Love Me Do " , the single " Please Please Me " met with a more emphatic reception . Released in January 1963 , two months ahead of the album of the same name , the song reached number one on every chart in London except Record Retailer , where it stalled at number two . Recalling how the Beatles " rushed to deliver a debut album , bashing out Please Please Me in a day " , AllMusic 's Stephen Thomas Erlewine comments , " Decades after its release , the album still sounds fresh , precisely because of its intense origins . " Lennon said little thought went into composition at the time ; he and McCartney were " just writing songs à la Everly Brothers , à la Buddy Holly , pop songs with no more thought of them than that ? to create a sound . And the words were almost irrelevant . "

Released in March 1963 , the album initiated a run during which eleven of their twelve studio albums released in the United Kingdom through 1970 reached number one . The band 's third single , " From Me to You " , came out in April and was also a chart @-@ topping hit , starting an almost unbroken string of seventeen British number @-@ one singles for the Beatles , including all but one of the eighteen they released over the next six years . Issued in August , the band 's fourth single , " She Loves You " , achieved the fastest sales of any record in the UK up to that time , selling three @-@ quarters of a million copies in under four weeks . It became their first single to sell a million copies , and remained the biggest @-@ selling record in the UK until 1978 , when " Mull of Kintyre " , by McCartney 's post @-@ Beatles band Wings , surpassed it in sales . Their commercial success brought increased media exposure , to which the Beatles responded with an irreverent and comical attitude that defied the expectations of pop musicians at the time , inspiring even more interest . The band toured the UK three times in the first half of the year : a four @-@ week tour that began in

February , the Beatles 's first nationwide , preceded three @-@ week tours in March and May ? June . As their popularity spread , a frenzied adulation of the group took hold . Greeted with riotous enthusiasm by screaming fans , the press dubbed the phenomenon " Beatlemania " . Although not billed as tour leaders , the Beatles overshadowed American acts Tommy Roe and Chris Montez during the February engagements and assumed top billing " by audience demand " , something no British act had previously accomplished while touring with artists from the US . A similar situation arose during their May ? June tour with Roy Orbison .

In late October , the Beatles began a five @-@ day tour of Sweden , their first time abroad since the final Hamburg engagement of December 1962 . On their return to the UK on 31 October , according to Lewisohn , " several hundred screaming fans " greeted them in heavy rain at Heathrow Airport . Around 50 to 100 journalists and photographers as well as representatives from the BBC also joined the airport reception , the first of more than 100 such events . The next day , the band began its fourth tour of Britain within nine months , this one scheduled for six weeks . In mid @-@ November , as Beatlemania intensified , police resorted to using high @-@ pressure water hoses to control the crowd before a concert in Plymouth .

Please Please Me maintained the top position on the Record Retailer chart for 30 weeks , only to be displaced by its follow @-@ up , With the Beatles . On 22 November EMI released With the Beatles to record advance orders of 270 @,@ 000 copies , and the LP topped a half @-@ million albums sold in one week . Recorded between July and October , With the Beatles made better use of studio production techniques than its predecessor . It held the top spot for 21 weeks with a chart life of 40 weeks . Erlewine described the LP as " a sequel of the highest order ? one that betters the original " . In a reversal of then standard practice , EMI released the album ahead of the impending single " I Want to Hold Your Hand " , with the song excluded to maximise the single 's sales . The album caught the attention of music critic William Mann of The Times , who suggested that Lennon and McCartney were " the outstanding English composers of 1963 " . The newspaper published a series of articles in which Mann offered detailed analyses of the music , lending it respectability . With the Beatles became the second album in UK chart history to sell a million copies , a figure previously reached only by the 1958 South Pacific soundtrack . When writing the sleeve notes for the album , the band 's press officer , Tony Barrow , used the superlative the " fabulous foursome " , which the media widely adopted as " the Fab Four " .

= = = = " British Invasion " = = = =

EMI 's American subsidiary , Capitol Records , hindered the Beatles ' releases in the United States for more than a year by initially declining to issue their music , including their first three singles . Concurrent negotiations with the independent US label Vee @-@ Jay led to the release of some of the songs in 1963 , but not all . Vee @-@ Jay finished preparation for the album Introducing ... The Beatles , culled from most of the songs of Parlophone 's Please Please Me , but a management shake @-@ up led to the album not being released . Then when it surfaced that the label did not report royalties on their sales , the licence Vee @-@ Jay signed with EMI was voided . A new licence was granted to the Swan label for the single " She Loves You " , but legal issues with royalties and publishing rights proved an obstacle to the successful marketing of the group in the US . American chart success began after Epstein arranged for a \$ 40 @,@ 000 US marketing campaign and secured the support of disc jockey Carrol James , who first played the band 's records in mid @-@ December 1963 . Late that same month , the Beatles were introduced in the Tidewater area of Virginia by Gene Loving of radio station WGH , accompanied by a full marketing campaign , including Beatles shirt giveaways . Within days , almost every other song played on the station was a Beatles recording . It was not until the end of first week of January 1964 that their records were played in New York City (also accompanied by a major marketing campaign and with similar play frequency) , and then the rest of the country , initiating their music 's spread across US radio . This caused an increase in demand , leading Capitol to rush @-@ release " I Want to Hold Your Hand " later that month . Issued on 26 December 1963 , with the band 's previously scheduled debut there just weeks away , " I Want to Hold Your Hand " sold a million copies , becoming a number @-@ one

hit in the US by mid @-@ January . In its wake , Vee @-@ Jay released Introducing ... The Beatles to go along with Capitol 's debut album , Meet the Beatles ! , while Swan reactivated production of " She Loves You " .

On 7 February 1964 , the Beatles left the United Kingdom with an estimated 4000 fans gathered at Heathrow , waving and screaming as the aircraft took off . Upon landing at New York 's John F. Kennedy Airport , an uproarious crowd estimated at 3000 greeted them . They gave their first live US television performance two days later on The Ed Sullivan Show , watched by approximately 73 million viewers in over 23 million households , or 34 per cent of the American population . Biographer Jonathan Gould writes that , according to the Nielsen rating service , it was " the largest audience that had ever been recorded for an American television program " . The next morning , the Beatles awoke to a negative critical consensus in the US , but a day later their first US concert saw Beatlemania erupt at Washington Coliseum . Back in New York the following day , the Beatles met with another strong reception during two shows at Carnegie Hall . The band then flew to Florida and appeared on the weekly Ed Sullivan Show a second time , before another 70 million viewers , before returning to the UK on 22 February .

= = = = A Hard Day 's Night = = = =

Capitol Records ' lack of interest throughout 1963 had not gone unnoticed , and a competitor , United Artists Records , encouraged their film division to offer the group a three @-@ motion @-@ picture deal , primarily for the commercial potential of the soundtracks . Directed by Richard Lester , A Hard Day 's Night involved the band for six weeks in March ? April 1964 as they played themselves in a mock @-@ documentary . The film premiered in London and New York in July and August , respectively , and was an international success , with some critics drawing comparison with the Marx Brothers . According to Erlewine , the accompanying soundtrack album , A Hard Day 's Night , saw them " truly coming into their own as a band . All of the disparate influences on their first two albums had coalesced into a bright , joyous , original sound , filled with ringing guitars and irresistible melodies . " That " ringing guitar " sound was primarily the product of Harrison 's 12 @-@ string electric Rickenbacker , a prototype given to him by the manufacturer , which made its debut on the record .

During the week of 4 April 1964 , the Beatles held twelve positions on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart , including the top five . Their popularity generated unprecedented interest in British music , and a number of other UK acts subsequently made their own American debuts , successfully touring over the next three years in what was termed the British Invasion . Their hairstyle , unusually long for the era and mocked by many adults , became an emblem of rebellion to the burgeoning youth culture .

Touring internationally in June and July , the Beatles staged 37 shows over 27 days in Denmark , the Netherlands , Hong Kong , Australia and New Zealand . In August they returned to the US , with a 30 @-@ concert tour of 23 cities . Generating intense interest once again , the month @-@ long tour attracted between 10 @,@ 000 and 20 @,@ 000 fans to each 30 @-@ minute performance in cities from San Francisco to New York .

In August , journalist Al Aronowitz arranged for the Beatles to meet Bob Dylan . Visiting the band in their New York hotel suite , Dylan introduced them to cannabis . Gould points out the musical and cultural significance of this meeting , before which the musicians ' respective fanbases were " perceived as inhabiting two separate subcultural worlds " : Dylan 's audience of " college kids with artistic or intellectual leanings , a dawning political and social idealism , and a mildly bohemian style " contrasted with their fans , " veritable ' teenyboppers ' ? kids in high school or grade school whose lives were totally wrapped up in the commercialised popular culture of television , radio , pop records , fan magazines , and teen fashion . They were seen as idolaters , not idealists . " Within six months of the meeting , Gould writes , " Lennon would be making records on which he openly imitated Dylan 's nasal drone , brittle strum , and introspective vocal persona " . Within a year , Dylan would " proceed , with the help of a five @-@ piece group and a Fender Stratocaster electric guitar , to shake the monkey of folk authenticity permanently off his back ... the distinctions between the folk

and rock audiences would have nearly evaporated [and the group 's] audience ... [was] showing signs of growing up . "

= = = = Beatles for Sale , Help ! and Rubber Soul = = = =

According to Gould , Beatles for Sale , the Beatles ' fourth studio LP , evidenced a growing conflict between the commercial pressures of their global success and their creative ambitions . They had intended the album , recorded between August and October 1964 , to continue the format established by A Hard Day 's Night which , unlike the group 's first two LPs , contained only original songs . The band had nearly exhausted their backlog of songs on the previous album , however , and given the challenges constant international touring posed to their songwriting efforts , Lennon admitted , " Material 's becoming a hell of a problem " . As a result , six covers from their extensive repertoire were chosen to complete the album . Released in early December , its eight original compositions stood out , demonstrating the growing maturity of the Lennon ? McCartney songwriting partnership .

In early 1965 , while they were his guests for dinner , Lennon and Harrison 's dentist secretly added LSD to their coffee . Lennon described the experience : " It was just terrifying , but it was fantastic . I was pretty stunned for a month or two . " He and Harrison subsequently became regular users of the drug , joined by Starr on at least one occasion . McCartney was initially reluctant to try it , but eventually did so in late 1966 . He became the first Beatle to discuss LSD publicly , declaring in a magazine interview that " it opened my eyes " and " made me a better , more honest , more tolerant member of society " .

Controversy erupted in June 1965 when Queen Elizabeth II appointed all four Beatles Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) after Prime Minister Harold Wilson nominated them for the award . In protest ? the honour was at that time primarily bestowed upon military veterans and civic leaders ? some conservative MBE recipients returned their own insignia .

Released in July , the Beatles ' second film , Help ! , was again directed by Lester . Described as " mainly a relentless spoof of Bond " , it inspired a mixed response among both reviewers and the band . McCartney said : " Help ! was great but it wasn 't our film ? we were sort of guest stars . It was fun , but basically , as an idea for a film , it was a bit wrong . " The soundtrack was dominated by Lennon , who wrote and sang lead on most of its songs , including the two singles : " Help ! " and " Ticket to Ride " . The accompanying album , the group 's fifth studio LP , contained all original material save for two covers , " Act Naturally " and " Dizzy Miss Lizzy " ; they were the last covers the band would include on an album , with the exception of Let It Be 's brief rendition of the traditional Liverpool folk song " Maggie Mae " . The band expanded their use of vocal overdubs on Help ! and incorporated classical instruments into some arrangements , notably a string quartet on the pop ballad " Yesterday " . Composed by McCartney , " Yesterday " would inspire the most recorded cover versions of any song ever written .

The group 's third US tour opened with a performance before a world @-@ record crowd of 55 @,@ 600 at New York 's Shea Stadium on 15 August 1965 ? " perhaps the most famous of all Beatles ' concerts " , in Lewisohn 's description . A further nine successful concerts followed in other American cities . At a show in Atlanta , the Beatles gave one of the first live performances ever to make use of a foldback system of on @-@ stage monitor speakers . Towards the end of the tour , they met with Elvis Presley , a foundational musical influence on the band , who invited them to his home in Beverly Hills . September saw the launch of an American Saturday @-@ morning cartoon series , The Beatles , that echoed A Hard Day 's Night 's slapstick antics over its two @-@ year original run . The series was a historical milestone as the first weekly television series to feature animated versions of real , living people .

In mid @-@ October 1965 , the Beatles entered the recording studio ; for the first time when making an album , they had an extended period without other major commitments . Until this time , according to George Martin , " we had been making albums rather like a collection of singles . Now we were really beginning to think about albums as a bit of art on their own . " Released in December , Rubber Soul has been hailed by critics as a major step forward in the maturity and complexity of

the band 's music . Their thematic reach was beginning to expand as they embraced deeper aspects of romance and philosophy . Biographers Peter Brown and Steven Gaines attribute the new musical direction to " the Beatles ' now habitual use of marijuana " , an assertion confirmed by the band ? Lennon referred to it as " the pot album " , and Starr said : " Grass was really influential in a lot of our changes , especially with the writers . And because they were writing different material , we were playing differently . " After Help ! ' s foray into the world of classical music with flutes and strings , Harrison 's introduction of a sitar on " Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown) " marked a further progression outside the traditional boundaries of popular music . As their lyrics grew more artful , fans began to study them for deeper meaning . Of " Norwegian Wood " Lennon commented : " I was trying to be sophisticated in writing about an affair ... but in such a smokescreen way that you couldn 't tell . "

While many of Rubber Soul 's more notable songs were the product of Lennon and McCartney 's collaborative songwriting , it also featured distinct compositions from each , though they continued to share official credit . The song " In My Life " , of which each later claimed lead authorship , is considered a highlight of the entire Lennon ? McCartney catalogue . Harrison called Rubber Soul his " favourite album " and Starr referred to it as " the departure record " . McCartney has said , " We 'd had our cute period , and now it was time to expand . " However , recording engineer Norman Smith later stated that the studio sessions revealed signs of growing conflict within the group ? " the clash between John and Paul was becoming obvious " , he wrote , and " as far as Paul was concerned , George could do no right " . In 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked Rubber Soul fifth among " The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time " , and AllMusic 's Richie Unterberger describes it as " one of the classic folk @-@ rock records " .

== = 1966 ? 70 : Controversy , studio years and break @-@ up == =

== = = Events leading up to final tour == = =

Capitol Records , from December 1963 when it began issuing Beatles recordings for the US market , exercised complete control over format , compiling distinct US albums from the band 's recordings and issuing songs of their choosing as singles . It was not until Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band in 1967 that a Beatles album was released with identical track listings in both the UK and the US . In June 1966 , Yesterday and Today , one of Capitol 's compilation albums , caused an uproar with its cover , which portrayed the grinning Beatles dressed in butcher 's overalls , accompanied by raw meat and mutilated plastic baby dolls . It has been incorrectly suggested that this was meant as a satirical response to the way Capitol had " butchered " the US versions of their albums . Thousands of copies of the LP had a new cover pasted over the original ; an unpeeled " first @-@ state " copy fetched \$ 10 @, @ 500 at a December 2005 auction . In England , meanwhile , Harrison met sitar maestro Ravi Shankar , who agreed to train him on the instrument .

During a tour of the Philippines the month after the Yesterday and Today furore , the Beatles unintentionally snubbed the nation 's first lady , Imelda Marcos , who had expected them to attend a breakfast reception at the Presidential Palace . When presented with the invitation , Epstein politely declined on the band members ' behalf , as it had never been his policy to accept such official invitations . They soon found that the Marcos regime was unaccustomed to taking no for an answer . The resulting riots endangered the group and they escaped the country with difficulty . Immediately afterwards , the band members visited India for the first time .

Almost as soon as they returned home , the Beatles faced a fierce backlash from US religious and social conservatives (as well as the Ku Klux Klan) over a comment Lennon had made in a March interview with British reporter Maureen Cleave . " Christianity will go , " Lennon had said . " It will vanish and shrink . I needn 't argue about that ; I 'm right and I will be proved right . We 're more popular than Jesus now ; I don 't know which will go first , rock ' n ' roll or Christianity . Jesus was alright but his disciples were thick and ordinary . It 's them twisting it that ruins it for me . " The comment went virtually unnoticed in England , but when US teenage fan magazine Datebook

printed it five months later ? on the eve of the group 's August US tour ? it sparked a controversy with Christians in the American " Bible Belt " . The Vatican issued a protest , and bans on Beatles ' records were imposed by Spanish and Dutch stations and South Africa 's national broadcasting service . Epstein accused Datebook of having taken Lennon 's words out of context ; at a press conference Lennon pointed out , " If I 'd said television was more popular than Jesus , I might have got away with it . " Lennon claimed that he was referring to how other people viewed their success , but at the prompting of reporters , he concluded : " If you want me to apologise , if that will make you happy , then okay , I 'm sorry . "

As preparations were made for the US tour , the Beatles knew that their music would hardly be heard . Having originally used Vox AC30 amplifiers , they later acquired more powerful 100 @-@ watt amplifiers , specially designed by Vox for them as they moved into larger venues in 1964 , but these were still inadequate . Struggling to compete with the volume of sound generated by screaming fans , the band had grown increasingly bored with the routine of performing live . Recognising that their shows were no longer about the music , they decided to make the August tour their last .

= = = Revolver and Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band = = =

Rubber Soul had marked a major step forward ; Revolver , released in August 1966 a week before the Beatles ' final tour , marked another . Pitchfork 's Scott Plagenhoef identifies it as " the sound of a band growing into supreme confidence " and " redefining what was expected from popular music " . Revolver featured sophisticated songwriting , studio experimentation , and a greatly expanded repertoire of musical styles , ranging from innovative classical string arrangements to psychedelic rock . Abandoning the customary group photograph , its cover ? designed by Klaus Voormann , a friend of the band since their Hamburg days ? " was a stark , arty , black @-@ and @-@ white collage that caricatured the Beatles in a pen @-@ and @-@ ink style beholden to Aubrey Beardsley " , in Gould 's description . The album was preceded by the single " Paperback Writer " , backed by " Rain " . Short promotional films were made for both songs ; described by cultural historian Saul Austerlitz as " among the first true music videos " , they aired on The Ed Sullivan Show and Top of the Pops in June 1966 .

Among the experimental songs that Revolver featured was " Tomorrow Never Knows " , the lyrics for which Lennon drew from Timothy Leary 's The Psychedelic Experience : A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead . Its creation involved eight tape decks distributed about the EMI building , each staffed by an engineer or band member , who randomly varied the movement of a tape loop while Martin created a composite recording by sampling the incoming data . McCartney 's " Eleanor Rigby " made prominent use of a string octet ; Gould describes it as " a true hybrid , conforming to no recognisable style or genre of song " . Harrison was developing as a songwriter , and three of his compositions earned a place on the record . In 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked Revolver as the third greatest album of all time . During the US tour that followed its release , however , the band performed none of its songs . As Chris Ingham writes , they were very much " studio creations ... and there was no way a four @-@ piece rock ' n ' roll group could do them justice , particularly through the desensitising wall of the fans ' screams . ' Live Beatles ' and ' Studio Beatles ' had become entirely different beasts . " The band 's final concert at San Francisco 's Candlestick Park on 29 August was their last commercial concert . It marked the end of a four @-@ year period dominated by almost nonstop touring that included over 1 @,@ 400 concert appearances internationally .

Freed from the burden of touring , the Beatles embraced an increasingly experimental approach as they recorded Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band , beginning in late November 1966 . According to engineer Geoff Emerick , the album 's recording took over 700 hours . He recalled the band 's insistence " that everything on Sgt. Pepper had to be different . We had microphones right down in the bells of brass instruments and headphones turned into microphones attached to violins . We used giant primitive oscillators to vary the speed of instruments and vocals and we had tapes chopped to pieces and stuck together upside down and the wrong way around . " Parts of " A Day in

the Life " featured a 40 @-@ piece orchestra . The sessions initially yielded the non @-@ album double A @-@ side single " Strawberry Fields Forever " / " Penny Lane " in February 1967 ; the Sgt. Pepper LP followed in June .

The musical complexity of the records , created using relatively primitive four @-@ track recording technology , astounded contemporary artists . For Beach Boys leader Brian Wilson , then in the midst of a personal crisis and struggling at the time to complete the ambitious Smile , hearing " Strawberry Fields " was reported as one of many elements that contributed to the project 's collapse . Among music critics , acclaim for the album was virtually universal . Gould writes :

The overwhelming consensus is that the Beatles had created a popular masterpiece : a rich , sustained , and overflowing work of collaborative genius whose bold ambition and startling originality dramatically enlarged the possibilities and raised the expectations of what the experience of listening to popular music on record could be . On the basis of this perception , Sgt. Pepper became the catalyst for an explosion of mass enthusiasm for album @-@ formatted rock that would revolutionise both the aesthetics and the economics of the record business in ways that far outstripped the earlier pop explosions triggered by the Elvis phenomenon of 1956 and the Beatlemania phenomenon of 1963 .

Sgt. Pepper was the first major pop / rock LP to include its complete lyrics , which appeared on the back cover . Those lyrics were the subject of critical analysis ; for instance , in late 1967 the album was the subject of a scholarly inquiry by American literary critic and professor of English Richard Poirier , who observed that his students were " listening to the group 's music with a degree of engagement that he , as a teacher of literature , could only envy " . Poirier identified what he termed its " mixed allusiveness " : " It 's unwise ever to assume that they 're doing only one thing or expressing themselves in only one style ... one kind of feeling about a subject isn 't enough ... any single induced feeling must often exist within the context of seemingly contradictory alternatives . " McCartney said at the time : " We write songs . We know what we mean by them . But in a week someone else says something about it , and you can 't deny it You put your own meaning at your own level to our songs . " In 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked it number one on its list of the " 500 Greatest Albums of All Time " .

Sgt. Pepper 's elaborate cover also attracted considerable interest and study . A collage designed by pop artists Peter Blake and Jann Haworth , it depicted the group as the fictional band referred to in the album 's title track standing in front of a crowd of famous people . The heavy moustaches worn by the group reflected the growing influence of hippie style , while cultural historian Jonathan Harris describes their " brightly coloured parodies of military uniforms " as a knowingly " anti @-@ authoritarian and anti @-@ establishment " display .

On 25 June 1967 , the Beatles performed their forthcoming single , " All You Need Is Love " , to an estimated 350 million viewers on Our World , the first live global television link . Released a week later , during the Summer of Love , the song was adopted as a flower power anthem . Two months later , the group suffered a loss that threw their career into turmoil . Having been introduced to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi only the previous night in London , on 25 August they travelled to Bangor for his Transcendental Meditation retreat . Two days later , their manager 's assistant , Peter Brown , phoned to inform them that Epstein had died . The coroner ruled the death an accidental carbitol overdose , although it was widely rumoured to be a suicide . Epstein had been in a fragile emotional state , stressed by personal issues and concern that the band might not renew his management contract , due to expire in October , over discontent with his supervision of business matters , particularly regarding Seltaeb , the company that handled their US merchandising rights . His death left the group disoriented and fearful about the future . Lennon recalled : " We collapsed . I knew that we were in trouble then . I didn 't really have any misconceptions about our ability to do anything other than play music , and I was scared . I thought , ' We 've had it now . ' "

= = = = Magical Mystery Tour , the White Album and Yellow Submarine = = = =

Magical Mystery Tour , the soundtrack to a forthcoming Beatles television film , was released in the UK as a six @-@ track double extended play disc (EP) in early December 1967 . In the United

States , the six songs were issued on an identically titled LP that also included five tracks from the band 's recent singles . Unterberger says of the US Magical Mystery Tour , " the psychedelic sound is very much in the vein of Sgt. Pepper , and even spacier in parts (especially the sound collages of ' I Am the Walrus ') " and he calls its five songs culled from the band 's 1967 singles " huge , glorious , and innovative " . In its first three weeks , the album set a record for the highest initial sales of any Capitol LP , and it is the only Capitol compilation later to be adopted in the band 's official canon of studio albums . First aired on Boxing Day , the Magical Mystery Tour film , largely directed by McCartney , brought the group their first major negative UK press . It was dismissed as " blatant rubbish " by the Daily Express ; the Daily Mail called it " a colossal conceit " ; and The Guardian labelled the film " a kind of fantasy morality play about the grossness and warmth and stupidity of the audience " . Gould describes it as " a great deal of raw footage showing a group of people getting on , getting off , and riding on a bus " . Although the viewership figures were respectable , its slating in the press led US television networks to lose interest in broadcasting the film .

In January 1968 , the Beatles filmed a cameo for the animated movie Yellow Submarine , which featured cartoon versions of the band members and a soundtrack with eleven of their songs , including four unreleased studio recordings that made their debut in the film . Released in June 1968 , the film was praised by critics for its music , humour and innovative visual style . It would be seven months , however , before the film 's soundtrack album appeared .

In the interim came The Beatles , a double LP commonly known as the White Album for its virtually featureless cover . Creative inspiration for the album came from a new direction : without Epstein 's guiding presence , the group had briefly turned to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi as their guru . At his ashram in Rishikesh , India , a " Guide Course " scheduled for three months marked one of their most prolific periods , yielding numerous songs including a majority of the 30 included on the album . However , Starr left after only ten days , likening it to Butlins , and McCartney eventually grew bored and departed a month later . For Lennon and Harrison , creativity turned to questioning when an electronics technician known as Magic Alex suggested that the Maharishi was attempting to manipulate them . When he alleged that the Maharishi had made sexual advances to women attendees , a persuaded Lennon left abruptly just two months into the course , bringing an unconvinced Harrison and the remainder of the group 's entourage with him . In anger , Lennon wrote a scathing song titled " Maharishi " , renamed " Sexy Sadie " to avoid potential legal issues . McCartney said , " We made a mistake . We thought there was more to him than there was . "

During recording sessions for the White Album , which stretched from late May to mid @-@ October 1968 , relations between the Beatles grew openly divisive . Starr quit for two weeks , and McCartney took over the drum kit for " Back in the U.S.S.R. " (on which Harrison and Lennon drummed as well) and " Dear Prudence " . Lennon had lost interest in collaborating with McCartney , whose contribution " Ob @-@ La @-@ Di , Ob @-@ La @-@ Da " he scorned as " granny music shit " . Tensions were further aggravated by Lennon 's romantic preoccupation with avant @-@ garde artist Yoko Ono , whom he insisted on bringing to the sessions despite the group 's well @-@ established understanding that girlfriends were not allowed in the studio . Describing the double album , Lennon later said : " Every track is an individual track ; there isn 't any Beatle music on it . [It 's] John and the band , Paul and the band , George and the band . " McCartney has recalled that the album " wasn 't a pleasant one to make " . Both he and Lennon identified the sessions as the start of the band 's break @-@ up .

Issued in November , the White Album was the band 's first Apple Records album release , although EMI continued to own their recordings . The new label was a subsidiary of Apple Corps , which Epstein had formed as part of his plan to create a tax @-@ effective business structure . The record attracted more than 2 million advance orders , selling nearly 4 million copies in the US in little over a month , and its tracks dominated the playlists of American radio stations . Despite its popularity , it did not receive flattering reviews at the time . According to Gould :

The critical response ... ranged from mixed to flat . In marked contrast to Sgt. Pepper , which had helped to establish an entire genre of literate rock criticism , the White Album inspired no critical writing of any note . Even the most sympathetic reviewers ... clearly didn 't know what to make of

this shapeless outpouring of songs . Newsweek 's Hubert Saal , citing the high proportion of parodies , accused the group of getting their tongues caught in their cheeks .

General critical opinion eventually turned in favour of the White Album , and in 2003 , Rolling Stone ranked it as the tenth greatest album of all time . Pitchfork 's Mark Richardson describes it as " large and sprawling , overflowing with ideas but also with indulgences , and filled with a hugely variable array of material ... its failings are as essential to its character as its triumphs . " Erlewine comments : " The [band 's] two main songwriting forces were no longer on the same page , but neither were George and Ringo " , yet " Lennon turns in two of his best ballads " , McCartney 's songs are " stunning " , Harrison had become " a songwriter who deserved wider exposure " , and Starr 's composition was " a delight " .

The Yellow Submarine LP , issued in January 1969 , contained only the four previously unreleased songs that had debuted in the film , along with the title track (already issued on Revolver) , " All You Need Is Love " (already issued as a single and on the US Magical Mystery Tour LP) and seven instrumental pieces composed by Martin . Because of the paucity of new Beatles music , AllMusic 's Unterberger and Bruce Eder suggest the album might be " inessential " but for Harrison 's " It 's All Too Much " : " the jewel of the new songs ... resplendent in swirling Mellotron , larger @-@ than @-@ life percussion , and tidal waves of feedback guitar ... a virtuoso excursion into otherwise hazy psychedelia " .

= = = Abbey Road , Let It Be , and break @-@ up = = =

Although Let It Be was the Beatles ' final album release , it was largely recorded before Abbey Road . The project 's impetus came from an idea Martin attributes to McCartney , who suggested they " record an album of new material and rehearse it , then perform it before a live audience for the very first time ? on record and on film " . Originally intended for a one @-@ hour television programme to be called Beatles at Work , much of the album 's content came from extensive rehearsals filmed by director Michael Lindsay @-@ Hogg at Twickenham Film Studios , beginning in January 1969 . Martin has said that the project was " not at all a happy recording experience . It was a time when relations between the Beatles were at their lowest ebb . " Lennon described the largely impromptu sessions as " hell ... the most miserable ... on Earth " , and Harrison , " the low of all @-@ time " . Irritated by both McCartney and Lennon , Harrison walked out for five days . Upon returning , he threatened to leave the band unless they " abandon [ed] all talk of live performance " and instead focused on finishing a new album , initially titled Get Back , using songs recorded for the TV special . He also demanded they cease work at Twickenham and relocate to the newly finished Apple Studio . The other band members agreed , and the idea came about to salvage the footage shot for the TV production for use in a feature film .

In an effort to alleviate tensions within the band and improve the quality of their live sound , Harrison invited keyboardist Billy Preston to participate in the last nine days of sessions . Preston received label billing on the " Get Back " single ? the only musician ever to receive that acknowledgment on an official Beatles release . At the conclusion of the rehearsals , the band could not agree on a location to film a concert , rejecting several ideas , including a boat at sea , a lunatic asylum , the Tunisian desert , and the Colosseum . Ultimately , what would be their final live performance was filmed on the rooftop of the Apple Corps building at 3 Savile Row , London , on 30 January 1969 . Five weeks later , engineer Glyn Johns , whom Lewisohn describes as Get Back 's " uncredited producer " , began work assembling an album , given " free rein " as the band " all but washed their hands of the entire project " .

New strains developed between the band members regarding the appointment of a financial adviser , the need for which had become evident without Epstein to manage business affairs . Lennon , Harrison and Starr favoured Allen Klein , who had managed the Rolling Stones and Sam Cooke ; McCartney wanted Lee and John Eastman ? father and brother , respectively , of Linda Eastman , whom McCartney married on 12 March . Agreement could not be reached , so both Klein and the Eastmans were temporarily appointed : Klein as the Beatles ' business manager and the Eastmans as their lawyers . Further conflict ensued , however , and financial opportunities were lost

. On 8 May , Klein was named sole manager of the band , the Eastmans having previously been dismissed as the Beatles ' attorneys . McCartney refused to sign the management contract with Klein , but he was out @-@ voted by the other Beatles .

Martin stated that he was surprised when McCartney asked him to produce another album , as the Get Back sessions had been " a miserable experience " and he had " thought it was the end of the road for all of us " . The primary recording sessions for Abbey Road began on 2 July 1969 . Lennon , who rejected Martin 's proposed format of a " continuously moving piece of music " , wanted his and McCartney 's songs to occupy separate sides of the album . The eventual format , with individually composed songs on the first side and the second consisting largely of a medley , was McCartney 's suggested compromise . On 4 July , the first solo single by a Beatle was released : Lennon 's " Give Peace a Chance " , credited to the Plastic Ono Band . The completion and mixing of " I Want You (She 's So Heavy) " on 20 August 1969 was the last occasion on which all four Beatles were together in the same studio . Lennon announced his departure to the rest of the group on 20 September , but agreed to withhold a public announcement to avoid undermining sales of the forthcoming album .

Released six days after Lennon 's declaration , Abbey Road sold 4 million copies within three months and topped the UK charts for a total of seventeen weeks . Its second track , the ballad " Something " , was issued as a single ? the only Harrison composition ever to appear as a Beatles A @-@ side . Abbey Road received mixed reviews , although the medley met with general acclaim . Unterberger considers it " a fitting swan song for the group " , containing " some of the greatest harmonies to be heard on any rock record " . Musicologist and author Ian MacDonald calls the album " erratic and often hollow " , despite the " semblance of unity and coherence " offered by the medley . Martin has singled it out as his personal favourite of all the band 's albums ; Lennon said it was " competent " but had " no life in it " . Recording engineer Emerick notes that the replacement of the studio 's valve mixing console with a transistorised one yielded a less punchy sound , leaving the group frustrated at the thinner tone and lack of impact and contributing to its " kinder , gentler " feel relative to their previous albums .

For the still unfinished Get Back album , one last song , Harrison 's " I Me Mine " , was recorded on 3 January 1970 . Lennon , in Denmark at the time , did not participate . In March , rejecting the work Johns had done on the project , now retitled Let It Be , Klein gave the session tapes to American producer Phil Spector , who had recently produced Lennon 's solo single " Instant Karma ! " In addition to remixing the material , Spector edited , spliced and overdubbed several of the recordings that had been intended as " live " . McCartney was unhappy with the producer 's approach and particularly dissatisfied with the lavish orchestration on " The Long and Winding Road " , which involved a fourteen @-@ voice choir and 36 @-@ piece instrumental ensemble . McCartney 's demands that the alterations to the song be reverted were ignored , and he publicly announced his departure from the band on 10 April 1970 , a week before the release of his first , self @-@ titled solo album .

On 8 May , the Spector @-@ produced Let It Be was released . Its accompanying single , " The Long and Winding Road " , was the Beatles ' last ; it was released in the United States , but not Britain . The Let It Be documentary film followed later that month , and would win the 1970 Academy Award for Best Original Song Score . Sunday Telegraph critic Penelope Gilliatt called it " a very bad film and a touching one ... about the breaking apart of this reassuring , geometrically perfect , once apparently ageless family of siblings " . Several reviewers stated that some of the performances in the film sounded better than their analogous album tracks . Describing Let It Be as the " only Beatles album to occasion negative , even hostile reviews " , Unterberger calls it " on the whole underrated " ; he singles out " some good moments of straight hard rock in ' I 've Got a Feeling ' and ' Dig a Pony ' " , and praises " Let It Be " , " Get Back " , and " the folky ' Two of Us ' , with John and Paul harmonising together " . McCartney filed suit for the dissolution of the Beatles ' contractual partnership on 31 December 1970 . Legal disputes continued long after their break @-@ up , and the dissolution was not formalised until 29 December 1974 .

= = = 1970 ? present : After the break @-@ up = = =

===== 1970s =====

Lennon , McCartney , Harrison and Starr all released solo albums in 1970 . Their solo records sometimes involved one or more of the others ; Starr 's Ringo (1973) was the only album to include compositions and performances by all four ex @-@ Beatles , albeit on separate songs . With Starr 's participation , Harrison staged the Concert for Bangladesh in New York City in August 1971 . Other than an unreleased jam session in 1974 , later bootlegged as A Toot and a Snore in ' 74 , Lennon and McCartney never recorded together again .

Two double @-@ LP sets of the Beatles ' greatest hits , compiled by Klein , 1962 ? 1966 and 1967 ? 1970 , were released in 1973 , at first under the Apple Records imprint . Commonly known as the Red Album and Blue Album , respectively , each have earned a Multi @-@ Platinum certification in the United States and a Platinum certification in the United Kingdom . Between 1976 and 1982 , EMI / Capitol released a wave of compilation albums without input from the ex @-@ Beatles , starting with the double @-@ disc compilation Rock ' n ' Roll Music . The only one to feature previously unreleased material was The Beatles at the Hollywood Bowl (1977) ; the first officially issued concert recordings by the group , it contained selections from two shows they played during their 1964 and 1965 US tours .

The music and enduring fame of the Beatles has been commercially exploited in various other ways , again often outside their creative control . In April 1974 , the musical John , Paul , George , Ringo ? and Bert , written by Willy Russell and featuring singer Barbara Dickson , opened in London . It included , with permission from Northern Songs , eleven Lennon @-@ McCartney compositions and one by Harrison , " Here Comes the Sun " . Displeased with the production 's use of his song , Harrison withdrew his permission to use it . Later that year , the off @-@ Broadway musical Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band on the Road opened . All This and World War II (1976) was an unorthodox nonfiction film that combined newsreel footage with covers of Beatles songs by performers ranging from Elton John and Keith Moon to the London Symphony Orchestra . The Broadway musical Beatlemania , an unauthorised nostalgia revue , opened in early 1977 and proved popular , spinning off five separate touring productions . In 1979 , the band sued the producers , settling for several million dollars in damages . Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1978) , a musical film starring the Bee Gees and Peter Frampton , was a commercial failure and an " artistic fiasco " , according to Ingham .

===== 1980s =====

After the December 1980 murder of Lennon , Harrison rewrote the lyrics to his song " All Those Years Ago " in Lennon 's honour . With Starr on drums and McCartney and his wife , Linda , contributing backing vocals , the song was released as a single in May 1981 . McCartney 's own tribute , " Here Today " , appeared on his Tug of War album in April 1982 . In 1987 , Harrison 's Cloud Nine album included " When We Was Fab " , a song about the Beatlemania era .

When the Beatles ' studio albums were released on CD by EMI and Apple Corps in 1987 , their catalogue was standardised throughout the world , establishing a canon of the twelve original studio LPs as issued in the UK plus the US LP version of Magical Mystery Tour (1967) . All the remaining material from the singles and EPs which had not appeared on the original studio albums was gathered on the two @-@ volume compilation Past Masters (1988) . Except for the Red and Blue albums , EMI deleted all its other Beatles compilations ? including the Hollywood Bowl record ? from its catalogue .

In 1988 , the Beatles were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame , their first year of eligibility . Harrison and Starr attended the ceremony with Lennon 's widow , Yoko Ono , and his two sons , Julian and Sean . McCartney declined to attend , citing unresolved " business differences " that would make him " feel like a complete hypocrite waving and smiling with them at a fake reunion " . The following year , EMI / Capitol settled a decade @-@ long lawsuit filed by the band over royalties

, clearing the way to commercially package previously unreleased material .

===== 1990s =====

Live at the BBC , the first official release of unissued Beatles performances in seventeen years , appeared in 1994 . That same year McCartney , Harrison and Starr collaborated on the Anthology project . Anthology was the culmination of work begun in 1970 , when Apple Corps director Neil Aspinall , their former road manager and personal assistant , had started to gather material for a documentary with the working title The Long and Winding Road . Documenting their history in the band 's own words , the Anthology project included the release of several unissued Beatles recordings . McCartney , Harrison and Starr also added new instrumental and vocal parts to two songs recorded as demos by Lennon in the late 1970s .

During 1995 ? 96 , the project yielded a television miniseries , an eight @-@ volume video set , and three two @-@ CD / three @-@ LP box sets featuring artwork by Klaus Voormann . The two songs based on Lennon demos , " Free as a Bird " and " Real Love " , were issued as new Beatles singles . The releases were commercially successful and the television series was viewed by an estimated 400 million people . In 1999 , to coincide with the re @-@ release of the 1968 film Yellow Submarine , a new soundtrack compilation CD / LP , Yellow Submarine Songtrack , was issued .

===== 2000s =====

The Beatles ' 1 , a compilation album of the band 's British and American number @-@ one hits , was released on 13 November 2000 . It became the fastest @-@ selling album of all time , with 3 @.@ 6 million sold in its first week and 13 million within a month . It topped albums charts in at least 28 countries , including the UK and US . As of April 2009 , the compilation had sold 31 million copies globally , and was the best @-@ selling album of the decade in the United States .

Harrison died from metastatic lung cancer in November 2001 . McCartney and Starr were among the musicians who performed at the Concert for George , organised by Eric Clapton and Harrison 's widow , Olivia . The tribute event took place at the Royal Albert Hall on the first anniversary of Harrison 's death . In addition to songs he composed for the group and during his solo career , the concert included a celebration of Indian classical music , which had significantly influenced Harrison .

In 2003 , Let It Be ... Naked , a reconceived version of the Let It Be album , with McCartney supervising production , was released . One of the main differences with the Spector @-@ produced version was the omission of the original string arrangements . It was a top ten hit in both Britain and America . The US album configurations from 1964 ? 65 were released as box sets in 2004 and 2006 ? The Capitol Albums , Volume 1 and Volume 2 included both stereo and mono versions based on the mixes that were prepared for vinyl at the time of the music 's original American release .

As a soundtrack for Cirque du Soleil 's Las Vegas Beatles stage revue , Love , George Martin and his son Giles remixed and blended 130 of the band 's recordings to create what Martin called " a way of re @-@ living the whole Beatles musical lifespan in a very condensed period " . The show premiered in June 2006 , and the Love album was released that November when McCartney discussed his hope that " Carnival of Light " , a fourteen @-@ minute experimental recording made at Abbey Road in 1967 , would receive an official release . A rare live performance involving two ex @-@ Beatles took place in April 2009 at a benefit concert organised by McCartney at New York 's Radio City Music Hall , where he was joined by Starr for three songs .

On 9 September 2009 , the Beatles ' entire back catalogue was reissued following an extensive digital remastering process that lasted four years . Stereo editions of all twelve original UK studio albums , along with Magical Mystery Tour and the Past Masters compilation , were released on compact disc both individually and as a box set . Comparing the new releases with the 1987 CDs , which had been widely criticised for their lack of clarity and dynamism , Mojo 's Danny Eccleston wrote , " the remastered vocals are purer , more natural @-@ sounding and give the illusion of sitting slightly higher in the mix . " A second collection , The Beatles in Mono , included remastered

versions of every Beatles album released in true mono along with the original 1965 stereo mixes of Help ! and Rubber Soul (which Martin had remixed for the 1987 editions) . The Beatles : Rock Band , a music video game in the Rock Band series , was issued on the same day . In December 2009 , the band 's catalogue was officially released in FLAC and MP3 format in a limited edition of 30 @, @ 000 USB flash drives .

= = = = 2010s = = = =

Owing to a long @-@ running royalty disagreement , the Beatles were among the last major artists to sign deals with online music services . Residual disagreement emanating from Apple Corps ' dispute with Apple , Inc . , iTunes ' owners , over the use of the name " Apple " was also partly responsible for the delay , although in 2008 , McCartney stated that the main obstacle to making the Beatles ' catalogue available online was that EMI " want [s] something we 're not prepared to give them " . In 2010 , the official canon of thirteen Beatles studio albums , Past Masters , and the Red and Blue greatest @-@ hits albums were made available on iTunes .

In 2012 , EMI 's recorded music operations were sold to Universal Music Group . In order for Universal Music to acquire EMI , the European Union , for antitrust reasons , forced EMI to spin off assets including Parlophone . Universal was allowed to keep the Beatles ' recorded music catalogue , managed by Capitol Records under its Capitol Music Group division . Also in 2012 , the entire original Beatles album catalogue was reissued on vinyl , available either individually or as a box set .

Announced on October 2013 , The estate of John Lennon , Downtown Music Publishing will serve as U.S. administrator for the first two Beatles singles , which consisted of four songs : ? Please Please Me , ? ? Ask Me Why , ? ? Love Me Do ? and ? P.S. I Love You . ? The deal also includes the band ? s lone post @-@ breakup song , ? Free as a Bird . ?

In 2013 , a second volume of BBC recordings entitled On Air ? Live at the BBC Volume 2 was released . December of that year saw the release of another 59 Beatles recordings on iTunes . The set , titled The Beatles Bootleg Recordings 1963 , had the opportunity to gain a 70 @-@ year copyright extension conditional on the songs being published at least once before the end of 2013 . Apple Records released the recordings on 17 December to prevent them from going into the public domain and had them taken down from iTunes later that same day . Fan reactions to the release were mixed , with one blogger saying " the hardcore Beatles collectors who are trying to obtain everything will already have these . "

On 26 January 2014 , Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr performed McCartney 's " Queenie Eye " in Los Angeles at the 56th Annual Grammy Awards , held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles . The following day , The Night That Changed America : A Grammy Salute to The Beatles television special was taped in the Los Angeles Convention Center 's West Hall . It aired on 9 February , the exact date of ? and at the same time , and on the same network as ? the original broadcast of the Beatles ' first US television appearance on The Ed Sullivan Show , 50 years earlier . The special included performances of Beatles songs by current artists as well as by McCartney and Starr , archival footage , and Paul and Ringo being interviewed by David Letterman at the Ed Sullivan Theater , site of The Ed Sullivan Show .

In December 2015 the Beatles released their catalogue for streaming on various streaming music services .

= = Musical style and development = =

In Icons of Rock : An Encyclopedia of the Legends Who Changed Music Forever , Scott Schinder and Andy Schwartz describe the Beatles ' musical evolution :

In their initial incarnation as cheerful , wisecracking mop-tops , the Fab Four revolutionised the sound , style , and attitude of popular music and opened rock and roll 's doors to a tidal wave of British rock acts . Their initial impact would have been enough to establish the Beatles as one of their era 's most influential cultural forces , but they didn 't stop there . Although their initial style was

a highly original , irresistibly catchy synthesis of early American rock and roll and R & B , the Beatles spent the rest of the 1960s expanding rock 's stylistic frontiers , consistently staking out new musical territory on each release . The band 's increasingly sophisticated experimentation encompassed a variety of genres , including folk @-@ rock , country , psychedelia , and baroque pop , without sacrificing the effortless mass appeal of their early work .

In *The Beatles as Musicians* , Walter Everett describes Lennon and McCartney 's contrasting motivations and approaches to composition : " McCartney may be said to have constantly developed ? as a means to entertain ? a focused musical talent with an ear for counterpoint and other aspects of craft in the demonstration of a universally agreed @-@ upon common language that he did much to enrich . Conversely , Lennon 's mature music is best appreciated as the daring product of a largely unconscious , searching but undisciplined artistic sensibility . "

Ian MacDonald describes McCartney as " a natural melodist ? a creator of tunes capable of existing apart from their harmony " . His melody lines are characterised as primarily " vertical " , employing wide , consonant intervals which express his " extrovert energy and optimism " . Conversely , Lennon 's " sedentary , ironic personality " is reflected in a " horizontal " approach featuring minimal , dissonant intervals and repetitive melodies which rely on their harmonic accompaniment for interest : " Basically a realist , he instinctively kept his melodies close to the rhythms and cadences of speech , colouring his lyrics with bluesy tone and harmony rather than creating tunes that made striking shapes of their own . " MacDonald praises Harrison 's lead guitar work for the role his " characterful lines and textural colourings " play in supporting Lennon and McCartney 's parts , and describes Starr as " the father of modern pop / rock drumming " .

= = = Influences = = =

The band 's earliest influences include Elvis Presley , Carl Perkins , Little Richard and Chuck Berry . During the Beatles ' co @-@ residency with Little Richard at the Star @-@ Club in Hamburg , from April to May 1962 , he advised them on the proper technique for performing his songs . Of Presley , Lennon said , " Nothing really affected me until I heard Elvis . If there hadn 't been Elvis , there would not have been the Beatles . "

Other early influences include Buddy Holly , Eddie Cochran , Roy Orbison and the Everly Brothers . The Beatles continued to absorb influences long after their initial success , often finding new musical and lyrical avenues by listening to their contemporaries , including Bob Dylan , Frank Zappa , the Lovin ' Spoonful , the Byrds and the Beach Boys , whose 1966 album *Pet Sounds* amazed and inspired McCartney . Referring to the Beach Boys ' creative leader , Martin later stated : " No one made a greater impact on the Beatles than Brian [Wilson] . " Ravi Shankar , with whom Harrison studied for six weeks in India in late 1966 , had a significant effect on his musical development during the band 's later years .

= = = Genres = = =

Originating as a skiffle group , the Beatles quickly embraced 1950s rock and roll and helped pioneer the Merseybeat genre , and their repertoire ultimately expanded to include a broad variety of pop music . Reflecting the range of styles they explored , Lennon said of Beatles for Sale , " You could call our new one a Beatles country @-@ and @-@ western LP " , while Gould credits *Rubber Soul* as " the instrument by which legions of folk @-@ music enthusiasts were coaxed into the camp of pop " .

Although the 1965 song " Yesterday " was not the first pop record to employ orchestral strings , it marked the group 's first recorded use of classical music elements . Gould observes : " The more traditional sound of strings allowed for a fresh appreciation of their talent as composers by listeners who were otherwise allergic to the din of drums and electric guitars . " They continued to experiment with string arrangements to various effect ; Sgt. Pepper 's " She 's Leaving Home " , for instance , is " cast in the mold of a sentimental Victorian ballad " , Gould writes , " its words and music filled with the clichés of musical melodrama " .

The band 's stylistic range expanded in another direction with their 1966 B @-@ side " Rain " , described by Martin Strong as " the first overtly psychedelic Beatles record " . Other psychedelic numbers followed , such as " Tomorrow Never Knows " (recorded before " Rain ") , " Strawberry Fields Forever " , " Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds " and " I Am the Walrus " . The influence of Indian classical music was evident in Harrison 's " The Inner Light " , " Love You To " and " Within You Without You " ? Gould describes the latter two as attempts " to replicate the raga form in miniature " .

Innovation was the most striking feature of their creative evolution , according to music historian and pianist Michael Campbell : " ' A Day in the Life ' encapsulates the art and achievement of the Beatles as well as any single track can . It highlights key features of their music : the sound imagination , the persistence of tuneful melody , and the close coordination between words and music . It represents a new category of song ? more sophisticated than pop ... and uniquely innovative . There literally had never before been a song ? classical or vernacular ? that had blended so many disparate elements so imaginatively . " Philosophy professor Bruce Ellis Benson agrees : " the Beatles ... give us a wonderful example of how such far @-@ ranging influences as Celtic music , rhythm and blues , and country and western could be put together in a new way . "

Author Dominic Pedler describes the way they crossed musical styles : " Far from moving sequentially from one genre to another (as is sometimes conveniently suggested) the group maintained in parallel their mastery of the traditional , catchy chart hit while simultaneously forging rock and dabbling with a wide range of peripheral influences from country to vaudeville . One of these threads was their take on folk music , which would form such essential groundwork for their later collisions with Indian music and philosophy . " As the personal relationships between the band members grew increasingly strained , their individual tastes became more apparent . The minimalistic cover artwork for the White Album contrasted with the complexity and diversity of its music , which encompassed Lennon 's " Revolution 9 " , whose musique concrète approach was influenced by Yoko Ono ; Starr 's country song " Don 't Pass Me By " ; Harrison 's rock ballad " While My Guitar Gently Weeps " ; and the " proto @-@ metal roar " of McCartney 's " Helter Skelter " .

= = = Contribution of George Martin = = =

George Martin 's close involvement in his role as producer made him one of the leading candidates for the informal title of the " fifth Beatle " . He applied his classical musical training in various ways , and functioned as " an informal music teacher " to the progressing songwriters , according to Gould . Martin suggested to a sceptical McCartney that the arrangement of " Yesterday " should feature a string quartet accompaniment , thereby introducing the Beatles to a " hitherto unsuspected world of classical instrumental colour " , in MacDonald 's description . Their creative development was also facilitated by Martin 's willingness to experiment in response to their suggestions , such as adding " something baroque " to a particular recording . In addition to scoring orchestral arrangements for recordings , Martin often performed on them , playing instruments including piano , organ and brass .

Collaborating with Lennon and McCartney required Martin to adapt to their different approaches to songwriting and recording . MacDonald comments , " while [he] worked more naturally with the conventionally articulate McCartney , the challenge of catering to Lennon 's intuitive approach generally spurred him to his more original arrangements , of which ' Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite ! ' is an outstanding example . " Martin said of the two composers ' distinct songwriting styles and his own stabilising influence :

Compared with Paul 's songs , all of which seemed to keep in some sort of touch with reality , John 's had a psychedelic , almost mystical quality ... John 's imagery is one of the best things about his work ? ' tangerine trees ' , ' marmalade skies ' , ' cellophane flowers ' ... I always saw him as an aural Salvador Dalí , rather than some drug @-@ ridden record artist . On the other hand , I would be stupid to pretend that drugs didn 't figure quite heavily in the Beatles ' lives at that time ... they knew that I , in my schoolmasterly role , didn 't approve ... Not only was I not into it myself , I couldn 't see

the need for it ; and there 's no doubt that , if I too had been on dope , Pepper would never have been the album it was . Perhaps it was the combination of dope and no dope that worked , who knows ?

Harrison echoed Martin 's description of his stabilising role : " I think we just grew through those years together , him as the straight man and us as the loonies ; but he was always there for us to interpret our madness ? we used to be slightly avant @-@ garde on certain days of the week , and he would be there as the anchor person , to communicate that through the engineers and on to the tape . "

= = = In the studio = = =

Making innovative use of technology while expanding the possibilities of recorded music , the Beatles urged experimentation by Martin and his recording engineers . Seeking ways to put chance occurrences to creative use , accidental guitar feedback , a resonating glass bottle , a tape loaded the wrong way round so that it played backwards ? any of these might be incorporated into their music . Their desire to create new sounds on every new recording , combined with Martin 's arranging abilities and the studio expertise of EMI staff engineers Norman Smith , Ken Townsend and Geoff Emerick , all contributed significantly to their records from Rubber Soul and , especially , Revolver onwards . Along with innovative studio techniques such as sound effects , unconventional microphone placements , tape loops , double tracking and vari @-@ speed recording , the Beatles augmented their songs with instruments that were unconventional in rock music at the time . These included string and brass ensembles as well as Indian instruments such as the sitar in " Norwegian Wood " and the swarmandal in " Strawberry Fields Forever " . They also used early electronic instruments such as the Mellotron , with which McCartney supplied the flute voices on the " Strawberry Fields Forever " intro , and the clavioline , an electronic keyboard that created the unusual oboe @-@ like sound on " Baby , You 're a Rich Man " .

= = Legacy = =

Former Rolling Stone associate editor Robert Greenfield compared the Beatles to Picasso , as " artists who broke through the constraints of their time period to come up with something that was unique and original ... [I] n the form of popular music , no one will ever be more revolutionary , more creative and more distinctive ... " The British poet Philip Larkin described their work as " an enchanting and intoxicating hybrid of Negro rock @-@ and @-@ ro?! with their own adolescent romanticism " , and " the first advance in popular music since the War " . They not only sparked the British Invasion of the US , they became a globally influential phenomenon as well . From the 1920s , the United States had dominated popular entertainment culture throughout much of the world , via Hollywood movies , jazz , the music of Broadway and Tin Pan Alley and , later , the rock and roll that first emerged in Memphis , Tennessee .

Their musical innovations and commercial success inspired musicians worldwide . Many artists have acknowledged the Beatles ' influence and enjoyed chart success with covers of their songs . On radio , their arrival marked the beginning of a new era ; in 1968 the programme director of New York 's WABC radio station forbade his DJs from playing any " pre @-@ Beatles " music , marking the defining line of what would be considered oldies on American radio . They helped to redefine the album as something more than just a few hits padded out with " filler " , and they were primary innovators of the modern music video . The Shea Stadium show with which they opened their 1965 North American tour attracted an estimated 55 @,@ 600 people , then the largest audience in concert history ; Spitz describes the event as a " major breakthrough ... a giant step toward reshaping the concert business " . Emulation of their clothing and especially their hairstyles , which became a mark of rebellion , had a global impact on fashion .

According to Gould , the Beatles changed the way people listened to popular music and experienced its role in their lives . From what began as the Beatlemania fad , the group 's popularity grew into what was seen as an embodiment of sociocultural movements of the decade . As icons of

the 1960s counterculture , Gould continues , they became a catalyst for bohemianism and activism in various social and political arenas , fuelling movements such as women 's liberation , gay liberation and environmentalism . According to Peter Lavezzoli , after the " more popular than Jesus " controversy in 1966 , the Beatles felt considerable pressure to say the right things and " began a concerted effort to spread a message of wisdom and higher consciousness " .

= = Awards and achievements = =

In 1965 , Queen Elizabeth II appointed Lennon , McCartney , Harrison and Starr Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) . The film Let It Be (1970) won the 1971 Academy Award for Best Original Song Score . The recipients of seven Grammy Awards and fifteen Ivor Novello Awards , the Beatles have been awarded six Diamond albums , as well as 24 Multi @-@ Platinum albums , 39 Platinum albums and 45 Gold albums in the United States . In the UK , the Beatles have four Multi @-@ Platinum albums , four Platinum albums , eight Gold albums and one Silver album . They were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988 .

The best @-@ selling band in history , the Beatles have sold between 600 million and (at EMI estimates) over 1 billion units worldwide . They have had more number @-@ one albums on the British charts , fifteen , and sold more singles in the UK , 21 @.@ 9 million , than any other act . In 2004 , Rolling Stone ranked the Beatles as the best artist of all time . They ranked number one on Billboard magazine 's list of the all @-@ time most successful Hot 100 artists , released in 2008 to celebrate the US singles chart 's 50th anniversary . As of 2016 , they hold the record for most number @-@ one hits on the Billboard Hot 100 , with twenty . The Recording Industry Association of America certifies that the Beatles have sold 178 million units in the US , more than any other artist . They were collectively included in Time magazine 's compilation of the twentieth century 's 100 most influential people . In 2014 , they received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award .

= = Members = =

Timeline

= = Discography = =

Original UK LPs

Please Please Me (1963)

With the Beatles (1963)

A Hard Day 's Night (1964)

Beatles for Sale (1964)

Help ! (1965)

Rubber Soul (1965)

Revolver (1966)

Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967)

The Beatles (" The White Album " , 1968)

Yellow Submarine (1969)

Abbey Road (1969)

Let It Be (1970)

When the above albums were reissued on CDs in 1988 , the American Magical Mystery Tour album (1967) and the double @-@ CD compilation set Past Masters were included so the full set would contain every track commercially released in the band 's lifetime .

See also

John Lennon discography

Paul McCartney discography

George Harrison discography

Ringo Starr discography

Collaborations between ex @-@ Beatles

= = Song catalogue = =

Through 1969 , the Beatles ' catalogue was published almost exclusively by Northern Songs Ltd . , a company formed in February 1963 by music publisher Dick James specifically for Lennon and McCartney , though it later acquired songs by other artists . The company was organised with James and his partner , Emmanuel Silver , owning a controlling interest , variously described as 51 % or 50 % plus one share . McCartney had 20 % . Reports again vary concerning Lennon 's portion ? 19 or 20 % ? and Brian Epstein 's ? 9 or 10 % ? which he received in lieu of a 25 % band management fee .

In 1965 , the company went public . Five million shares were created , of which the original principals retained 3 @. @ 75 million . James and Silver each received 937 @, @ 500 shares (18 @. @ 75 % of 5 million) ; Lennon and McCartney each received 750 @, @ 000 shares (15 %) ; and Epstein 's management company , NEMS Enterprises , received 375 @, @ 000 shares (7 @. @ 5 %) . Of the 1 @. @ 25 million shares put up for sale , Harrison and Starr each acquired 40 @, @ 000 . At the time of the stock offering , Lennon and McCartney renewed their three @-@ year publishing contracts , binding them to Northern Songs until 1973 .

Harrison created Harrisongs to represent his Beatles compositions , but signed a three @-@ year contract with Northern Songs that gave it the copyright to his work through March 1968 , which included " Taxman " and " Within You Without You " . The songs on which Starr received co @-@ writing credit before 1968 , such as " What Goes On " and " Flying " , were also Northern Songs copyrights . Harrison did not renew his contract with Northern Songs when it ended , signing instead with Apple Publishing while retaining the copyright to his work from that point on . Harrisongs thus owns the rights to his later Beatles songs such as " While My Guitar Gently Weeps " and " Something " . That year , as well , Starr created Startling Music , which holds the rights to his Beatles compositions , " Don 't Pass Me By " and " Octopus 's Garden " .

In March 1969 , James arranged to sell his and his partner 's shares of Northern Songs to the British broadcasting company Associated Television (ATV) , founded by impresario Lew Grade , without first informing the Beatles . The band then made a bid to gain controlling interest by attempting to work out a deal with a consortium of London brokerage firms that had accumulated a 14 % holding . The deal collapsed over the objections of Lennon , who declared , " I 'm sick of being fucked about by men in suits sitting on their fat arses in the City . " By the end of May , ATV had acquired a majority stake in Northern Songs , controlling nearly the entire Lennon ? McCartney catalogue , as well as any future material until 1973 . In frustration , Lennon and McCartney sold their shares to ATV in late October 1969 .

In 1981 , financial losses by ATV 's parent company , ACC , led it to attempt to sell its music division . According to authors Brian Southall and Rupert Perry , Grade contacted McCartney , offering ATV Music and Northern Songs for \$ 30 million . According to an account McCartney gave in 1995 , he met with Grade and explained he was interested solely in the Northern Songs catalogue , if Grade were ever willing to " separate off " that portion of ATV Music . Soon afterwards , Grade offered to sell him Northern Songs for £ 20 million , giving the ex @-@ Beatle " a week or so " to decide . By McCartney 's account , he and Ono countered with a £ 5 million bid that was rejected . According to reports at the time , Grade refused to separate Northern Songs , and turned down an offer of £ 21 ? 25 million from McCartney and Ono for ATV Music . In 1982 , ACC as a whole was sold to Australian business magnate Robert Holmes à Court for £ 60 million .

Three years later , Michael Jackson purchased ATV for a reported \$ 47 @. @ 5 million . The acquisition gave him control over the publishing rights to more than 200 Beatles songs , as well as 40 @, @ 000 other copyrights . In 1995 , in a deal that earned him a reported \$ 110 million , Jackson merged his music publishing business with Sony , creating a new company , Sony / ATV Music Publishing , in which he held a 50 % stake . The merger made the new company , then valued at over half a billion dollars , the third largest music publisher in the world .

Despite the lack of publishing rights to most of their songs , Lennon 's estate and McCartney

continue to receive their respective shares of the writers ' royalties , which together are 33 ? % of total commercial proceeds in the US and which vary elsewhere around the world between 50 and 55 % . Two of Lennon and McCartney 's earliest songs ? " Love Me Do " and " P.S. I Love You " ? were published by an EMI subsidiary , Ardmore & Beechwood , before they signed with James . McCartney acquired their publishing rights from Ardmore in the mid @-@ 1980s , and they are the only two Beatles songs owned by McCartney 's company MPL Communications .