

= Stuart Sutcliffe =

Stuart Fergusson Victor Sutcliffe (23 June 1940 ? 10 April 1962) was a Scottish @-@ born painter and musician best known as the original bass guitarist for the Beatles . Sutcliffe left the band to pursue his career as a painter , having previously attended the Liverpool College of Art . Sutcliffe and John Lennon are credited with inventing the name , " Beetles " , as they both liked Buddy Holly 's band , the Crickets . The band used this name for a while until Lennon decided to change the name to " the Beatles " , from the word beat . As a member of the group when it was a five @-@ piece band , Sutcliffe is one of several people sometimes referred to as the " Fifth Beatle " .

When he performed with the Beatles in Hamburg , he met photographer Astrid Kirchherr , to whom he was later engaged . After leaving the Beatles , he enrolled in the Hamburg College of Art , studying under future pop artist Eduardo Paolozzi , who later wrote a report stating that Sutcliffe was one of his best students . Sutcliffe earned other praise for his paintings , which mostly explored a style related to abstract expressionism .

While studying in Germany , Sutcliffe began experiencing severe headaches and acute sensitivity to light . In April 1962 he collapsed in the middle of an art class after complaining of head pains . German doctors performed various checks , but were unable to determine the exact cause of his headaches . On 10 April 1962 , he was taken to hospital , but died in the ambulance on the way . The cause of death was later revealed to have been an aneurysm in his brain 's right hemisphere .

= = Early years = =

Sutcliffe 's father , Charles Sutcliffe (25 May 1905 ? 18 March 1966) , was previously married to his first wife Martha with whom he already had 4 children . He was a senior civil servant , who moved to Liverpool to help with wartime work in 1943 , and then signed on as a ship 's engineer , and so was often at sea during his son 's early years . His mother , Millie , was a schoolteacher at an infants ' school . Sutcliffe had two younger sisters , Pauline and Joyce with but also had three older brothers , Joe , Ian , and Charles , as well as an older sister Mattie , from his father 's first marriage .

Sutcliffe was born at the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion Hospital in Edinburgh , Scotland , and after his family moved south , he was brought up at 37 Aigburth Drive in Liverpool . He attended Park View Primary School , Huyton (1946 ? 1951) , and Prescot Grammar School from 4 September 1951 to 1956 . When Sutcliffe 's father did return home on leave , he invited his son and art college classmate , Rod Murray (also Sutcliffe 's roommate and best friend) , for a " real good booze @-@ up " , slipping £ 10 into Sutcliffe 's pocket before disappearing for another six months . The Beatles ' biographer , Philip Norman , wrote that Charles Sutcliffe was a heavy drinker and physically cruel to his wife , which the young Sutcliffe had witnessed .

During his first year at the Liverpool College of Art , Sutcliffe worked as a bin man on the Liverpool Corporation 's waste collection trucks . Lennon was introduced to Sutcliffe by Bill Harry , a mutual friend , when all three were studying at the Liverpool College of Art . According to Lennon , Sutcliffe had a " marvellous art portfolio " and was a very talented painter who was one of the " stars " of the school . He helped Lennon to improve his artistic skills , and with others , worked with him when Lennon had to submit work for exams . Sutcliffe shared a flat with Murray at 9 Percy Street , Liverpool , before being evicted and moving to Hillary Mansions at 3 Gambier Terrace , where another art student lived , Margaret Chapman , who competed with Sutcliffe to be the best painter in class . The flat was opposite the new Anglican cathedral in the rundown area of Liverpool 8 , with bare lightbulbs and a mattress on the floor in the corner . Lennon moved in with Sutcliffe in early 1960 . (Paul McCartney later admitted that he was jealous of Sutcliffe 's relationship with Lennon , as he had to take a " back seat " to Sutcliffe) . Sutcliffe and his flatmates painted the rooms yellow and black , which their landlady did not appreciate . On another occasion the tenants , needing to keep warm , burned the flat 's furniture .

After talking to Sutcliffe one night at the Casbah Coffee Club (owned by Pete Best 's mother , Mona Best) , Lennon and McCartney persuaded Sutcliffe to buy a Höfner President 500 / 5 model

bass guitar on hire @-@ purchase from Frank Hessey 's Music Shop . Sutcliffe was versed in music : he had sung in the local church choir in Huyton , his mother had insisted on piano lessons for him since the age of nine , he had played bugle in the Air Training Corps , and his father had taught him some chords on the guitar . In May 1960 , Sutcliffe joined Lennon , McCartney , and George Harrison (then known as " the Silver Beatles ") . Sutcliffe 's fingers would often blister during long rehearsals , as he had never practised long enough for his fingers to become calloused , even though he had previously played acoustic guitar . Sutcliffe started acting as a booking agent for the group , and they often used his Gambier Terrace flat as a rehearsal room .

In July 1960 , the Sunday newspaper , The People , ran an article entitled " The Beatnik Horror " that featured a photograph taken in the flat below Sutcliffe 's of a teenaged Lennon lying on the floor , with Sutcliffe standing by a window . As they had often visited the Jacaranda club , its owner , Allan Williams , arranged for the photograph to be taken , subsequently taking over from Sutcliffe to book concerts for the group : Lennon , McCartney , Harrison and Sutcliffe . The Beatles ' subsequent name change came during an afternoon in the Renshaw Hall bar when Sutcliffe , Lennon and his girlfriend , Cynthia Powell , thought up names similar to Holly 's band , the Crickets , and came up with Beatles . Lennon later changed the name because he thought it sounded French , suggesting Le Beat or Beat @-@ less .

= = The Beatles and Hamburg = =

Sutcliffe 's playing style was elementary , mostly sticking to root notes of chords . Harry ? an art school friend and founder and editor of the Mersey Beat newspaper ? complained to Sutcliffe that he should be concentrating on art and not music , as he thought that Sutcliffe was a competent musician whose talents would be better used in the visual arts . While Sutcliffe is often described in Beatles ' biographies as appearing very uncomfortable onstage , and often playing with his back to the audience , their drummer at the time , Best , denies this , recalling Sutcliffe as usually good @-@ natured and " animated " before an audience . When the Beatles auditioned for Larry Parnes at the Wyvern Club , Seel Street , Liverpool , Williams later claimed that Parnes would have taken the group as the backing band for Billy Fury for £ 10 per week , but as Sutcliffe turned his back to Parnes throughout the audition ? because , as Williams believed , Sutcliffe could not play very well ? Parnes said that he would employ the group only if they got rid of Sutcliffe . Parnes later denied this , stating his only concern was that the group had no permanent drummer . Klaus Voormann regarded Sutcliffe as a good bass player , although Beatles ' historian Richie Unterberger described Sutcliffe 's bass playing as an " artless thump " .

Sutcliffe 's popularity grew after he began wearing Ray @-@ Ban sunglasses and tight trousers . Sutcliffe 's high spot was singing " Love Me Tender " , which drew more applause than the other Beatles , and increased the friction between him and McCartney . Lennon also started to criticise Sutcliffe , making jokes about Sutcliffe 's size and playing . On 5 December 1960 , Harrison was sent back to Britain for being under @-@ age . McCartney and Best were deported for attempted arson at the Bambi Kino , which left Lennon and Sutcliffe in Hamburg . Lennon took a train home , but as Sutcliffe had a cold he stayed in Hamburg . Sutcliffe later borrowed money from his girlfriend , Astrid Kirchherr , in order to fly back to Liverpool on Friday , 20 January 1961 , although he returned to Hamburg in March 1961 , with the other Beatles .

In July 1961 , Sutcliffe decided to leave the group to continue painting . After being awarded a postgraduate scholarship , he enrolled at the Hamburg College of Art under the tutelage of Paolozzi . He briefly lent McCartney his bass until the latter could earn enough to buy a specially made smaller left @-@ handed Höfner 500 / 1 bass guitar of his own in June 1961 , but specifically asked McCartney (who is left @-@ handed) not to change the strings around or restring the instrument , so McCartney had to play the bass as it was . In 1967 , a photo of Sutcliffe was among those on the cover of the Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band album (extreme left , in front of fellow artist Aubrey Beardsley) .

= = Astrid Kirchherr = =

Kirchherr was brought up by her widowed mother , Nielsa Kirchherr , in Eimsbütteler Strasse , in a wealthy part of the Hamburg suburb of Altona . Sutcliffe met Kirchherr in the Kaiserkeller club , where she went to watch the Beatles perform . After a photo session with the group , Kirchherr invited them to her mother 's house for tea and showed them her bedroom ; decorated in black , including the furniture , with silver foil on the walls and a large tree branch hanging from the ceiling . Sutcliffe began dating Kirchherr shortly thereafter .

Sutcliffe wrote to friends that he was infatuated with Kirchherr , and asked her German friends which colours , films , books and painters she liked . Best commented that the beginning of their relationship was , " like one of those fairy stories " . Kirchherr and Sutcliffe got engaged in November 1960 , and exchanged rings , as is the German custom . Sutcliffe later wrote to his parents that he was engaged to Kirchherr , which they were shocked to learn , as they thought he would give up his career as an artist , although he told Kirchherr that he would like to be an art teacher in London or Germany in the future . After moving into the Kirchherr family 's house , Sutcliffe used to borrow her clothes . He wore her leather pants and jackets , collarless jackets , oversized shirts and long scarves , and also borrowed a corduroy suit with no lapels that he wore on stage , which prompted Lennon to sarcastically ask if his mother had lent him the suit .

= = Art = =

Sutcliffe displayed artistic talent at an early age . Helen Anderson (a fellow student) , remembered his early works as being very aggressive , with dark , moody colours , which was not the type of painting she expected from such a " quiet student " . One of Sutcliffe 's paintings was shown at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool as part of the John Moores exhibition , from November 1959 until January 1960 . After the exhibition , Moores bought Sutcliffe 's canvas for £ 65 , which was then equal to 6 ? 7 weeks ' wages for an average working man . The picture Moore bought was called Summer Painting , and Sutcliffe attended a formal dinner to celebrate the exhibition with another art student , Susan Williams . Murray remembered that the painting was painted on a board , not a canvas , and had to be cut into two pieces (because of its size) and hinged . Murray added that only one of the pieces actually got to the exhibition (because they stopped off in a pub to celebrate) , but sold nonetheless because Moores bought it for his son .

Sutcliffe had been turned down when he applied to study for an ATD (Art Teachers Diploma) course at the Liverpool Art College , but after meeting Kirchherr , he decided to leave the Beatles and attend the Hamburg College of Art in June 1961 , under the tutelage of Paolozzi , who later wrote a report stating that Sutcliffe was one of his best students . He wrote : " Sutcliffe is very gifted and very intelligent . In the meantime he has become one of my best students . "

Sutcliffe 's few surviving works reveal influence from the British and European abstract artists contemporary with the Abstract Expressionist movement in the United States . His earlier figurative work is reminiscent of the kitchen sink school , particularly of John Bratby , though Sutcliffe was producing abstract work by the end of the 1950s , including The Summer Painting , purchased by Moores . Sutcliffe 's works bear some comparison with those of John Hoyland and Nicolas de Staël , though they are more lyrical (Sutcliffe used the stage name " Stu de Staël " when he was playing with the Beatles on a Scottish tour in spring 1960) . His later works are typically untitled , constructed from heavily impastoed slabs of pigment in the manner of de Staël , whom he learned about from Surrey born , art college instructor , Nicky Horsfield , and overlaid with scratched or squeezed linear elements creating enclosed spaces . Hamburg Painting no . 2 was purchased by Liverpool 's Walker Art Gallery and is one of a series entitled Hamburg in which the surface and colour changes produced atmospheric energy . European artists (including Paolozzi) were also influencing Sutcliffe at the time . The Walker Art Gallery has other works by Sutcliffe , which are Self @-@ portrait (in charcoal) and The Crucifixion . Lennon later hung a pair of Sutcliffe 's paintings in his house (Kenwood) in Weybridge , and McCartney had a Paolozzi sculpture in his Cavendish Avenue home .

= = Death = =

While in Germany , Sutcliffe began experiencing severe headaches and acute sensitivity to light , and Kirchherr stated that some of the headaches left him temporarily blind . In 1962 , Sutcliffe collapsed in the middle of an art class in Hamburg . Kirchherr 's mother had German doctors perform various checks on him , but they were unable to determine exactly what was causing the headaches . They suggested he go back to Britain and have himself checked into a hospital with better facilities , but Sutcliffe was told there was nothing wrong with him , so he returned to Hamburg . While living at the Kirchherrs ' house his condition got worse , and after collapsing again on 10 April 1962 , he was taken to hospital by Kirchherr (who rode with him in the ambulance) , but he died before the ambulance reached the hospital . The cause of death was revealed to have been a cerebral haemorrhage , specifically , a ruptured aneurysm resulting in " cerebral paralysis due to bleeding into the right ventricle of the brain . "

On 13 April 1962 , Kirchherr met the group at Hamburg Airport , telling them that Sutcliffe had died a few days before . Sutcliffe 's mother flew to Hamburg with the Beatles ' manager Brian Epstein , and returned to Liverpool with her son 's body . Sutcliffe 's father did not hear of his son 's death for three weeks , as he was sailing to South America , although the family arranged for a padre to tell him when he docked in Buenos Aires . After Sutcliffe 's death , Kirchherr wrote a letter to his mother , apologising for being too ill to attend his funeral in Liverpool and saying how much she and Lennon missed him : " Oh , Mum , he (Lennon) is in a terrible mood now , he just can 't believe that darling Stuart never comes back . [He 's] just crying his eyes out ... John is marvellous to me , he says that he knows Stuart so much and he loves him so much that he can understand me . "

The cause of Sutcliffe 's aneurysm is unknown , although it is believed to have been started by an earlier head injury , as he was either kicked in the head , or thrown , head first , against a brick wall during a fight outside Lathom Hall , after a performance in January 1961 . According to former manager Allan Williams , Lennon and Best went to Sutcliffe 's aid , fighting off his attackers before dragging him to safety . Sutcliffe sustained a fractured skull in the fight and Lennon 's little finger was broken . Sutcliffe refused medical attention at the time and failed to keep an X @-@ ray appointment at Sefton General Hospital .

Although Lennon did not attend or send flowers to Sutcliffe 's funeral , his second wife , Yoko Ono , remembered that Lennon mentioned Sutcliffe 's name very often , saying that he was " [My] alter ego ... a spirit in his world ... a guiding force " .

= = Posthumous music releases = =

The Beatles ' compilation album Anthology 1 , released in 1995 , featured previously unreleased recordings from the group 's early years . Sutcliffe plays bass with the Beatles on three songs they recorded in 1960 : " Hallelujah , I Love Her So " , " You 'll Be Mine " , and " Cayenne " . In addition , he is pictured on the front covers of both Anthology 1 and Anthology 3 .

In 2011 , Sutcliffe 's estate released a recording claimed to be Sutcliffe singing " Love Me Tender " , recorded in 1961 and donated to the estate in 2009 . The cover art shows a Sutcliffe painting entitled Homage to Elvis . The authenticity of the recording has been much debated .

= = Film , television , and books = =

Part One of the The Beatles Anthology video documentary covers Sutcliffe 's time with the group . There is no mention of his death in the documentary , but it is discussed in the accompanying book .

Sutcliffe was portrayed by David Nicholas Wilkinson in the film Birth of the Beatles (1979) and by Lee Williams in In His Life : The John Lennon Story (2000) . Sutcliffe 's role in the Beatles ' early career , as well as the factors that led him to leave the group , is dramatised in the film Backbeat (1994) , in which he was portrayed by American actor Stephen Dorff . Sutcliffe doesn 't appear in the film Nowhere Boy (2009) but is briefly mentioned toward the end of the film . Four television

documentaries have been broadcast that deal with Sutcliffe 's life :

Midnight Angel (1990) Granada TV (networked) U.K.

Exhibition (1991) Cologne , German TV

Stuart , His life and Art (2005) BBC

Stuart Sutcliffe , The Lost Beatle

Books about Sutcliffe :

Backbeat : Stuart Sutcliffe : The Lost Beatle (1994) Alan Clayson and Pauline Sutcliffe

Stuart , The Life and Art of Stuart Sutcliffe (1995) Pauline Sutcliffe and Kay Williams

The Beatles Shadow , Stuart Sutcliffe , & his lonely hearts club (2001) Pauline Sutcliffe and Douglas Thompson

Stuart Sutcliffe : a retrospective (2008) Matthew H. Clough and Colin Fallows

Baby 's in Black (2010) Arne Bellstorf

The Stuart Sutcliffe Estate sells memorabilia and artefacts of Sutcliffe 's , which include poems written by him and the chords and lyrics to songs Lennon and Sutcliffe were learning .