

THE BEATLES: 'Abbey Road'

The history of the album, its songs and the groundbreaking 'joined-up' songs of the second side.

An illustrated lecture presented by Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

To Beatles fans, Abbey Road brings to mind not a London street but rather the image of a pedestrian crossing being traversed by John, George, Ringo ... and Paul as the 'odd man out'? And who notices that this image does not name the band nor the album? Though recording company EMI believed that the album would not sell without this usual information, distributor Apple Records' creative director and album designer John Kosh pointed out that "the most famous band in the world" does not need to be named.

Released in 1969, 'Abbey Road' was the eleventh Beatles studio album and though nobody knew at the time that this would be the band's final studio collaboration, George Harrison said that it felt: "... as if we were reaching the end of the line."

By then, The Fab Four had been together for most of the 1960s and – almost inevitably – friction and tensions were growing between them over the direction the group was going, mostly with such stubborn personalities as Paul McCartney and John Lennon locking horns over a variety of subjects.

A year earlier, The Beatles had agreed to be filmed in-studio during the 'creative processes' of song writing – a project that turned out to be ill-fated since it captured forever increasing personal and creative differences. The release of this album, eventually entitled 'Let It Be', was put on hold as the band members disagreed over the quality and content of the musical results.

Following this period of artistic and personal acrimony, in an attempt to 're-unify' the band. McCartney approached long-time musical guru to The Beatles, George Martin, to produce songs that were free of the conflicts that had surfaced during the 1968 'White Album' recording sessions and exacerbated by the presence of the media – not to mention John's beloved Yoko Ono - during the 'Let It Be' project.

Paul wanted to make an album "the way we used to do it", but 'the 5th Beatle', as George Martin was called (though he did not care for the compliment), laid down strict conditions for the band members – particularly the rebellious John Lennon – that Martin would be allowed to produce the album in the same manner as earlier studio collaborations and that discipline would be adhered to.

'Abbey Road' was released to mixed reviews but over time, the voices of the critical naysayers were gradually drowned out by enthused Beatles fans worldwide. This presentation outlines the history of 'Abbey Road', its songs and focuses on 'The Long One', as the 'joined-up' songs of the second side became known. The ongoing popularity of Beatles songs proves that 'the best music never grows old' and the group's contribution to the history of 20th century popular music remains unprecedented and unchallenged. Singing along to John's 'Come Together', Paul's 'Oh! Darling', George's 'Something' and even Ringo's 'Octopus's Garden' is encouraged 😊

DURATION: c1 hour

FEE: \$275.00

EXPENSES: a contribution toward travel costs is appreciated.

Thank you for considering my proposal and please contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

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REFERENCES, RECOMMENDATIONS & REVIEWS

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