

## THE BEATLES IN CONTEXT

Since their first performances in 1960, the Beatles' cultural influence grew in unparalleled ways. From Liverpool to Beatlemania, and from Dance Halls to Abbey Road Studios and the digital age, the band's impact exploded during their heyday, and has endured in the decades following their disbandment. Beatles' fashion and celebrity culture, politics, psychedelia and the Summer of Love, all highlight different aspects of the band's complex relationship with the world around them. With a wide range of short, snapshot chapters, *The Beatles in Context* brings together key themes in which to better explore the Beatles' lives and work and understand their cultural legacy, focusing on the people and places central to the Beatles' careers, the visual media that contributed to their enduring success, and the culture and politics of their time.

KENNETH WOMACK is Dean of the Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Monmouth University, where he also serves as Professor of English. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Long and Winding Roads* (2007), *Cambridge Companion to the Beatles* (2009), and *The Beatles Encyclopedia* (2014). More recently, he is the author of a two-volume biography of Beatles producer George Martin, including *Maximum Volume: The Life of Beatles Producer George Martin (The Early Years, 1926–1966)* and *Sound Pictures: The Life of Beatles Producer George Martin (The Later Years, 1966–2016)*.

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## COMPOSERS IN CONTEXT

Understanding and appreciation of musical works is greatly enhanced by knowledge of the context within which their composers lived and worked. Each of these volumes focuses on an individual composer, offering lively, accessible and concise essays by leading scholars on the many contexts – professional, political, intellectual, social and cultural – that have a bearing on his or her work. Biographical and musical influences, performance and publishing history and the creative afterlife of each composer's work are also addressed, providing readers with a multi-faceted view of how the composers' output and careers were shaped by the world around them.

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# THE BEATLES IN CONTEXT

EDITED BY  
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*Monmouth University, New Jersey*



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## *Preface*

*The Beatles in Context* offers an expansive introduction to the band, arguably the most critically and commercially successful musical fusion of all time. *The Beatles in Context* affords readers a wide-ranging analysis of the cultural contexts that led to the group's emergence and enduring global influence, while also providing students, general readers, and advanced scholars alike with a key point of departure for understanding the Beatles' vaunted place in twentieth- and twenty-first-century culture.

*The Beatles in Context* provides readers with an array of insightful scholarly essays. In so doing, it affords its audience vital information regarding the historical-, performance-, and reception-related aspects of the Beatles' achievement, especially in regard to the group's corporate successes as pop music's foremost composers and musicians. To this end, *The Beatles in Context* is arranged across six thematic sections: "Beatle People and Beatle Places"; "The Beatles in Performance"; "The Beatles on TV, Film, and the Internet"; "The Beatles' Sound"; "The Beatles as Sociocultural and Political Touchstones"; and "The Beatles' Critical Reception and Cultural Legacy."

The first section, "Beatle People and Beatle Places," examines the biographical and social contexts of the bandmates' origins, while the second section, "The Beatles in Performance," addresses the group's development as live performers from their early days in Liverpool and Hamburg through the world tours of their heyday. The third section, "The Beatles on TV, Film, and the Internet," explores the ways in which the evolving contexts of television, movies, and the World Wide Web have shaped the group's reception into the cultural main across successive generations. The fourth section, "The Beatles' Sound," provides a deeper understanding of the compositional and cultural contexts that influenced their emergence into the pantheon of twentieth-century popular music. The fifth section, "The Beatles as Sociocultural and Political Touchstones," investigates the band's abiding influence as social, fashion,

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political, and industry icons. Finally, “The Beatles’ Critical Reception and Cultural Legacy” addresses the group’s enduring impact upon global culture, particularly in terms of their artistic and musicological influence; their publishing and business forays; their place in the formation of heritage tourism in England and the USA; and their continuing and highly successful efforts to market their output to successive generations of fans.

KENNETH WOMACK

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## *Chronology*

NOTE: All release dates refer to official entries in the Beatles' UK catalog.

- 1926 January 3:** George Martin born in London  
**1934 September 19:** Brian Epstein born in Liverpool  
**1940 July 7:** Ringo Starr [Richard Starkey] born in Liverpool  
**October 9:** John Winston Lennon born in Liverpool  
**1942 June 18:** James Paul McCartney born in Liverpool  
**1943 February 25:** George Harrison born in Liverpool  
**1957 July 6:** McCartney meets Lennon after a Quarry Men performance at the Woolton Parish Church Garden Fête in Liverpool  
**December:** Harrison joins Lennon and McCartney as a member of the Quarry Men  
**1958 July 12:** The Quarry Men record "That'll Be the Day" and "In Spite of All the Danger" at P.F. Phillips Professional Tape and Disk Record Service in Liverpool  
**1959 August 29:** the Quarry Men begin an extensive engagement at Mona Best's Casbah Club in Liverpool  
**October:** The Quarry Men change their name to Johnny and the Moondogs  
**1960 January:** Stu Sutcliffe's painting in a local competition is purchased by John Moores for £65. Stu purchases a Höfner bass at Lennon's behest.  
**May:** Allan Williams becomes the manager of The Beatals, who change their name, shortly thereafter, to Long John and the Silver Beatles  
**May 20–28:** As the Silver Beatles, the band embarks upon a nine-day Scottish tour in support of Johnny Gentle  
**August 12:** Drummer Pete Best joins the band, who change their name to the Beatles in advance of their upcoming Hamburg engagement  
**August 17–November 29:** the Beatles perform on the Reeperbahn in Hamburg, first at the Indra Club and later at the Kaiserkeller

## Chronology

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- 1961 February 9:** The Beatles perform at Liverpool's Cavern Club, eventually becoming the establishment's regular lunchtime act
- April 1–July 1:** The Beatles perform on the Reeperbahn in Hamburg's Top Ten Club; during this period, McCartney replaces Sutcliffe as the band's regular bassist
- June:** The Beatles record several songs as the Beat Brothers, the backing band for musician Tony Sheridan
- November 9:** NEMS record-store owner Brian Epstein watches the Beatles perform at the Cavern Club
- December 10:** Brian Epstein officially becomes the Beatles' manager
- 1962 January 1:** The Beatles audition, unsuccessfully, for Decca Records in London
- January 5:** "My Bonnie"/"The Saints" by Tony Sheridan and the Beatles released by Polydor
- April 10:** Sutcliffe dies of a brain hemorrhage in Hamburg
- April 13–May 31:** The Beatles perform at Hamburg's Star-Club
- June 6:** The Beatles' first session at EMI Studios under the supervision of producer George Martin, who is impressed with their potential, with the exception of Best's drumming ability
- August 16:** Best is told he is being replaced by Ringo Starr in the Beatles
- August 18:** Starr performs as the Beatles' drummer for the first time
- August 23:** Lennon marries Cynthia Powell
- September 11:** The Beatles record "Love Me Do," "Please Please Me," and "P.S. I Love You" at EMI Studios
- October 5:** "Love Me Do"/"P.S. I Love You" single released by Parlophone; the single reaches no. 17 on the British charts
- October 17:** The Beatles' first television appearance on Granada's *People and Places*
- November 1–14:** The Beatles return for a brief engagement at Hamburg's Star-Club
- November 26:** The Beatles record "Please Please Me" at EMI Studios
- December 18–31:** The Beatles' final engagement at Hamburg's Star-Club
- 1963 January 3–6:** Winter Scottish Tour
- January 10–February 1:** Winter UK Tour
- January 11:** "Please Please Me"/"Ask Me Why" single released by Parlophone. "Please Please Me" reaches the top position on the British charts.
- January 19:** The Beatles appear before a nationally televised audience on *Thank Your Lucky Stars*

- February 2–March 3:** Helen Shapiro Tour  
**February 11:** The Beatles record the *Please Please Me* album in a - single day's session at EMI Studios  
**March 9–31:** Tommy Roe/Chris Montez Tour  
**March 22:** *Please Please Me* album released by Parlophone  
**April 2–May 17:** Spring UK Tour  
**April 11:** “From Me to You”/“Thank You Girl” single released by Parlophone  
**May 18–June 9:** Roy Orbison/Beatles Tour  
**June 10–September 15:** Summer UK Tour  
**August 23:** “She Loves You”/“I’ll Get You” single released by Parlophone  
**October 5–7:** The Beatles’ Mini-Tour of Scotland  
**October 13:** The Beatles perform before a national television audience of some 15 million viewers on the popular British variety show *Val Parnell’s Sunday Night at the London Palladium*. Beatlemania is born.  
**October 11–19:** The Beatles’ Autumn UK Tour  
**October 25–29:** The Beatles’ Tour of Sweden  
**November 1–December 13:** The Beatles’ Autumn Tour of Britain  
**November 22:** *With the Beatles* album released by Parlophone  
**November 29:** “I Want to Hold Your Hand”/“This Boy” single released by Parlophone  
**December 24–January 11:** The Beatles’ 1963 Christmas Show at the Astoria Cinema, London  
**1964 January 16–February 4:** The Beatles’ extended engagement at Paris’ Olympia Theatre  
**February 7:** The Beatles arrive at New York City’s John F. Kennedy Airport, where they are greeted by thousands of ecstatic fans  
**February 9:** The Beatles perform on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in New York City to a nationally televised audience of some 74 million viewers  
**February 11:** The Beatles perform their first US concert at Washington, DC’s Coliseum  
**February 12:** The Beatles perform at New York City’s Carnegie Hall  
**March–April:** Principal photography for *A Hard Day’s Night* feature film  
**March 20:** “Can’t Buy Me Love”/“You Can’t Do That” single released by Parlophone  
**June 4–30:** The Beatles’ World Tour  
**July 6:** *A Hard Day’s Night* premieres at the London Pavilion  
**July 10:** “A Hard Day’s Night”/“Things We Said Today” single released by Parlophone



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- July 10:** *A Hard Day's Night* album released by Parlophone  
**August 19–September 20:** The Beatles' First American Tour  
**October 9–November 10:** The Beatles' Autumn Tour of Britain  
**November 4:** The Beatles' Royal Variety Command Performance at the Prince of Wales Theatre  
**November 27:** "I Feel Fine"/"She's a Woman" single released by Parlophone  
**December 4:** *Beatles for Sale* album released by Parlophone  
**December 24–January 16:** The Beatles' 1964 Christmas Show at the Odeon Cinema, London  
**1965 February 11:** Starr marries Maureen Cox  
**February–May:** Principal photography for the *Help!* feature film  
**April 9:** "Ticket to Ride"/"Yes It Is" single released by Parlophone  
**June 20–July 3:** The Beatles' European Tour  
**July 23:** "Help!"/"I'm Down" single released by Parlophone  
**July 29:** *Help!* premieres at the London Pavilion  
**August 6:** *Help!* album released by Parlophone  
**August 15–31:** The Beatles' American Tour  
**August 15:** The Beatles perform at Shea Stadium in New York City before an audience of 55,600 fans  
**August 27:** The Beatles meet Elvis Presley in Los Angeles  
**October–November:** Recording sessions for *Rubber Soul*  
**October 26:** The Beatles receive their MBEs from Queen Elizabeth II  
**December 3:** "We Can Work It Out"/"Day Tripper" single released by Parlophone  
**December 3:** *Rubber Soul* album released by Parlophone  
**December 3–12:** The Beatles' British Tour  
**1966 January 21:** Harrison marries Pattie Boyd  
**April–June:** Recording sessions for *Revolver*  
**June 10:** "Paperback Writer"/"Rain" single released by Parlophone  
**June 24–July 4:** The Beatles' Tour of Germany and Japan  
**July 29:** American magazine *Datebook* republishes Lennon's March 1966 interview in which he proclaims that the Beatles are "more popular than Jesus"  
**August 12–29:** The Beatles' Final American Tour  
**August 5:** "Eleanor Rigby"/"Yellow Submarine" single released by Parlophone  
**August 5:** *Revolver* album released by Parlophone  
**August 29:** The Beatles play at San Francisco's Candlestick Park for their final concert before a paying audience

- November 9:** Lennon meets Yoko Ono at London's Indica Gallery  
**November–April:** Recording sessions for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*  
**1967 February 17:** "Strawberry Fields Forever"/"Penny Lane" single released by Parlophone  
**June 1:** *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album released by Parlophone  
**June 25:** The Beatles perform "All You Need Is Love" on the *Our World* international telecast  
**July 7:** "All You Need Is Love"/"Baby, You're a Rich Man" single released by Parlophone  
**August 24:** The Beatles meet the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi at the London Hilton  
**August 27:** Brian Epstein is found dead in London from an accidental drug overdose  
**September–October:** Principal photography and recording sessions for the *Magical Mystery Tour* project  
**November 24:** "Hello Goodbye"/"I Am the Walrus" single released by Parlophone  
**December 8:** *Magical Mystery Tour* EP released by Parlophone  
**December 26:** *Magical Mystery Tour* film televised on the BBC  
**1968 February–April:** The Beatles visit the Maharishi's compound at Rishikesh  
**March 15:** "Lady Madonna"/"The Inner Light" single released by Parlophone  
**May 14:** Lennon and McCartney announce the formation of Apple Corps at a New York City press conference  
**May–October:** Recording sessions for *The Beatles (The White Album)*  
**July 17:** *Yellow Submarine* cartoon feature premieres at the London Pavilion  
**August 30:** "Hey Jude"/"Revolution" single released by Apple  
**November 22:** *The Beatles (The White Album)* released by Apple  
**1969 January 2:** Principal photography for the *Get Back* project commences at Twickenham Studios  
**January 17:** *Yellow Submarine* album released by Apple  
**January 30:** The Beatles' Rooftop Concert at Apple Studios on Savile Row  
**March 12:** McCartney marries Linda Eastman  
**March 20:** Lennon marries Yoko Ono  
**March 21:** Allen Klein appointed as business manager for Apple Corps

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- April–August:** Recording sessions for *Abbey Road*  
**April 11:** “Get Back”/“Don’t Let Me Down” single released by Apple  
**May 30:** “The Ballad of John and Yoko”/“Old Brown Shoe” single released by Apple  
**August 22:** The Beatles gather at Lennon and Ono’s Tittenhurst Park estate for their final photo session  
**September 26:** *Abbey Road* album released by Apple  
**October 31:** “Something”/“Come Together” single released by Apple  
**1970 March 6:** “Let It Be”/“You Know My Name (Look Up the Number)” single released by Apple  
**April 9:** McCartney announces the Beatles’ break-up  
**May 8:** *Let It Be* album released by Apple  
**1973 April 19:** *The Beatles, 1962–1966* and *The Beatles, 1967–1970* are released by Apple  
**1976 March 5:** “Yesterday”/“I Should Have Known Better” single released by Parlophone  
**1976 June 11:** *Rock ’n’ Roll Music* is released by Parlophone  
**1976 June 25:** “Back in the USSR”/“Twist and Shout” single released by Parlophone  
**1977 May 6:** *The Beatles at the Hollywood Bowl* is released by Parlophone  
**1977 November 19:** *Love Songs* is released by Parlophone  
**1978 September 30:** “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band/With a Little Help from My Friends”/“A Day in the Life” single released by Parlophone  
**1979 October 12:** *Rarities* is released by Parlophone  
**1980 December 8:** John Lennon is assassinated in New York City  
**1982 March 22:** *Reel Music* is released by Parlophone  
**1982 March 24:** “The Beatles’ Movie Medley”/“I’m Happy Just to Dance with You” released by Parlophone  
**1982 October 11:** *20 Greatest Hits* is released by Parlophone  
**1985 July 13:** Paul McCartney performs “Let It Be” at the Live Aid benefit concert at London’s Wembley Stadium  
**1985 October 9:** Yoko Ono dedicates the Strawberry Fields memorial in New York City’s Central Park  
**1988** The Beatles are inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame  
**1994** John Lennon is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame  
**1994 November 30:** *Live at the BBC* released by Apple  
**1995 November:** The Beatles’ televised *Anthology* documentary is broadcast in six parts on the UK’s ITV and the US ABC TV networks  
**1995 November 21:** *Anthology 1* released by Apple

- 1995 **December 4:** “Free as a Bird”/“Christmas Time (Is Here Again)” released by Apple
- 1996 George Martin is knighted by Queen Elizabeth II
- 1996 **March 4:** “Real Love”/“Baby’s in Black (Live)” released by Apple
- 1996 **March 18:** *Anthology 2* released by Apple
- 1996 **October 28:** *Anthology 3* released by Apple
- 1997 Paul McCartney is knighted by Queen Elizabeth II
- 1998 **April 17:** Linda McCartney dies of cancer in Tucson, Arizona
- 1999 Paul McCartney is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- 1999 **September 13:** *Yellow Submarine Songtrack* released by Apple
- 1999 George Martin is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- 2000 **November 13:** *1* is released by Apple
- 2001 **November 29:** George Harrison dies of cancer in Los Angeles
- 2003 **November 17:** *Let It Be . . . Naked* released by Apple
- 2004 George Harrison is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- 2006 **June 30:** Cirque du Soleil’s *Love* premieres at the Mirage in Las Vegas
- 2006 **November 20:** *Love* released by Apple
- 2009 **September 9:** The Beatles’ remastered recordings are released by Apple
- 2010 **November 16:** The Beatles release their catalog digitally on iTunes
- 2012 **July 24:** *Tomorrow Never Knows* is released by Apple on iTunes
- 2013 **December 17:** *The Beatles Bootleg Recordings, 1963* is released by Apple on iTunes
- 2014 **January 21:** *The US Albums* is released by Apple
- 2016 **March 8:** George Martin dies in Coleshill, Wiltshire
- 2016 **September 15:** *The Beatles: Eight Days a Week – The Touring Years*, directed by Ron Howard, premieres at the Odeon, Leicester Square, London
- 2017 **December 15:** *The Christmas Records* is released by Apple
- 2018 Ringo Starr is knighted by Queen Elizabeth II