

1967 and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*

See Hunter Davies, *The Beatles*, with a new introduction, New York: Norton, 2009 and Tim Riley, *Tell Me Why: A Beatles Commentary*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988.

George Harrison on the Beatles in 1966:

“By 1966 the Beatles were in a car that was going downhill very fast. This is not to say that their career was going down hill; but they were a media juggernaut that was increasingly out of their manager Brian Epstein’s control – and everybody else’s for that matter. It wasn’t so much that somebody was pressing the accelerator too hard; it was that nobody had their foot on the brake.”

Revolver (1966) 7th consecutive no. 1 album in UK for the Beatles
1966: Beatles last tour

Late November 1966: recording of “Strawberry Fields” intended for 8th album. It and “Penny Lane” (recorded along with “When I’m Sixty-four” in Dec 1966 and Jan 1967) were released as a single in Feb 1967.

Lennon and McCartney were considering taking childhood places and images (a la “In My Life”) as a departure for an album.

January 19, 1967 first try at “A Day in the Life”

McCartney’s “Woke up ... “ added next day and came from school reminiscences

Lennon’s original verses connected to 3 events:

newspaper story of road holes in Blackburn;

death of aristocrat Tara Browne;

Lennon’s part in the film *How I Won the War*.

Orchestral crescendos at 1’40” and 3’46” was Paul, apparently influenced by Stockhausen.

“Indeed the album’s only line which appears to have been intentionally provocative was ‘I’d love to turn you on,’ from “A Day in the Life” – Allan Moore, Cambridge Music Handbooks, Sgt. Pepper’s, 21

“With a Little Help from My Friends” written for Ringo

See Hunter Davies page 263 for composition process of this song and compare with the studio process George Martin outlines on p199-200 (*All You Need Are Ears*)

May 26, 1967 UK release of *Sgt. Pepper’s*; US release is June 2

27 weeks at No.1 in UK; 15 weeks US

First rock album to receive Grammy for Album of the Year

Is this a concept album? Allan Moore, in 1997, called the album “thirteen discrete songs, marketed in a sleeve which conveys the illusion of a coherent package wherein the order of the songs is highly important.” (p. 26)

Paul: meaning of the album is part of packaging

Gatefold sleeve

Printed lyrics

Cutouts:

Badges

False moustaches

Sgt. Pepper stripes

John: meaning is part of his exploration of his personal response to events/things

Side one

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" | Paul |
| 2. "With a Little Help from My Friends" | Ringo |
| 3. "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" | John |
| 4. "Getting Better" | Paul |
| 5. "Fixing a Hole" | Paul |
| 6. "She's Leaving Home" | Paul and John |
| 7. "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" | John |

Side two

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. "Within You Without You" | George |
| 2. "When I'm Sixty-Four" | Paul |
| 3. "Lovely Rita" | Paul |
| 4. "Good Morning Good Morning" | John |
| 5. "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (Reprise)" | John, Paul, George |
| 6. "A Day in the Life" | John and Paul 2nd |

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.

August 9, 1967, George and Judy Martin's first child is born. Her name is Lucy.

August 25, 1967 the Beatles meet the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1918-2008)

August 27, 1967, Brian Epstein dies in London

Magical Mystery Tour released as EP in December 1967 6 tracks

1968:

John and Cynthia divorce (see Cynthia on NPR Fresh Air Apr. 2, 2015)

The Beatles (White Album) released on November 22, 1968

Mostly composed in April and May 1968 (in India at a Transcendental Meditation center with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1918-2008)

Studio work May- October (Not a smooth process) Ringo leaves band in August, but returns

Album design by Richard Hamilton with Paul. Name embossed on white cover; serial numbers were added for “fake” authenticity/status
conscious contrast to *Sgt. Pepper's*

Reviews are mixed “greatest album all time” OR “should have been one disc” (Martin)

Financials: cost £25,000 to make (compared to £400 for *Please Please*)

Beatles share of profits was 8 ½%; EMI 47%

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