

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

Written by bluesever

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01. *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* 02. *With A Little Help From My Friends* 03. *Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds* 04. *Getting Better* 05. *Fixing A Hole* 06. *She's Leaving Home* 07. *Being For The Benefit Of Mr. Kite!* 08. *Within You Without You* 09. *When I'm Sixty-four* 10. *Lovely Rita* 11. *Good Morning Good Morning* 12. *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (Reprise)* 13. *A Day In The Life* Artists: John Lennon – lead, harmony and backing vocals, lead, rhythm and acoustic guitars, Hammond organ, piano, handclaps, harmonica, tape loops, sound effects, kazoo, tambourine, maracas, comb and paper (on "Lovely Rita") Paul McCartney – lead, harmony and backing vocals, lead, acoustic and bass guitars, piano, Lowry and Hammond organ, handclaps, vocalisations, tape loops, sound effects, kazoo, comb and paper (on "Lovely Rita") George Harrison – lead, rhythm and acoustic guitars, sitar, lead vocals on "Within You Without You", harmony and backing vocals, Hammond organ, tambura, harmonica, kazoo, handclaps, maracas, comb and paper (on "Lovely Rita") Ringo Starr – drums, percussion, congas, tambourine, maracas, handclaps, tubular bells, lead vocals on "With a Little Help from My Friends", harmonica, kazoo, final piano E chord

With *Revolver*, the Beatles made the Great Leap Forward, reaching a previously unheard-of level of sophistication and fearless experimentation. *Sgt. Pepper's*, in many ways, refines that breakthrough, as the Beatles consciously synthesized such disparate influences as psychedelia, art song, classical music, rock & roll, and music hall, often in the course of one song. Not once does the diversity seem forced -- the genius of the record is how the vaudevillian "When I'm Sixty-Four" seems like a logical extension of "Within You Without You" and how it provides a gateway to the chiming guitars of "Lovely Rita." There's no discounting the individual contributions of each member or their producer, George Martin, but the preponderance of whimsy and self-conscious art gives the impression that Paul McCartney is the leader of the Lonely Hearts Club Band. He dominates the album in terms of compositions, setting the tone for the album with his unabashed melodicism and deviously clever arrangements. In comparison, Lennon's contributions seem fewer, and a couple of them are a little slight but his major statements are stunning. "With a Little Help from My Friends" is the ideal Ringo tune, a rolling, friendly pop song that hides genuine Lennon anguish, à la "Help!";

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"Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" remains one of the touchstones of British psychedelia; and he's the mastermind behind the bulk of "A Day in the Life," a haunting number that skillfully blends Lennon's verse and chorus with McCartney's bridge. It's possible to argue that there are better Beatles albums, yet no album is as historically important as this. After Sgt. Pepper's, there were no rules to follow -- rock and pop bands could try anything, for better or worse. Ironically, few tried to achieve the sweeping, all-encompassing embrace of music as the Beatles did here. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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