

# Free essay on paul mccartney: life after "the beatles"

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A band more famous than Jesus! That statement was one casually made by a British rock band known to leave a permanent mark on both pop culture and music history for time immemorial. The Beatles was the band, and although that comment attracted bad publicity, it was not enough to destroy the incredibly talented men who made up this legendary band. John, Paul, George, and Ringo are names that every baby boomer and surrounding generations has come to associate with an era that will never be forgotten. The band to alter the face of music history entered the scene in the 1950's and established a remarkable position through the 1960's until the demise of the band in 1969 (" The Beatles History", 2013). The break-up of the Beatles was one that many fans could not accept and one that continues to be topic of conversation for many. In 2015, of the four members of the band, only Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr remain. The following essay will examine the career of Paul McCartney and several aspects of my opinion about his position with and without the Beatles. If any of the Beatles were likely to skyrocket in their solo career, it was no surprise to see Paul McCartney as that band member.

Paul McCartney was born James Paul McCartney in Liverpool, England in 1942. His exposure to music began very young with a father whose hobby involved playing piano in a band called Jim Mac's Jazz Band (" Biography", IMDb). Throughout his youth his interest and involvement in the arts and music continued to grow into his teenage years where he met John Lennon. As the two first members of the Beatles, John and Paul were also key figures in the creation of the music and lyrics of a large portion of the Beatles

numerous hit songs. Regardless of his split with the Beatles, McCartney's talents would carry him over into his solo career.

## **After the Split**

Once the tragic break-up of the Beatles was official, McCartney continued forward in his pursuit of his music career. As an individual with such incredibly talent, there was no other option but to continue forward with the natural gifts he possessed. Initially McCartney re-entered the music scene as a one-man show playing all the instruments along with singing. His image and style was not typical for the 70's era of glam rock and punk bands that were popular (" The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame", n. d.). Instead he had a very mellow family friendly presence that was liked but not loved by rock critics (" The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame", n. d.).

After his venture into a solo, one-man band McCartney began to commit his time and energy with his next band " Wings". His achievements with Wings was quite fruitful, as he was named one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century, despite the popularity of the punk scene that Wings was not a part of (" The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame", n. d.). According to " The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame" (n. d.), " Five consecutive Wings albums - Red Rose Speedway, Band on the Run, Venus and Mars, Wings at the Speed of Sound and Wings Over America (a triple live album) - topped the album charts" (para. 5). The end of Wings happened in 1981 with their final album, " Back to the Egg."

McCartney's return to his solo career in 1980 with the album called " McCartney II" began the start of numerous successful productions that has kept him in the limelight. His ability to work with other prominent artist like

Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson in the 80's has helped him remain innovative in the diverse audience who has embraced his music. Even in the current 21st century trend of the hip hop music culture, McCartney continues his collaboration with the likes of Kanye West and Rihanna. It is his genius musicality that has held him as a prominent figure in music history even after his departure from the Beatles.

### **With or Without the Beatles**

When considering the possibility of what may have been had the Beatles remained together like bands, such as The Rolling Stones, one must ask if McCartney would have been better off to end his career with John, George, and Ringo. However, from what I understand, his decision to leave the Beatles and venture out on his own to continue his career has resulted in significant acclaim that may not have occurred with the Beatles.

McCartney's produced some incredible hits with Wings that often is overlooked or overshadowed by his time with the Beatles. According to an article in the "U. S. News" website (2014), under McCartney's direction, the band Wings played the same arenas as the Beatles, had numerous Top Ten Hits, and a multitude of albums that went gold and platinum (Williams, "Is Paul McCartney Bigger than the Beatles"). "Their studio album, 'Band on the Run,' and a triple-live album, 'Wings Over America,' are considered classics. With 1972's 'Live and Let Die,' a James Bond movie theme song, the band accomplished something the Beatles never did, becoming the first rock group to receive an Oscar nomination" (Williams, 2014, para. 5). The stigma and notoriety of the Beatles as a ground breaking band has possibly limited the acknowledgment of McCartney's additional ongoing

achievements as a musician.

Even the collaborations that McCartney was wise to participate in, included some of the most talented artist of the late 20th Century, such as Michael Jackson, Elvis Costello, Nirvana and Stevie Wonder (Williams, 2014). His talent and genius are something that remains visible in the world of music, even in 2015, at the age of 73. His recent work with hip hop artists has gained a young generation of fans who are oblivious to associate McCartney's with just the Beatles. Needless to say, the career move that Paul McCartney stepped into after the break-up with the Beatles has been a wise and successful choice for him.

## **Conclusion**

Although McCartney's music at times held a similarity in musicality from his work with the Beatles, the overall style has evolved and changed with the trends in pop culture. It has been a brilliant journey for McCartney from his start with the Beatles to the various accomplishments since, which proves that a great musician should never retire. The work of a musician is a passion and a piece of him or herself that is not similar to most careers that people that people retire from. Of course there are musicians who opt to retire in their musical careers; however, evidence of McCartney's passion for music is apparent when the world still enjoys his presence on a massive scale. It is an honorable accomplishment of this legendary artist to continue to tour and share his gift with old and new fans alike. To conclude the essay, McCartney (1965) " I'm looking through you, where did you go? I thought I knew you, what did I know? You don't look different, but you have changed.

I'm looking through you, you're not the same" (I'm Looking Through You from Rubber Soul).

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