

The history of art, changed

[History](#)



Many artists and musicians have a claim to fame: Elvis Presley is "The King" of rock-and-roll, Michael Jackson is "The King" of pop, Miles Davis made jazz what it is today. But perhaps the only musical artists that are known for having changed an entire era of youth musically, politically, socially, and even economically are The Beatles. John, Paul, George, and Ringo are four names that when said together will, in most cases, solicit the same response: The Beatles.

There was Beatlemania, Ed Sullivan, early years, transition years, drug years, war years, the fighting, and of course, the break-up. Their first appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" is just as vivid in the memories of baby boomers as is the memory of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Perhaps most surprising is that The Beatles did in 8 years what most artists can't do in a life time; they impacted youth culture and became arguably the most well known artists in history.

In 1956, at the age of 16, John Lennon started a band by the name of the Quarrymen (Schaffner 12). Playing mostly in local clubs, The Quarrymen were a neighborhood band. On July 6, 1957 John Lennon would meet Paul McCartney for the first time. One of John's band mates, Ivan Vaughan, also a friend of fifteen year old Paul McCartney, invited Paul to the St. Peter's Church in Woolton, Liverpool where the Quarrymen would be playing.

Introductions were made; Paul picked up a guitar and John was genuinely impressed with Paul, not only because he could play so well but because he could tune a guitar, a feat that the others had not yet mastered. A few days later while riding his bicycle, Paul ran into Pete Shotton, one of the

Quarrymen. Pete told Paul that they had talked it over and John wanted Paul to join the band. After a moment's contemplation, Paul replied " Oh, all right" (Goldman 72). John and Paul quickly became friends, and the historic song writing duo was born.

Ivan Vaughn would go on to introduce John and Paul to George Harrison. Paul discovered that the fourteen year old George knew dozens more chords than he and John put together (Giuliano 28). George could also pick out actual solos instead of merely strumming (Goldman 75). The band's name went from Quarrymen to The Silver Beetles, and finally to the Beatles. One of John's rock 'n' roll heroes was Buddy Holly whose band was called the Crickets so John tried to dream up an insect name of his own. The result was " Beetles", but unable to resist the pun, he changed " Beet" to " Beat".

Explained John, " When you said it, people thought of crawly things, when you read it it was beatmusic" (Schaffner 19). Members were added and thrown out of the group eventually leaving only John, Paul, and George. On a brief outing to Hamburg, the three members would meet a drummer by the name of Richard Starkey, later to be known as Ringo Starr. He got the name " Ringo" for the many rings he wore on his fingers. On January 24, 1962, the Beatles signed a management contract with Brian Epstein.