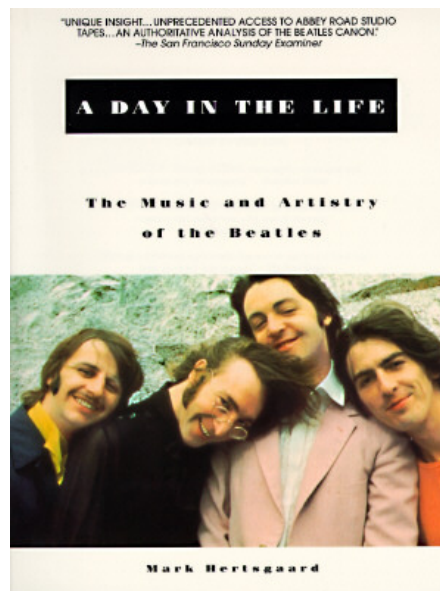




A Day in the Life: The Music and Artistry of the Beatles

Mark Hertsgaard

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They are the most popular and accomplished musical artists of this century. But for more than three decades, the secrets behind the Beatles' unparalleled artistic evolution were beyond reach--sealed in a locked room at London's Abbey Road Studios. In this comprehensive and brilliantly rendered book the only "outsider" to gain access to these invaluable musical archives provides a new, fascinating look at the music and artistry of the Beatles, revealing how four untrained musicians merged their collective genius into a single creative force, how they came together to paint pictures with sound...and how album by album, the Beatles transformed the landscape of popular music forever.

Combining literary analysis and investigative reporting with page-turning storytelling and musical explication, author Mark Hertsgaard has written the first serious biography of the music of the Beatles. *A Day in the Life* takes readers inside the Beatles' creative process as never before, from the first tentative run-throughs in the studio of such classics as "Eleanor Rigby" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand" to the final master tapes.

Here we learn how George Harrison's stirring composition "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" was completely transformed from an achingly meditative acoustic masterpiece to a hard-rocking hit--in forty-four takes. We recall how the fantastic final mix of "Strawberry Fields Forever" opens the door to a psychedelic utopia, but discover it is the haunting solo version that takes us down to the core of John Lennon's disillusioned soul. And only here do we see how the Beatles' audacious ability to reinvent themselves stamped the group's unfolding ingenuity on each album like a fingerprint.

With rare insight, Mark Hertsgaard unlocks the mystery of the century's most dynamic musical collaboration: the competitive and creative partnership of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. *A Day in the Life* traces the way Lennon and McCartney worked together and paints an intricate picture of the composers as we have never seen them before: Paul, the optimistic foil who made John's ominous fragments whole...John, the natural poet who injected raw sexuality into "I Saw Her Standing There" by making a simple five word change.

Smart, fresh, compulsively readable, *A Day in the Life* reveals John, Paul, George, and Ringo not as celebrities or cultural icons but as musicians whose work will be remembered as some of the most important art of the twentieth century.

A Day in the Life: The Music and Artistry of the Beatles Details

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Hertsgaard**

From Reader Review A Day in the Life: The Music and Artistry of the Beatles for online ebook

Gustav Gerät says

very good book, I like it

Rebecca says

Excellent archival work and research into the blood, sweat, and tears involved in the Beatles' recording sessions, written in a chronological fashion. My favorite takeaway quote was from George Martin in 1993: "All the sounds we were making in 1967-1968 you can now get by pressing a button. So people SELECT rather than CREATE. Nobody's PLAYING, just assembling digital information, and we get a lot of sterility, which is why music is going down the pan and Nintendo and Sega are taking over."

GraceAnne says

Hertsgaard examines the Beatles' music chronologically, and places it within its time, its musical context, and its level of innovation.

Biography impinges only tangentially. This is written at a very high level of analysis, but written with a graceful tone and suppleness of thought.

Even though he is talking about chord changes, etc, a nonmusician can follow. What he tries to illuminate is the powerful joy the Beatles music radiates.

He is unabashedly a fan, but never lets his love for his subject permit him to sentimentalize his analysis. He is clear in teasing out the contributions of all four guys, and sends one running back to the recordings to hear this or that part. He does a wonderful job of pinpointing all the musical innovations that began with the Beatles,

and describes in soaring prose the combination of sheer pleasure, eroticism, and straight-ahead rock and roll that was their music.

Hertsgaard sticks to primary sources and material closest to the four, trying to present as much of the truth as can be known.

A great read--carried it around with me, even on the subway, for two days.

Andrew Shipe says

The primary emphasis of Hertsgaard's book is his focus on the music: how it was made and why it's good. Yes, there is a well-reasoned chapter on the breakup, as well as chapters on some of the mythic features associated with the Beatles (songwriting, production, Beatlemania, for example). But even in those chapters, Hertsgaard stays with the strength of the book, its analysis of what John, Paul, George, and Ringo said, cross-referenced with people who were close to them and their work, like George Martin, Pete Shotton,

Derek Taylor, and, according to the author, fifty hours of listening to EMI's recording tapes of the Beatles in the studio.

The weakness of this book comes from having little primary research, beyond the recounting of studio chatter and rough drafts of their songs. He invited Paul, George, and Ringo to be interviewed; they refused. He does rely quite a bit on Mark Lewisohn's work, which is very reliable, but then why not just read Lewisohn?

That said, this is a very readable and informative compendium of well-chosen secondary sources on the Beatles' music.

Cyndy says

I read this book about the same time the Anthologies were coming out. The book and those DVD's go hand in hand and I would recommend reading this book and listening to the music together.

Em says

So enjoyable. I fairly tore through this book since I picked it up yesterday morning. And I followed the author's suggestion and listened to Beatles music as I read. Its focus is primarily on the music and the innovations the Beatles brought to recording and songwriting and covered each recording chronologically which makes perfect sense to me, as that is how I did my own essays on my fab four – Queen. How I would love to access their work tapes as MH had to the Beatles. As for the writing, it is quite good. He is sometimes repetitive in the descriptive phrases he uses, but I know from experience that it's easy to do when writing of music. His accounts of the sessions, the relationship of the four men, and the break-up is very balanced. He doesn't fall into the easy clichés and in fact makes meticulous notations to justify what he's written concerning things known to the surviving Beatles. A brilliant book.

Jason says

Probably the best book specifically about the Beatles' career as a band of talented lyricists and genius melody makers, this is a chronological album-by-album song-by-song document of the processes that went into the recording of every song and album they released. The author was given exclusive access to the Abbey Road archives, both paper and tape, and has documented a creative process and an artistic evolution unprecedented in the history of music, and unmatched since. THE must read for anyone who has ever asked the question (as I have on numerous occasions) "How the hell did they DO that!?!?!"

Jan Jørgensen says

Jeg har haft denne bog stående på hylden siden 1995 n tid hvor min beatles feber havde toppet og stille var på retur. Af uransable oversager har bogen fået lov til at stå ulæst på min reol indtil nu hvor jeg er igang med at få læst reolen igennem inden jeg må købe nye bøger. Men en af grundende til den har fået lov at stå uberørt så længe er den afstand jeg lague til det band der var det største i min verden som 14 årig. Jeg har

simpelt hen fornedret bandet og forbundet det med mine år som uerfaren lytter.

Det sagt har jeg efter at have læst denne bog der tager udgangspunkt i musikken og ikke de egentlige begivenheder fundet min glæde ved Beatles og har spillet dem non stop når jeg ikke lige har skulle læse eller vært på studiet. Det er ikke mange bøger der vender en mismodig holdning til begær men Mark Hertsgaard klare det til fulde med hans bog om 66'ernes største band. men nu gør emnet det nok også lidt nemmere.

Jeg kan kun varmt anbefale denne bog der er skrevet i et let tilgængeligt og varmt sprog. den er nørdet men forlader ikke at læseren skal være nørd eller ekspert. bogen ønsker som sådan bare at fortælle om de fire drenge fra Liverpool og underholde læseren med dette emne.

Robin Hart says

Good info on specific Beatles classics. Some stuff unknown to me.

Damon Lively says

I felt this was an excellent book. It does a nice job of incorporating the history of the Beatles (individual members, band as a whole, Martin), offering insight into the musical compositions and album creations process, and providing some insight into the personalities involved under an objective position. The writer does a great job incorporating research into this work and offering points of view – but in a way that is reasonable and non-biased in his own writing. The insight into the music is most impactful and really offers the evolution and importance of their work. Not to mention the innovative tricks and experimentation. The chapters follow the path of the musical creation – and I took a moment to listen to songs in sequence – and the book really came alive in that manner. I really did not find any glaring fault – although it could be argued there are more comprehensive works. But the intent is to look at the music in close terms and the Beatles are such a complex biography – this book has nice balance and is not overdone. I also valued the insight into the Lennon / McCartney relationship – but maybe more importantly – how critical George Martin was to the band too.

Drew Athans says

My full and detailed review is on my site at <http://nrchemist.blogspot.com/2014/1...>

Overall, a good book and a nice overview of the Beatles as musicians and creatives, although my opinion of the book has cooled considerably since it first came out over 20 years ago. There's nothing too revelatory for any serious Beatles fan and some minor errors abound, but it's a nice overview.

Rory says

A must-read for any Beatles fan, really. I think I remember a boy I had a crush on in college going on and on about this book--it's an accessible, straight-forward, not-too-gushing explanation of what made the Beatles' music (and it really does focus on the music and not much else) so good and important and rocking. It came out right around the Anthology, and I think it'd be fun to re-read sometime while listening to the albums

when reading the chapters about them. I go through an intense Beatles phase every 3 years or so (though this most recent phase has lasted a lot longer than others, thanks to Rock Band and new friends who dig them) and am glad I picked this one up this time.

Bruce says

See my review of *Hard Day's Write*, which I read simultaneously with this book for my overview of Beatlesologies. Hertsgaard makes a strong case for the Beatles' influence on pop music, both its significance in the context of the '60s and also on everything that came after. This is a well-written and well-researched biographical study of the group and its members (chiefly McCartney and Lennon, Harrison as songwriter ironically gets short-shrift here from a biographical point of view) that further illuminates the development and recording of each of their releases. It doesn't go song-by-song, which is what makes *Hard Day's Write* such a fitting contemporary companion. However, it certainly leads readers back to the tracks themselves and will have even the die-hard Beatles fan hearing with new ears, an experience worth the price of admission alone.

Hardy says

This is the second book I read on the Beatles. It focuses on the lyrics, while the other book focused on the people.

Paul McCartney of John Lennon, who was the better songwriter? This is the eternal question. This book convincingly argues that duality is natural: they both helped each other become better songwriters through friendly competition. It also helps that they shared so many similar experiences while growing up.

Now if someone asks you who is the better soccer (football) player, Messi or Ronaldo, you can answer that they both need each other. Duality can be seen throughout nature, with many species working together to avoid predators. Balance is a beautiful thing.

However, the Beatles' manager confesses that he should have spend more time developing George Harrison's songwriting skills.

Andreas Veie-Rosvoll says

Har aldri lest en "biografi" så oppslukt i et av bandmedlemmene (Lennon), hvor det ender med at forfatteren glemmer helt bort et av de andre medlemmene. Det er så mye Lennon-worship og så absurd lite Ringo i denne boka. Det er faktisk mer om George Martin enn det er om Ringo her. Det beste med A Day In The Life er at forfatteren har peil på det tekniske bak innspillingene The Beatles gjorde og kan sitt av musikkteori. Da er det gøy at han har tilgang til mange sjeldne opptak fra Abbey Road Studio BABY! Meeen boka later som den handler om musikken til Beatles, og prøver å nørde litt ut på det, men velger altfor mange ganger å synse om Lennon og livet hans (det er seriøst helt sinnssvakt hvor høyt han elsker John Lennon)
