



EASY BEATLES

Irresistible in-sound interpretations from the 60s and 70s

Nobody is bigger than The Beatles. They are, and always will be, the Kings of Pop. It simply can't be done any better. Or can it? No, maybe not – but differently! Many are those who have risen to the challenge and have fallen short, but have, in their attempts to emulate the Fab Four, left us with a rich catalogue of Beatles cover versions. Countless musicians and bands have transposed The Beatles into styles as diverse as country & western, reggae or even waltzes. When it comes to Beatles interpretations, almost anything goes.

The most prolific period of Beatles remakes coincided with the band's own active phase. The late Sixties and early Seventies were positively awash with Fab Four facsimiles on the songsheets of popular entertainers and jazz musicians. Some went as far as to record entire albums of Beatles songs. Whilst some turned out to be rather fabulous in their own right, others

were unintentionally amusing, but no less fascinating for that. More than a few pearls have been gathering dust in the archives over the years, as Beatles Covermania shows no sign of diminishing. Many such treasures thoroughly deserve to see the light of day once again.

This collection is but a small, initial foray into such territory. Eighteen jewels handpicked from the copious vaults of (primarily) American recordings, covering jet set pop, the Now Sound, easy listening, vocal and soul jazz. Little known startlets like The Assembled Multitude, studio musicians who came together for a single production, rub shoulders with the somewhat more familiar vocalist Nancy Ames, her highest chart position a less than stellar #89, and the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, a true giant of the vocal jazz scene.

Get ready to enter the FAB FOURTH DIMENSION.



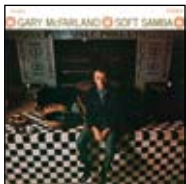
01 The Assembled Multitude | **I Want You (She's So Heavy)** (4:24)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Sony ATV Tunes/Beatles
ISRC US-AT2-04-02447, LC 00121, © 1970 Atlantic Recordings Corp.
Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company

One might be forgiven for thinking that it simply isn't possible to take the blues out of this dramatic piece. If that is the case, nobody told The Assembled Multitude. A mere dot of light in the musical universe, this muzak project comprised session musicians from Philadelphia. In 1970 they had a bona fide chart hit in the USA with their take on the "Tommy" overture. Encouraged by its success, the record company commissioned a full-length LP, culminating in this phlegmatic, incredibly laid-back rendition of "I Want You (She's So Heavy)". The Assembled Multitude undeservedly faded into obscurity not long after releasing said album.

Taken from the album "One Two/The Assembled Multitude" (1970)

Original track on "Abbey Road" (1969)



02 Gary McFarland **She Loves You** (2:17)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-UM7-06-03055
© 1964 The Verve Music Group, a division of UMG Recordings. Courtesy of Universal Music International Division - a division of Universal Music GmbH

Like so many of his contemporaries, Gary McFarland, one of the most underrated jazz musicians of the 1960s, lived in two worlds at the same time. In one, he was a composer, producer and arranger of high-brow orchestral jazz and in the other he served up easy listening Latin Jazz for the masses. He was also one of the first to spot the potential of The Beatles' oeuvre for jazz music. As early as 1964 he included a super smooth Bossa take on "She Loves You" on his "Soft Samba" album (with Kenny Burrell on guitar). Shunned by many of his older fans, he soon found plenty of new followers, as burgeoning sales figures reflected. Tragically, in 1971, McFarland died of a methadone overdose under mysterious circumstances in a New York bar, at just 38 years of age. The 2006 film "This Is Gary McFarland. The Jazz Legend Who Should Have Been a Pop Star" is a fitting tribute to his talent.

Taken from the album "Soft Samba" (1964)

Original single "She Loves You" / "I'll Get You" (1963)

03 The Harvey Averne Dozen **The Word** (2:39)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-AT2-02-02812, LC 00121 © 1968 Atlantic Recording Corp. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

Simple but effective: New York vibraphone maestro Harvey Averne conjures up an irresistible groove-twisting performance of "The Word". Sticking to a syncopated beat, impressive splashes of brass and, of course, the distinctive timbre of the vibraphone, this minor chord Lennon & McCartney composition ambles along quite jovially. At the end of the song, it's the girls' turn to utter "The Word". Harvey Averne made a name for himself in the 50s as Harvey Arvito, purveyor of Latin sounds, but progressed into crossover terrain in the 60s with a mix of Latin, soul and pop as Harvey Averne, recording two albums under that moniker. Worth a small fortune these days, should you come across either of them.

Taken from the album "Viva Soul" (1968)

Original track on "Rubber Soul" (1965)

04 Nancy Wilson **And I Love Him** (2:20)

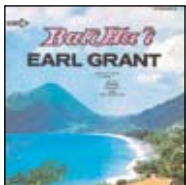
(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-CA2-66-00167
© 1966 Capitol Records. Courtesy of Capitol Music - a division of EMI Music Germany GmbH & Co. KG

The grande dame of vocal jazz was not averse to meandering into pop music, and let us give thanks for that. The world would be a poorer place without the Diva's celebration of Lennon & McCartney. Distinguished to a tee, the arrangement is refreshingly easy and yet quite exquisite. Nancy savours every syllable. Violins live up the proceedings as the piano shimmers in the background. There's groove in there too. Courtesy of an unexpected offbeat. Changing the title of the song ever so slightly is the lady's prerogative.

Taken from the album "A Touch Of Today" (1966)

Original track on "A Hard Day's Night" (1964)





05 Earl Grant: A Hard Day's Night (2:33)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs © 1967 Decca Records. Courtesy of Universal Music International Division – a division of Universal Music GmbH

A student of both the piano and organ, Grant was one of the most commercially successful organists of the 60s. He also enjoyed a few hits as an R&B singer. His slightly hoarse voice led some people to wonder if he was Nat King Cole's brother – but the rumour remained unsubstantiated. His 1967 album "Bali Ha Ha" featured various Latin treatments of popular songs, along with this compelling Beatles Bossa. It may begin in relaxed and unhurried mode, but once Grant's Hammond B-3 gets into gear, we are in for a ride with the devil. Listen out for Earl's ecstatic "Yeah" towards the end.

Taken from the album "Bali Ha Ha" (1967)

Original track on "Beatles For Sale" (1964)



06 Gershon Kingsley Paperback Writer (2:49)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs © 1969 Audio Fidelity Records. Courtesy of Gershon Kingsley

Gershon Kingsley (born Götz Gustav Ksinski in Bochum, 1922) had more aliases than you could shake a stick at: Mr. Popcorn, Mr. Moog, Mr. In-Sound From Way Out. Not only did he write the first ever worldwide Moog hit record ("Popcorn", made famous by the band Hot Butter), he happens to be the God of synthesizer pop and one of the sharpest Moog wizards on the planet. Popular German TV theme tunes also crop up on his C.V., including the memorable melodies for shows like "Die Pyramide" and "Babelgamm". Amongst his many musical highlights is this unhinged version of "Paperback Writer". See if you can hear the first "Popcorn" Moog motifs in the midst of the soundstorm right at the end of the song. Neat, Mr. Kingsley!

Taken from the album "Music To Moog By" (1969)

Original single "Paperback Writer" / "Rain" (1966)

07 Shirley Scott & the Soul Saxes Get Back (4:46)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-AT2-02-02818, LC 00121 © 1969 Atlantic Recording Corp. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

"Queen of the organ" Shirley Scott takes Paul McCartney's rock'n'roller on a wild ride through hip-swinging soul jazz and Sixties Beat. Accompanying her on the journey are the legendary "Soul Saxes" King Curtis, Hank Crawford and David Newman. Playing off each other in exuberant fashion, they never let the tempo drop. And just when you think you can take a breather, off they go again! Mercy me! "Get Back" never had more soul and drive. John Lennon, by the way, cheekily let slip in an interview that Paul McCartney cast his eye on Yoko Ono in the studio every time he sang the line "Get back to where you once belonged".

Taken from the album "Shirley Scott & the Soul Saxes" (1970)

Original track on "Let It Be" (1970)



08 Ella Fitzgerald Savoy Truffle (2:46)

(Harrison), published by Harrisongs, ISRC US-RE1-01-01737, LC 00322 © 1969 Reprise Records. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

If The Beatles are the Kings of Pop, then Ella Fitzgerald is the Queen of Vocal Jazz. A regal pairing indeed, with Ella injecting an extra dose of sleaze (more than Lennon's original interpretation) into George Harrison's shuffle, a composition that George had dedicated to Eric Clapton's sweet tooth ... and his bad teeth. What was unfamiliar territory for the Fab Four suits Ella Fitzgerald down to the ground. She actually recorded the track in the same London studio that The Beatles would subsequently use on some of the "Abbey Road" sessions.

Taken from the album "Ella" (1969)

Original track on "The White Album" (1968)







09 The Sandpipers Things We Said Today (2:54)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Maclen Music, ISRC US-AM1-70-00407
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You could always rely on The Sandpipers to slow down drastically any piece of music they got their hands on. Then they would wrap the listener in the aural equivalent of cotton wool, conjuring up an ethereal atmosphere with their silken voices. As is most definitely the case on this recording. The use of an echoing woodblock in place of a snare put The Sandpipers way ahead of their time in terms of sound. They were actually discovered by A&M supremo and Tijuana Brass trumpet player Herb Alpert. They had one hit record – “Guantanamera”, which made it into the top ten of the charts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Taken from the album “Guantanamera” (1966)

Original track on “A Hard Day’s Night” (1964)

10 Clarence Wheeler & the Enforcers Hey Jude (7:55)

(Lennon/McCartney), published By Northern Songs, ISRC US-AT2-01-07938,
LC 00121 © 1970 Atlantic Recording Corp. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

It would not be completely accurate to describe this as a cover version. Variations on a theme would be closer to the truth, with brand new parts added for good measure. In so doing, tenor saxophonist Clarence Wheeler manages to add on a whole minute to “Hey Jude”, not one of The Beatles’ shorter songs. He dispenses rapidly with verse and chorus to get down to the serious business of the Na-na-na sing-along which appears in the final third of the original and his own free expressionism. In fairness, Wheeler’s reinvention of the famous McCartney composition is both convincing and masterful.

Taken from the album “Doin’ What We Wanna” (1970)

Original single: “Hey Jude”/ “Revolution” (1968)



11 Helmut Zacharias Can't Buy Me Love (2:28)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, © 1966 RCA Victor.
Courtesy of Hildegard Zacharias

Before his fixed smile and smooth strings became permanent fixtures on family light entertainment television shows of the Seventies, German virtuoso violinist Helmut Zacharias had clearly felt more at ease outside the mainstream. One striking example of his experimental bent is his take on “Can’t Buy Me Love”. Zacharias seems unable to decide if he should drown the tune in a classical wall of violin sound or transform it into a wild beat stomp. The resulting clash of atmospheres are pretty far out. Which fits in nicely with the concept of the album from whence it came:

“Pop goes Baroque” (1967).

Original track on “A Hard Day’s Night” (1964)



12 Sammy Kaye Eight Days A Week (4:42)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs
© Decca Records. Courtesy of Universal Music International Division – a division of Universal Music GmbH

In the 40s and 50s Sammy Kaye and his orchestra warmed the hearts of all those listeners who liked their music to be entertaining but unobtrusive. It was only when Kaye enlisted the services of Charles Albertine as arranger in the early 60s that his sound began to change. And how it changed. Leaving his bland past behind him, Kaye brought new verve into play via the horns and drums, unleashing his Hammond organ as never before. In fact, this particular version might well have been too much for Kaye’s traditional fans. Just right for this compilation, however!

Taken from the album “Dancetime” (1965)

Original track on “Beatles For Sale” (1964)





13 Nancy Ames | *I Feel Fine* (2:36)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-SM1-01-15171
© 1967 Epic Records. Courtesy of Sony BMG Music Entertainment
(Germany) GmbH

Nancy Ames is better remembered for her two classy Latin Pop albums rather than any of the other dozen or so LPs she recorded. This fleet-footed version of "I Feel Fine", Brazilian style, can be found on her second Latin collection, "Spiced With Brasil". No lesser than the Brazilian legend Laurindo Almeida plucked the guitar strings on this recording, arranged by Stu Phillips, who went on to become a successful film composer in the 70s and 80s with such dubious cinematic pleasures as "Battlestar Galactica". Particularly noteworthy here is how Nancy Ames neatly switches the perspective of Lennon's lyrics.

Taken from the album "Spiced With Brasil" (1967)

Original single: "I Feel Fine"/ "She's A Woman" (1964)

14 The Brothers Four | *We Can Work It Out* (2:36)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-SM1-03-04870
© 1966 Columbia Records. Courtesy of Sony BMG Music Entertainment
(Germany) GmbH

When the four sweet singing "brothers" from Seattle, who set out in 1958 as a student band, turned their attention to The Beatles on their "Songbook" album, their best days were already behind them. The covers idea was an attempt to rekindle their popularity through association with the "British Invasion". They may not have succeeded in that respect, but they did commit some wonderful interpretations to tape. The cheerful harmonica melody adds a peaceful, almost pastoral note to this gentle McCartney composition. Your mother-in-law would love it too.

Taken from the album "A Beatles Songbook" (1966)

Original single: "We Can Work It Out" / "Day Tripper" (1965)



15 Wade Marcus | *Something* (3:35)

(Harrison), published by Harrisongs, ISRC US-AT2-02-02813, LC 00121
© 1971 Cotillion Records. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

George Harrison's bacchanal masterpiece is one of the most covered songs around. Wade Marcus delivers a sensitive and yet bold production, with harp, Hammond organ, lush strings and wah-wah guitar vying for centre stage. The longer it goes on, the groovier it gets. Wade Marcus began his career as a trombone player for Lionel Hampton and went on to work as arranger for such classic labels as Motown, Stax, MGM, Atlantic and Blue Note. Just why Marcus left his own customary instrument in the cupboard is anybody's guess.

Taken from the album "A New Era" (1971)

Original track on "Abbey Road" (1969)



16 Arif Mardin | *Glass Onion* (2:42)

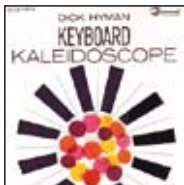
(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs, ISRC US-AT2-02-02810, LC 00121, © 1969 Atlantic Recording Corp.. Courtesy of Warner Music Group Germany Holding GmbH. A Warner Music Group Company.

John Lennon laced the lyrics of this song with riddles, leading to some audacious readings – although he always claimed that the line "The walrus was Paul" meant nothing at all. Maybe that is one of the reasons why Arif Mardin – whose day job was producer and arranger for the likes of Aretha Franklin and The Bee Gees – opted to substitute the vocals with a distorted electric guitar. He also introduced an element of tension into the track with a driving beat, hammering piano and an unanticipated psychedelic segment. It beats the original for intensity by some distance. Be prepared for the finale, where lunacy seems to have gained the upper hand ...

Taken from the album "Glass Onion" (1969)

Original track on "The White Album" (1968)





17 Dick Hyman Love Me Do (3:20)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by MPL Communications © 1964 Command Records. Courtesy of Universal Music International Division – a division of Universal Music GmbH

Nice and easy does it, Mr Hyman. In fact, The Beatles' first hit sounds almost sedate as the organ rocks gently to a somewhat sluggish beat. Don't be fooled – Dick Hyman, the man on the ivories, knows exactly what he is doing. His rigorous strut through the music lends it a coolness factor that was absent in the catchy original. Rarely, if ever, has such sleight of hand rendered this song so debonair. Without a pitch-bend wheel on his Lowrey organ, Hyman went for the Hawaiian guitar button – he could only pitch upwards but he got the Blues effect he was after. Our compliments, Mr. Hyman! (Space-Age Pop Maestro Enoch Light was the producer.)

Taken from the album "Keyboard Kaleidoscope" (1964)

Original track on "Please Please Me" (1963)

18 The Lettermen I'm Only Sleeping (3:05)

(Lennon/McCartney), published by Northern Songs © 1972 Capitol Records. Courtesy of Capitol Music – a division of EMI Music Germany GmbH & Co. KG

The dulcet tones of vocal trio The Lettermen were synonymous with MOR pop in the early 60s, as several hit records testify. The question they asked of "I'm Only Sleeping" seems to have been if the song could benefit from a relentlessly soporific delivery. It was a big ask, but they came up with the right answer – an invitation to lie down, close your eyes and float away as the music flows. One question remains unanswered – why did The Lettermen give the album from which this track was lifted the number 1, when it was to prove their last regular release for the next 18 years?

Taken from the album "The Lettermen 1" (1972)

Original track on "Revolver" (1966)



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