



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# **“Nothing is Beatleproof!” In what context? (part II)**

**The socio-political and the media perspectives  
in the creation of art and the artist's image  
in communication**

**EIRINI DANAI VLACHOU**

**Thesis for the Degree of Master of Science in Communication**

**Report No: 2012:002**

**ISSN: 1651-4769**

Regretfully I came to feel that this research has not been conducted under the auspices of GU; I can only hope that it has not been compromised as a result. All the more reason to express my gratitude to the few people who did offer me their guidance and support during this process:

Bilyana Martinovski, PhD  
*for believing this was a worthy subject for research*

Magnus Berg, PhD  
*for his interested gaze and enthusiastic comments*

Eva Gustavfsson, Stationschef at K103 Göteborgs Studentradio  
*for offering me radio-time to experiment and observe*

Dr John Barnes, PhD  
*for his encouragement, which kept me going*

Nataliya Berbyuk Lindström, PhD,  
*for thinking this project was worth salvaging  
and offering to become my supervisor*

It has been a privilege, thank you!  
Danai Vlachou

EIRINI DANAI VLACHOU

## "Nothing is Beatleproof!"\*

### In what context? (part II)

The socio-political and the media perspectives in the creation of art and the artist's image in communication

#### ABSTRACT

Art is often defined as a process of creation guided by artist's intention. However, artwork as a means of expression is also a communicative medium.

How do socio-political contexts influence the artwork and identity of artists? Can one define an artwork as a co-design between artist and its socio-political context?

What is the role of the media, the intermediate, in communication in this process?

The purpose of the thesis is to explore the idea of art as a communicative co-design process by studying the relation between the popular music band Beatles, their collaborators, and the socio-political context they emerged from. Is their image or identity a result of a co-design, which occurred between the band and the socio-political realities of the day as communicated via the media?

The band's communicative approaches, patterns and strategies are viewed in relation to socio-political perspectives and the role of media.

Answers to the above questions are to be found in communication theories related to production and media processes, studies related to society, politics, and the media, and examples of communicative interaction between the band and the political and social forces.

The study finds that socio-political, market and media parameters had a profound effect on the Beatles' art and image. It concludes that both artwork and artist's identity are co-shaped through communication; a co-design influenced by context, i.e. not simply products of artistic intention nor marketing strategies.

#### KEYWORDS

communication • context • art • pop culture • society • politics • media • music • identity • gender  
• the Beatles

(\*Lennon's character in film *Yellow Submarine*, 1:12:57)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>page</i>	5	INTRODUCTION
<i>page</i>	6	BACKGROUND STUDIES
<i>page</i>	7	Communication theories and the function of context
<i>page</i>	10	Socio-political and economical factors as context that affects the choices of media coverage
<i>page</i>	14	Socio-political factors as contexts that affected the media and market related choices in the design of the Beatles' image
<i>page</i>	17	METHOD
<i>page</i>	19	COMMUNICATION PROCESS
<i>page</i>	20	A socio-political contextual pool 1960-1970
<i>page</i>	25	Managing and Promoting the Beatles
<i>page</i>	31	Producing the Beatles
<i>page</i>	38	The Beatles' Image Mediated
<i>page</i>	45	Capitalizing on the Beatles
<i>page</i>	52	The Beatles Politics
<i>page</i>	61	DISCUSSION
<i>page</i>	62	The influence of socio-political contexts on artists' identity and the meaning of art
<i>page</i>	68	The ways in which socio-political contexts influenced the design and the image of the Beatles
<i>page</i>	79	Is the Beatles' image a result of a marketing intention or is it a co-design?
<i>page</i>	87	CONCLUSION
<i>page</i>	89	REFERENCES

## INTRODUCTION

*If you want to know about the Sixties, play the music of The Beatles*  
(Aaron Copland, in MacDonald, 1997, p.1)

How do socio-political contexts influence the artwork and identity of artists?  
Can one define an artwork as a co-design between artist and its socio-political context?  
What is the role of the media, the intermediate, in communication in this process?

This research, which has been conducted in two parts, aimed to explore the role context plays in communication, and the effects it has on the communication outcome, in the field of artistic creation and on the identity of the artist, through the interaction with the audience, within its given environment, as facilitated by the media. The paradigm of the Beatles, on whom this research focuses, occurred during the decade 1960-1970, an era of political turmoil, social change, scientific and technological progress, on the cultural threshold between modernism and post-modernism. "*Nothing is Beatleproof!*", the rather arrogant statement by Lennon's character in the animated film *Yellow Submarine* (1968) is a direct reference to the seemingly undisputable power both the art and the image of the Beatles possessed, which, nevertheless, given the Beatles' unprecedented success rang truthful. The question "*In what context?*" which follows this bold statement points to the issue at hand, the context, or rather the variety of the specific, given contexts within which the communication between the Beatles and their audience took place.

The first part of the research, "*Nothing is Beatleproof!*" *In what context? Art and the artist's image as communication* (Vlachou, 2010), was an exploration of the relation between the artist and the audience (the two opposing ends, the *sender* and the *receiver* in the communication act) in the creation of the artwork and the artist's image. The first part of the research showed that the audience – *the receiver*, is co-responsible for the creation of the artist's – *the sender's*, image and identity. The term *identity* is referring to an individual's (or in this case the band members') distinct personalities regarded as their persisting entities within the unity of the group – as they themselves perceived it, whereas the term *image* is referring to "*the elements that constitute a complete image: work product, publicity, promotion, and commentaries/criticism*" (Frontani, 2007, p.3).

In this paper, which should be considered as the second, concluding part of the research, the aim is to examine the roles distributed among the middle components, which facilitate the communication, that is the *channel* (production, promotion and distribution) through which the Beatles' *message* (work and image) traveled in order to reach its *receiver* (the audience), and the communicative pool – *the envi-*

ronment (society) within which the communication took place. In the examination of the band's interaction with both *environment* and *channel* the aim is to establish whether the formation of the artist's image and work constitutes a co-creation.

How do socio-political contexts influence the artwork and identity of artists? Society as the *environment*, within which communication occurs, cannot be viewed separately from the political and economic factors which influence and dictate its choices. These choices are presented as *messages*. A *message* is *content* formulated in an expressible *form*, that is, a *signified* 'dressed up' in a *signifier* 'outfit'. It is proposed and transmitted through communication *channels* known as media. Interferences occur and are treated as disturbances, *noise* which needs to be eliminated. Messages that attempt to emerge from non-dominant parts of a specific society are often evaluated out of context, presented as irrelevant, become marginalized, and treated as *noise*.

Can one define an artwork as a co-design between artist and its socio-political context? The Beatles emerged in an era that seemed ripe for social change. They belonged to a non-dominant part of society, that 'pushed' upwards. They considered themselves 'anti-establishment' and constantly tested the boundaries of 'propriety'. They balanced their image ideally, proving themselves both important counter-culture figures as well as mainstream pop culture superstars, and they have managed to successfully maintain their reigning position for over forty years after their split.

What is the role of the media, the intermediate, in communication in this process? The media, which in the beginning of their career dismissed the Beatles as *noise*, once established and to this day, celebrate their *message*. Between the Beatles and the entertainment industry an interaction took place, which allowed the artists to conceive, create, and distribute to the audience ever more meaningful, daring and demanding artistic works, which nevertheless proved to be extremely profitable and, thus were attractive to, and welcomed by the entertainment industry.

A look into communication theories related to context and the media, studies which identify socio-political and economic factors as context-shaping realities – which in turn affect the media coverage choices – as well as relevant studies on culture, and the Beatles, will be the tools to unravel the contextual cues exchanged, which allowed this interaction to occur.

## BACKGROUND STUDIES

In "Nothing is Beatleproof!" *In what context? Art and the artist's image as communication* (Vlachou, 2010), which should be viewed as the first part of this study, the issue discussed was the balance achieved by the Beatles, in creating and presenting works

which were accepted both as popular mass art and elite high art, to the audience. Questions were posed about the role of communication and the importance of context on art, its meaning, and their relation to the formation of the identity of the artist. It was revealed that the feedback offered by the audience as well the artists' peers, informed and complimented the shaping of the Beatles' image and their body of work. That is, the *receivers* of the artistic product were also *senders* who helped co-shape the artists as well as their art.

Between the two main components of the communication act – the *sender* and the *receiver* – stand the media as an additional component which facilitates the act of communication, the *channel*. The media used to transmit the works of the Beatles were essentially designed for mass consumption and they obliged to the rules of mass media production, transmission, and distribution. Moreover, their strategies and practices of the media, in order to be successful in their aim, had to correspond with the 'needs' and 'expectations' of society. The Beatles (*senders*) had to oblige to the market (*channel*) and its view about, and use of, the media (*channel*), in order to be heard and get accepted by their audience (*receivers*), all the afore-mentioned components constitute society, which is the *communication environment / pool*, and within which the communication acts took place.

With these parameters in mind theories on communication in relation to the media, which discuss the function of context will be presented. Further studies on the socio-political and economic factors as contexts that affect the choices of media coverage will reveal the market perspective. Last, socio-political factors as contexts that affected the media and market related choices in the design of the Beatles' image will be presented.

### **Communication theories and the function of context**

Communication theories that aim to explain the mechanisms of mass communication, reveal context as an essential factor that promotes meaning. The intermediate in the transmission of a message in mass communication is also essential. One way of organizing the following communication theories would be to identify the factors, which weave various types of contexts, such as the mechanics, the semiotics, the role of societies and their cultures, the politics, and the tools we rely on in order to distribute meaning. If one chose a more general view – an alternative framing, one could say that here are presented theories which recognize context as a crucial factor in communication, theories which suggest that context affects social formations, and last, theories which suggest that context can be created and

/ or cultivated via the media. The following communication theories are presented with both afore-mentioned orders of organization in mind. However, the further naming of those factors on each occasion seemed irrelevant and pointless, since the interweaving of factors and the contexts these create, along with the interchangeability of their weight when prioritizing in order to make decisions, is what affects communication and its outcome on each occasion, contrary to any analytical organization one might consider hierarchically valid.

If we attempt to frame communication in the model suggested by Shannon and Weaver (1963), we have the following components in a linear, rational, consecutive presentation: The *sender* and the *receiver* are positioned at the two opposing ends of the communication act. Between them the *message* travels from one to the other via a communication *channel*. The function of the *channel* may be partially disrupted by *noise*. What was left out is that this action takes place in a given *environment*. In the matter at hand this *environment* is society and it includes the *channels* within which the *message* 'travels' but also the *noise* that potentially prevents the message from reaching the *receiver*, or may alter its meaning. The Communication Model Shannon and Weaver (1963) proposed, offers us thus an accurate depiction of the components engaged in a communication incident. However, this machinist's model of communication is inadequate to accurately describe the communicative interaction, in that it does not recognize the human factor – and an imponderable one at that – as an additional actor between *sender* and *receiver*. The implication is that in the case of mass communication we cannot view the *environment* as something indifferent, static, unaltered. We must take into consideration as *noise*, the shifts and changes that occur due to various socio-political and economical factors, may they be directly or indirectly related to the communication act. The *noise* itself offers feedback which informs, and may shift or change the intention of the communication and its outcome. Socio-political and economic factors act as regulators of the *channels*, that is the media, through which the message is being transmitted. Within an at all times internally changing *environment* communication occurs via *channels* that are being constantly readjusted. The communication act is being disturbed and informed by *noise*, and readjusted according to the afore-mentioned socio-political and economic factors. The *environment*, being constituted by people who produce *noise* and also regulate the *channels*, should be considered as being *receivers* as well. The *environment* itself may thus be viewed as a context, better yet a constellation of contexts. Meanwhile, communication models that attempt to describe communication acts between people such as the Shared Intentionality Model, in their visual depictions seem to completely disregard the existence and therefore



the effects of the in-between stages in communication, namely the space, the tools and the implications thereof. Simplified mentions of 'Shared meaning' and 'We-intentions', speak more about our wishful thinking on the outcome in communication as it would appear if it were taking place within a sterilized test-tube than about the act as it takes place in a reality flooded with ambiguous and contrasting interests.

The Theory of Speech Act (Searle, 1969) suggests that in order to make meaning one must have an understanding of the intention, the *message* – that which is *signified*, and also be able to comprehend the *signifier* which bears it. The Interpretative and Interaction Theories (Watzlawick, 1974; Griffin, 1997) also point out the importance of a comprehensible *signifier* in order to make meaning of a *message*. Pearce and Cronen in the Theory Coordinated Management of Meaning (1980) suggest a co-construction of meaning by making use of the common space and the indicative, symbolic and / or descriptive *signifiers* it provides; making use of a culturally shared conceptual map (Givón, 2005, p. 91), or a common *environment*.

Theories that attempt to describe and explain communication within a specific society, and which are related to regulating as well as self-regulating functions recognize the 'appointing of roles' inherited in the regulation-setting function. The *senders*, the *receivers*, the *channels*, the *noise* are all to be designated within a specific *environment*-society. The Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) suggests that humans act within a context of pre-existing social structures, dictated by norms and laws, distinct from other social structures. Their actions are predetermined to some extent according to the various contextual rules they follow. The Adaptive Structuration Theory (Desanctis and Poole, 1994) on information technology and the production and reproduction of social systems by its members – an adaptation of Giddens' Structuration Theory (1984), reveals that through related activities, perceptions are formed about technology's role and utility. But those, it is noted, vary according to the social aspects, across groups.

Communication theories in stating the existence of communication models are at the same time shaping them. By revealing and naming communicative patterns they offer 'crystallized' models, that are often accepted as supposedly 'axiomatic' entities, which further dictate and specify the shape of the *channels*. As the Theory of the Altercasting Strategy (Pratkanis, 2000) reveals, people accept social roles, due to social pressures forced on them. A person is expected to be consistent with his / her role and thus, the role reinforces itself by offering exposure to information consistent with the role. This leads to typecasting within a specific frame, or a context. The patterns that, according to the Theory of the Altercasting Strategy

(Pratkanis, 2000), enable society to reinforce roles and functions within it – i.e. if applied in this enquiry: what / who is considered as *noise*, what / who is considered as *channel* – are enabling the media to shape the social conceptions of reality, according to Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1976). Exposure to mass media gradually shapes our perceptions of reality and culture. By the maintenance and propaganda of existing attitudes and values in a culture via the media, these attitudes and values are being reinforced along with the context within which society lies.

Another factor is relevant literacy. In the Knowledge Gap Theory (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970) context is indicated as a crucial factor in perceiving and understanding information, since it offers the potency to evaluate information according to acquired knowledge on related topics. A medium offers messages embedded within different contexts; these are processed by various receivers, from various perspectives, in various ways and to various extents. The media effects on the audience are enhanced via priming (Gerbner, 1976), which offers information – useful in order to further interpret subsequent communication acts. Most importantly, as framing theory (Gerbner, 1976) suggests, the media point the attention towards certain events, inescapably positioning them within a field of meaning at the same time. In making deliberate framing choices, mass media propose and promote frames of reference that gradually, by repetition, become standards. McLuhan, in the Medium Theory (1964) revealed how content – *the signified* is encapsulated within the *channel*, thus he re-framed our understanding of the *channel* – medium as *signifier*, and one that bears its own context, as the symbolic *environment* of the communication act. McLuhan's statement 'the medium is the message' (1964) offers different readings according to one's standpoint, as well as according to one's level of media literacy; thus the *channels* reveal flexibility and variety we may not realize they possess. Furthermore, one man's *noise* is another man's *message*, and, to make matters more complicated, *noise* can be represented as a *message* and a *message* can be represented as *noise*.

New revelations about the potential of media lead, on the one hand to further restrictions in order to successfully continue the media regulation on behalf of those who control them, while on the other hand those who wish to alter regulations continue to seek, discover and reveal cracks and holes in the 'axiomatic' facade of media

### **Socio-political and economical factors as context that affects the choices of media coverage**

Studies in communication offer us answers about the 'how' – the mechanisms and patterns in communication. The 'why' of communication in relation to

the media, the function and role of the media are to be looked for in theories explaining society and the political and financial implications, which affect its choices and the use of the tools of communication. Further understanding, can be acquired if we examine the contextual field of power structures responsible for the distribution of roles for each component in communication and the tensions 'encapsulated' within the act of distribution. If knowledge and the distribution of information is power, then the media are a power-tool used in order for power to be to acquired and / or retained. Thus the prevailing choices may generate optimism, or pessimism about the function and use of the media, according to a specific outcome in relation to one's point of view. While the function of the role has not yet been decided and imposed, ambivalence for the purpose and function of a role causes tension. However, even when a prevailing choice has been successfully imposed, the debate over the definition of the function of the role lingers. Shifts and changes to the use of communication tools are caused by counter forces, and thus on communication itself. A quick view on the evolution stages and the sustainability factors of the media as they are facilitated and framed by the rules of economy reveals the reason, which is the goal that motivates the use of media as tools for communication and consequently the conflict caused by the self claiming of roles by various agents involved in the communication act within the communicative interaction.

By revisiting the readings on meaning and the function of media offered by Benjamin (*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1936), Adorno (*Current of Music elements of a radio theory*, published in 2006, but written between 1938-1941), Enzensberger (*Constituents of a Theory of the Media*, 1970) and Baudrillard (*Requiem for the Media, For a critique of a political economy of the sign*, 1981) what becomes clear is how their authors' views mirror the socio-political factors that shaped the time these works were written and the position their authors took within their contextual *environment*.

*"Much like an article, a technology can carry and reproduce varying social values through its choice and use of language, its informational content, and its undeclared presumptions. Through its design it may convey ideological messages and prompt specific social behavior. "In this sense", declares Pfaffenberger (1992), "one may speak legitimately of the political dimension of technological design". Each given technological innovation can be thought of as carrying with it a conjunction of ideas, "any technology represents a cultural invention, in the sense that it brings forth a world, it emerges out of particular cultural conditions and in turn helps create new ones" (Escobar, 1994)" (Granqvist, 2005, p. 290-291).*

Benjamin was speculating on the emancipating potential mechanical reproduction may offer to art, right before Nazi Germany declared Modernism to be De-

generate Art in a massive communication act of flak. A few years later Adorno, having fled Nazi Germany – where books were being burned and cheap radios were offered, so that every citizen could tune-in to a propaganda which led to pogroms – found refuge in the USA. There he composed music for films, and participated in the Radio Project, which was part of a research on the effects of new forms of mass media on society, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. Adorno's interpretation on the findings further established his belief that the entertainment industry with the help of the media provides a system to control society through a top-down standardized model of culture that commodified artistic expression, as he had already written in *On Jazz* (1936). Adorno would agree with Herman's and Chomsky's observations:

*"A propaganda model has a certain initial plausibility on guided free market assumptions that are not particularly controversial. In essence, the private media are major corporations selling a product (readers and audiences) to other businesses (advertisers). The national media typically target and serve elite opinion, groups that, on the one hand, provide an optimal "profile" for advertising purposes, and, on the other, play a role in decision-making in the private and public spheres"* (Herman - Chomsky, 1988, p. 303).

In 1970, H. M. Enzensberger, having just witnessed the previous revolutionary decade presented a hopeful view of change via the emancipation of the productive forces in the field of media, where people would use technology to document and represent their own lives. However, the power struggle between marketing and social forces was present,

*"The use of social marketing developed in the 1970s and was quickly tied up with music, drama and storytelling. Entertainment was particularly linked to mass media-based strategies, especially television and radio. It was also in the 1970s that some of the key theories were developed, including Albert Bandura's theory of social learning (Bandura 1977)"* as Thomas Tufte observed (2005, p. 162).

Baudrillard, in 1981 pointed at social priming and framing as the reasons for the receivers' non-responsive attitude towards the media, and their acceptance of the role as passive receivers.

Evaluations on what role media and technology can serve, vary according to the way specific societies experience them during specific eras. The debate on who, in what manner, and to what end, will control the media – the *channel*, and consequently, what will be distributed as *message*, what will be dismissed as *noise*, is ongoing. *"As they interact, social discourses engage in processes of domination, resistance, and negotiation, in each of these processes, cultural meanings are produced, circulated, and consumed* (Geertz, 1973; Rodriguez, 2005, p. 381). Today's horizontal distribution of technology allows the

realization of Enzensberger's dream; the people traditionally viewed as the *receivers* create *messages*, gain access to the communicative *channel* and literally flood it, by distributing innumerable – not copies but – originals, making use of the possibilities digital reproduction offers. However, years of conditioning to the styles of *signifiers* deemed acceptable, through a top-down standardized model of culture – as stated by Adorno – provide a variety of ready-made solutions for the, not so passive, *receivers* to prove Baudrillard both right and wrong; wrong to the extent that those thought of as *receivers* produce and send their own messages – right, because their production is mostly a reproduction of the messages they have been receiving for years. Susan Wright, in *The politicization of 'culture'* (1998) notes how an ideology that becomes naturalized, and is taken for granted, and 'true' makes the notion of existing alternatives as being beyond the limits of the thinkable. Thus a dogma is presented as an axiom. Obregon and Mosquera observed “[...] *the relationship between popular culture and media brings with it the concept of mediations, in which culture is constantly resisted, negotiated and contextualized, and yet it is provisional*” (Obregon and Mosquera, 2005, p. 236).

We have gained access and the potential of control over *channels* of communication, the question is how do we make use of it? If "*Society is engaged in monitoring itself, scrutinizing itself, portraying itself in a variety of ways, and feeding the resulting understandings back into organizing its activities*" (Hannerz, Boyer, 2006, p. 13), is it in fact doing so with borrowed *signifiers*, repeating, and reproducing *messages* that were once transmitted via the traditional top-down standardized model, now naturalized to the extent that we view them as the only plausible ones? N. Wiener observed in *The Human Use of Human Beings, Cybernetics and Society* (1950) that the more probable the message, the less information it has to offer; that is, since the information it is supposed to provide is already known, no purpose is served (Wiener, 1950, p. 21).

W. J. Potter, in *Media Literacy* (2005) provides us with illuminating information about *The Profiles of the Mass Media Industries* – them being: book, newspaper, magazine, film, recording, radio, broadcast television, cable television, computers / internet. These go through five stages of evolution, namely: innovation, penetration, peak, decline (peak and decline do not necessary occur), and adaptation, as well as their current nature. There are stages of tension as to what the role of a medium will become, then comes the settling for a specific role and its implications, as to society's expectations from it, as well as the socio-political expectations of those who run and rule the medium according to its established role (Potter, 384-431). At this point a medium's symbolic *form* has been decided. The types (*content*) of messages and styles (*form*) of narrative adapt to models which reflect what seems

to be dictated by the technology of the medium as well as specific socio-political agendas. However the financial survival of most media is also heavily related to the length of time, or the amount of space offered to advertising (*further restriction of form variety*). Furthermore, advertising dictates a communication environment, which will minimize the possibility of contextual clashes with its product's interest (*further restriction of content variety*).

Evidently, the most important implication is the difference in the viewpoints and goals of the *sender*, the *receiver*, and the intermediate as the ruler of the *channel*. To the *sender* and the *receiver*, the importance lies in the *message* itself; it is the main aim for the communication act that occurs between them. But the *channel* – the media which facilitate the communication – acts simultaneously as the means to another end. "[...] *the private media are major corporations selling a product (readers and audiences) to other businesses (advertisers).*" (Herman - Chomsky, 1988, p. 303). Thus from this viewpoint, the *message* that 'travels' from the *sender* – artist to the *receiver* – audience is viewed as playing the role of a *channel* through which profit is being directed from another *sender* – the advertiser, to a different *receiver* – the media, which were originally identified as the *channel*.

### **Socio-political factors as contexts that affected the media and market related choices in the design of the Beatles' image**

A research on communication suggests that according to the generation one belongs to, and the external factors shaping the socio-political realities during specific stages in a generation's life, four categories of generational archetypes emerge: the prophets, the nomads, the heroes, and the artists (Hughes, Ginnett, Curphy, 2009, p. 171-172). This is not a case of gene mutations due to which generations of prophets, or artists, etc emerge, but rather the recognition of specific qualities certain people already possess, and which specific social needs call for at certain times. Certain types of messages are recognized as such and are allowed to go through communication channels, during specific eras, easier than during others. Nevertheless, in the course of the everyday which relies on set rules and regulations, the need for change may not be recognized initially. "*The basic freedom of being able to choose between alternatives is absent. The gifted people who have the capacity for choice cannot exercise it, the executives who technically have the freedom of choice do not actually have it, because they usually lack the knowledge and imagination necessary for making such a choice.*" (Powdermaker, 1950, p. 165). In the paradigm at hand – the Beatles, penetration of the channel was achieved, the tools for the use of the channel, its mechanics and semiotics were mastered. The existing politics for the production and distribution of a message were challenged, in

tune with the era's politics that challenged societal convictions. The possibility for the existence of a mediated aura allowed for its commodification, while at the same time the mass media product (art and the artists) could become sanctified.

Powdermaker's observation on the entertainment industry of Hollywood in the decade 1940-1950 testifies to the mediocrity that dictates the production of market-safe cultural media works which should fulfill basic requirements, a safe money-making bet and political correctness according to a specific era. In that spirit, the bureaucratically-run *channel* of the music industry, originally dismissed the Beatles as another of those guitar groups that were, fashion-wise, on the way out. One of the designated regulators of the *channel* recognized the potential in the *message* despite the 'out of fashion' *signifier* and allowed the *message* to go through.

Once accepted, the Beatles schooled themselves both on the process of encoding the *message* in formats acceptable for distribution, broadcasting, and overall successful transmission, making the most of the available *channels*. What they did not know about the media and its rules they learned fast as their collaborators in the studio reveal (*All you need is ears*, Martin - Hornsby, 1977), (*With a Little Help from My Friends: The Making of Sgt. Pepper*, Martin - Pearson, 1993), (*The Making of Sgt. Pepper*, BBC documentary, 1992), (*Here, There and Everywhere: My life recording the music of the Beatles*, Emerick - Massey, 2006). "They are considered to be the 'first recording artists' (Zolten, 2009) for working consciously within the context of the medium, as well as for taking paths and making choices that accentuated that context" (Vlachou, 2010). Marshall notes, "we might find some cultural lessons in the way the Beatles opened up space for the individual voice within the construct of a band, so too, we might admire their relationship with technology, admitting its voice, giving it a place, engaging in dialogue with it while not allowing it to dominate" (Marshall, 2006, p.32).

Gillett was the first to note the thorough understanding the Beatles had for the culture they drew their style from (Gillett, 1970). MacDonald credited the success of the British pop culture to the experience of the English institution of art school, explaining that "it was founded on talent rather than on official qualifications" (MacDonald, 1997, p. xiv) and adding that "its anarchic-individualistic ethos brought unusual invention and articulacy to British pop" (MacDonald, 1997, p. xv) as well as the introduction of 'concept' when compared to the works of American artists. Additionally he wrote about the influence of English counterculture being clearer in the Beatles' work than in any of their rivals. The content of the Beatles' message signified the social and political changes in the making (Frith, 1988), the shifts from societies that made distinctions according to 'superiority' of race (MacDonald, 1997; Piazza, 2006; Frontani, 2007), gender (Whiteley, 2006, 2009; Tompkins, 2006), class

(MacDonald, 2003; 1997; Gleed, 2006; Inglis, 2009; Roessner, 2006; Norem, 1968) towards the promotion of societies aiming at equality and suggesting experimental approaches and alternative readings (MacDonald, 1997; Reising, 2006; Reising - LeBlanc, 2009; Northcutt, 2006; Marshall, 2006; Decker, 2009; Roessner, 2006, Sarris, 1964, 2006; Wiener, 2006, Whiteley 2009).

An aspect of mass communication related to popular culture, strongly identified with the Beatles due to their massive impact, is what Goethals points out as its ritual dimension, the traditional framing of a sacred space of a religious nature (Cassirer, 1956, in Goethals, 1997) where ordinary objects and actions become 'sacred' (Smith, 1987, in Goethals, 1997). The experience of transcendence for people involving themselves "*in symbolic behavior that detaches them from their previous social status*" (Goethals, 1997, p. 123). The sacred space, where artists, performers and athletes who, by engaging in autotelic activities, allow themselves and viewers to lose themselves regardless of external rewards (Czikszentmihalyi, 1975, in Goethals, 1997) may also be substituted by sacred time, a temporal demarcation which offers the alternative possibility of a symbolic meeting. The effect of the 'aura' discussed by Benjamin (1936) reemerged in all its 'sacred' glory in televised performances transmitted and viewed simultaneously by millions of people positioned in remote places (Cooper, 2006; Goldsmith, 2004, 2006; Johnson, 1964, 2006; Sarris, 1964, 2006; Marcus, 1976, 2006). The message was embedded in the medium and apparently Lennon's observation in 1966 about the Beatles being more popular than Jesus, showed his instinctive comprehension on the power of their image as it was presented via the mass media. His rephrasing "*if I had said television is more popular than Jesus, I might have got away with it*" (Cleave, 1966, 2006) after the outcry and the bonfires where the Beatles' records got burned in the Bible Belt, was again, spot on (Frontani, 2007).

The 'aura' of the Beatles' image feeds a market for collectable items – that once belonged to them, or have been touched by them, or were of their time and in some way connected to them (Frontani, 2007; Piazza, 2006; Kahn, 2006; Kimsey, 2009; Burns, 2009; Steinem, 1964, 2006; Blaney, 2008) – and tourism (Hall, 2006; Frontani, 2007; Blaney, 2008; Kimsey, 2009; Burns, 2009). The media keep the interest alive by a constant flow of related articles, books, documentaries, new or re-issued, simultaneously cashing-in on a *signifier* that has been proven extremely profitable for forty years. The re-issues of the music itself in newly re-mastered physical formats seem like a metaphorical 'blood transfusion' to the ill music industry of today's pre-fabricated disposable fads whose life-span rivals the attention-span of an indifferent audience, primed to subliminally recognize their non-importance.



Existing theories on communication relating to the function of context, were presented, in order to help us understand its essential role in the transmission of a message and its understanding according to its representation in relation to perceptions about communication models. Secondly, the socio-political and economic factors as context that affects the choices of media coverage, reveal how the perception, evaluation and potential of media depend upon literacy, viewpoint and perspective, which constitute alternative contextual maps. Last, studies which explore the socio-political factors as contexts that affected the media and market related choices in the design of the Beatles' image were presented. These are related to the formation of the band's identity and their interaction with the media which were crucial to the distribution of the band's works and image.

## METHOD

In this paper I proceeded with the qualitative method which was also used in *"Nothing is Beatleproof!" In what context? Art and the artist's image as communication* (Vlachou, 2010); the collection of information provided in bibliography, daily, weekly, and monthly press. The extended bibliography used, consists of books written in the era the band was active and the following decade (1960-1980). This mainly includes recollections and memoirs of the people involved with the band, and also numerous essays, researches and articles written in the last two decades (1990-2010), which deal with various aspects of the Beatles as a cultural phenomenon with significant impact on society, as well as writings on popular culture and popular music. As a whole, selective bibliography spanning from 1967 until 2010 has been utilized. Articles on the Beatles, written during the era the band was active, and which appeared in newspapers, weekly and monthly magazines, have been reviewed and selected for presenting their authors' observations as well as aspects of the band's impact in relation to the day's realities; these cover the decade of 1960-1970. Additionally to those, music magazines of our present day have been used both as information sources in relation to the band as well as an example and a measure of the band's power to affect even today's music industry's choices in both the fields of production as well as promotion. Last, documentaries, which present excerpts of interviews of the era, as well as excerpts of newsreels, provide both a view on the events of the day but also a view on the choices the media of the day decided upon. Further commendation is offered by the protagonists as well as those who documented their progress from the standpoint of present day's reality, and that serves as an evaluation of this progress by the people who were actively involved in it.

The information is presented in the data section as a thematically organized 'narration' according to the factors examined in the research which are the following:  
The socio-political contextual pool 1960-1970 (the era during which the Beatles were active)

Managing and Promoting The Beatles

Producing the Beatles

The Beatles Image Mediated by the Press

Capitalizing on the Beatles

The Beatles Politics

The narration is constituted by a combination of fragments of stories, events, incidents, strategies and approaches organized in a loose chronological progression. The elements used in the narration have been extracted from the books, articles and documentaries mentioned in the bibliography. These are provided by the following sources: collaborators who participated in the creation and distribution of the communicative product, the band-members, their manager, their producer, technicians, other staff and journalists who documented and reported the communicative acts, as well as those who participated in the promotion of the product and the band's image.

This choice and the variety of sources aim to reveal different facets of the progression in the creation of the band's image as well as the creation of their cultural products. The press offers its documentation on the projection as well as in the promotion of the band's identity. Collaborators, technicians, and staff on the other hand, offer different aspects of information in relation to the formation of the product to be mediated. Additional information on the political and social realities of the day, the development of the media and the directions they took, serve to better understand the conditions within which the Beatles' phenomenon took place. The band-members' views on the production process and their interaction with the media and society are also presented. Statements and opinions they have offered during interviews, documentaries, viewpoints encapsulated within their product – the songs, reveal their identity as they perceived and intended it.

The identification and presentation of the various elements in the form of narration in a chronological progression serves to make obvious the paths and deviations chosen, which constitute the progress in the creation of both the image and the cultural product. Furthermore, it reflects on the image of the Beatles as it was perceived and projected during the era they were active but also their image as it has continued to be projected to this day. The examples have been chosen for their

relevance in reflecting the choices made by the band, affected by political, social, and marketing norms; conflicts, negotiations, power-shifts and compromises among the people who participated in the creation and distribution of the artistic product and the image of the Beatles.

The aim was to cross-examine the information with studies related to the Beatles and their image, and further discuss them in relation to theories on communication and the media, taking into account the parameter of contexts. By reflecting on the specific viewpoints according to one's position, interests, and expectations in a given environment, we are allowed to recognize the threads that intertwined into creating the environment from which the Beatles emerged, and within which they acted. Thus it can be revealed how context affected the design choices made through the feedback offered by the media, and this should contribute to an understanding of how and to what extent communication channels affected the formation and the maintenance of the band's image.

## COMMUNICATION PROCESS

In this part of the paper the following will be presented: First, an overview on the socio-political situation in the world during the decade between 1960-1970, as the contextual pool from which the Beatles emerged and within which they acted, but also essentially as the inescapable frame that holds their image. Second, the promotion approach of the Beatles' image and the management of their affairs. Third, the production of their music as a collaborative process. Forth, manifestations of the Beatles' image as reported by the Press. Fifth, the capitalization on the Beatles and their image. Sixth and final, the Beatles interaction with the politics of their era.

The existing literature on the Beatles as a cultural phenomenon is extensive, thus information covering various aspects in relation to the above mentioned issues is provided by the documentation of their interactions with their collaborators, and the making and promoting of their cultural products in various ways. The examples were chosen, viewed, and organized to be presented in relation to the contexts into which they occurred. The selective presentation of the collaborators' responses, comments and observations for both the works and the performances will offer an additional viewpoint about the perception of the Beatles' image. The information relating to the Beatles' interaction, their politics, as documented by their actions, choices and statements – in accordance to their era and the society – will help to better understand how the Beatles' identity was created, negotiated and maintained in a constant dialogue with their surroundings.

### A socio-political contextual pool 1960-1970

"All those things that happened like [...] race riots, student riots, always something big going on when we pulled into town." (Harrison, DVD Anthology VI, 0:25:00 - 0:25:20)

MacDonald noted the "*expectations of novelty and renewal*" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 6) the coming of a decade encourages, as well as the fulfillment of these, partially as a response to their presence in people's minds. Liverpool in the 1960 was an industrial city still attempting to recover from the destruction World War II bombings caused, having lost its former power as the main trade and transit port of Europe. The city's former glory originating in the 18th century had been built mainly on the Triangular Trade – ammunition exported from Europe to Africa with the purpose of capturing slaves to be sold in America and with the profits from this transaction to buy and bring commodities back to Europe. Globally, during the decade 1960-1970, the struggle and the seeking of a new power balance was evident on two levels, in the political sense among countries with the formations of new alliances and / or retained allegiances as well as in the social sense, where groups of citizens in various countries expressed demands for a more just system of governance, civil rights and freedoms. Decolonization was taking place amidst political turmoil and often bloodshed, in many cases only to be replaced by regimes – authoritarian or not – which nevertheless were still economically and, most likely to be, politically dependent to the countries' previous conquerors, namely various European countries. Meanwhile oppressed social groups, were revolting in order to achieve emancipation and equal rights with the dominant groups in their societies.

In Africa, the colonies of European countries, Madagascar, French Congo, Chad, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, became independent. In Congo the political turmoil following the country's independence involved the interference of UN troops, USSR armed forces, as well as Belgium – of which Congo was a former colony – resulting in application of martial law. South Africa left the Commonwealth and became a republic after a massacre and race riots. It was repeatedly censured by UN for the application of the harsh apartheid segregation law, and banned from the Olympic Games. Algeria achieved independence after a struggle that had started in 1954, and which in the 1960s involved a revolt, riots, violent demonstrations, protests of Algerians in Paris, military coups, and terrorist attempts by OAS (*Organisation armée secrète*, French far right nationalist militant organization) even involving a murder-attempt against the French President. Portuguese colonists were massacred in Angola. Rhodesia – now Zimbabwe – declared unilateral declaration of independence, causing Britain to call for oil embargo. Military coups took

place in Ghana and Nigeria, where a civil war outbreak followed. Biafra seceded from Nigeria, which resulted in Nigeria invading Biafra. In Libya, already an independent kingdom the legitimate government was overturned by military coup.

In Asia, the Sino-Soviet Communist split became official in the beginning of the decade. Chinese troops invaded India. By the end of the decade Russian and Chinese troops clashed in Usuri river border. Pakistan and India clashed over Kashmir, India invaded Pakistan, and Pakistan bombarded Indian cities Bombay and Amritsar. Iraq laid claim to Kuwait and British troops prepared to defend it against possible attack. A military coup took place in Iraq. Martial law was declared in South Korea. Malaysia was declared in state of emergency in 1964. Two years later a war between Malaysia and Indonesia ended. US, which gradually increased 'military advisers', and later military and financial aid to South Vietnam after a military coup, sent marines to defend Laos against communist incursion, and bombarded North Vietnam as well as the demilitarized zone between North and South Vietnam. North Vietnam attacked Laos. Israel defeated Arab coalition in 'Six Day War'. A rebellion against Mao took place in Shanghai. Viet Cong launched Tet Offensive. The My Lai Massacre committed by US soldiers became public knowledge causing outcry all over the world at the end of the decade. US troops attacked Viet Cong bases in Cambodia. Palestinian terrorists seized and blew three airliners. Jordan evicted PLO.

In America, there was an occurrence of U2 plane spy episode for which US President refused to apologize to USSR. USSR supported Cuba in attempt to oust American Forces from Guantanamo. US discontinued diplomatic relations with Cuba, and sponsored a (failed) attempt by Cuban exiles to invade Cuba. US embargoed Cuban exports. Soviet missile bases in Cuba got destroyed, USSR backed down over Cuban missile crisis. Uruguay, Paraguay and Nicaragua were under rule of juntas. Power was seized in Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Panama by military coups. Guatemala's elected president was ousted by a coup. Mexico was ruled by an authoritarian regime. A right-wing junta sponsored by US seized power in Dominican Republic. In USA, the internal turmoil was mainly concerning the segregation and civil rights as well as the Vietnam war. In the beginning of the decade protests against segregation, civil rights marches, and Freedom Rides starting in the South (the so-called Bible belt) in Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia lead to the deaths of black protestors by police, white racists attacks and race riots. Federal troops were sent to the South to quell race riots, and the National Guard was ordered to protect black students who enrolled at the University. In 1963, Martin Luther King gave his 'I have a dream' speech after the Civil rights march in Washington DC, and US President J.F. Kennedy got assassinated. By the middle of the decade Civil

Rights Act ending racial discrimination in US was signed. M. L. King received the Nobel Peace Prize. Malcolm X was assassinated. Civil rights protests and marches in the South continued even when they were being banned. Race riots spread in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, Newark and Detroit. Black Panther Party was founded. Civil rights marches and protests continued in the South. In 1968 M. L. King got assassinated; as a result black communities across US rioted after his funeral. The same year, US Presidential Candidate B. Kennedy got assassinated. At the Olympic Games in Mexico, US black athletes, gold and bronze Olympic medalists, gave 'black power' salutes and the International Olympic Committee expelled them. In 1969 US Supreme Court ordered the end of Segregation in the South. Meanwhile, after the middle of the decade anti-Vietnam war protests, marches and demonstrations were taking place in New York and California and even outside Pentagon. In 1967 boxing world champion Muhammad Ali refused the draft, was sentenced to 5 years in jail and was stripped of his title. By the end of the decade Campuses closed after student rioting, four students were shot dead by National Guard at Kent State University during a demonstration against the Vietnam war expanding in Cambodia, and students in Ohio burned their draft cards in protest for the killings.

In Europe, in the beginning of the decade Cyprus became independent. Before the middle of the decade hostilities started between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and British troops were sent to Cyprus followed by UN forces, leading Turkey and Greece to accept UN cease-fire. East Germany closed its border to West Germany and the Berlin Wall was built, as a result West Berliners rioted at the Wall. USSR expelled Albania from Soviet bloc. In UK, turmoil was caused by demonstrations against the use of nuclear weapons, the Vietnam war, and for civil-rights; fascist marches, race riots and opposing youth group clashes took place on top of the international political Profumo Scandal, which occurred early in the decade. By the middle of the decade 'ban the bomb' demonstrations were resulting in violence. Anti-nuclear protestors got jailed. Fascists marches in London provoked street battles. Mods and Rockers clashed repeatedly in various cities, eventually resulting in police arrests in Brighton. In 1967 British Labour MPs condemned renewed US bombings in Vietnam, and a peace rally against the war was held in London. By next year a Vietnam anti-war protest in London turned to battle with police outside US embassy, while on another front civil rights demonstrators were attacked in Londonderry, North Ireland. At the end of the decade Catholics rioted in Londonderry, British troops started patrolling Catholic areas of Belfast, a 'peace wall' between Catholic and Protestant communities was erected in Belfast. Police still dealt with race-riots, and fought with anti-racist

demonstrators in London, while London School of Economics students demonstrated causing LSE to close down. In France, by the middle of the decade, anti-Vietnam war demonstrations took place in Paris, while French President condemned US intervention in Latin America and South-East Asia. In 1967, the military seized power in Greece, and Ceausescu became Prime Minister of Romania. In 1968, French students occupied the campus at Nanterre, Sorbonne closed, street fights in Paris resulted in thousand injured, while French workers supported the students movement by calling general strike and bringing France to a standstill. De Gaulle dissolved National Assembly, banned demonstrations and called elections amidst riots. The same year, in Czechoslovakia, Dubcek became head of state, Warsaw Pact forces invaded the country, imposing return to totalitarianism. Thousands got arrested, resulting in anti-Soviet riots in Prague, and protests by students who occupied Prague University. In 1969, Soviet Tanks entered Prague to quell protests on the anniversary of the invasion, and student Jan Palach, in protest against Soviet occupation, immolated himself and died. Meanwhile, after the attempted murder of a student leader, student riots occurred in West Germany, and anti-communist riots were taking place in Poland, but uprising got suppressed; a terrorist bombing took place in Italy.

It seems relevant to note that in the beginning of 1960s plans were announced for nuclear test-ban between UK and US, followed by a call for nuclear atmospheric test-ban. Finally a nuclear test-ban treaty was signed among US, UK and USSR in Moscow, in 1963. The same year China exploded the country's first atomic bomb. By the middle of the decade, an American B-52 bomber carrying an H-bomb crashed in the sea near Spain, the H-bomb was later in the year found and recovered from the seabed off Spain. During the decade, significant progress and events related to science, culture and the media affected the social expectations. In 1961, Soviet Y. Gagarin became the first man to go to space. By the end of the decade the first manned mission (*Apollo 8*) orbited around the Moon, the first flight for Anglo-French supersonic airliner *Concorde* was materialized in 1969, and the same year, N. Armstrong and B. Aldrin landed on the Moon. In the field of media, entering the decade found *Lady Chatterley's Lover* publishing house being prosecuted with the judge asking the jury, whether this was a book they would wish their wives or servants to read. However Penguin Books was cleared of obscenity charges, and consequently D.H. Lawrence's book sold 200.000 copies on its first day of free publication in UK. The debate between Kennedy and Nixon transmitted via television and radio in 1961, proved also a debate between the two media, declaring Kennedy and television the winners. Soon Telstar satellite allowed live cross-Atlantic television link. By 1964, 'pirate' radio stations transmitting 'offshore'

from ships in the North Sea begun broadcasting pop music, and a survey showed they had more listeners than BBC; in 1967 they closed down. A year earlier, Time cover story on 'Swinging London' declared it 'city of the decade' and underground newspaper International Times was launched. By the end of the decade the first color television transmissions took place in UK. Meanwhile the counterculture movement was slowly building in the US already in 1963. Dr. Leary was relieved from his teaching duties at Harvard University after experimenting with LSD. A year later author Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters took a trip on a bus named *Further*, which was painted in a colorful 'psychedelic fashion', their main driver being Beat poet Neal Cassady (Kesey, 2004). After the middle of the decade, LSD became illegal in California. The American Hippie Movement was founded in San Francisco, where at a Be-In, Dr. Leary attended and uttered the phrase 'turn on, tune in, drop out', which became a slogan of the era. Love-In's were organized in Los Angeles and Detroit, the latter resulted in riot by the police. In UK, Jagger and Richards of the Rolling Stones were jailed on drugs charges, the Times published an editorial against their imprisonment. A 'Legalize Pot' rally took place in Hyde Park, and celebrities signed a pro-cannabis advertisement in the London Times. Andy Warhol was shot by Valerie Solanas inside the *Factory* in New York. At the end of the decade, Jimi Hendrix was arrested in Toronto for possession of heroin. The Tate-La Bianca murders were committed in Los Angeles by Manson and members of his 'family' cult, later arrested and charged. A Sex-Fair took place in Copenhagen.

Events of social significance were also changing the 'square' society. In the beginning of the decade, Amnesty International was founded, and, in the UK obligation to National Service ended. Contraceptive pills became available on British National Health Care System. By the middle of the decade, illegitimate births reported as having doubled in England in ten years and a few years later the first abortion clinic opened in London. Meanwhile, oil was discovered in the North Sea, the German manufacturers of thalidomide went on trial and British fashion designer Mary Quant 'invented' or rather named the 'mini-skirt' – in England at the time it was illegal for women to wear trousers. On a different path to gender liberation and equality, feminists disrupted Miss World contest in London in 1970. As for the legal system, the first woman judge was appointed in UK in 1965; homosexuality was legalized in 1967, however in the same year *Last exit to Brooklyn* by H. Shelby Jr. was found obscene when brought to trial in front of an all male jury – by direction of Judge G. Rigers who considered that women "might be embarrassed at having to read a book which dealt with homosexuality, prostitution, drug-taking and sexual perversion" (The Times, 2004/04/28). By 1970, equal pay for women was applied by law in England, and Gay Liberation front held its first demonstration in London.



## Managing and Promoting The Beatles

*"A manager dealing with a close-knit foursome has to be as fair as and as cautious as a father of four children"* (Epstein, p. 158).

The man who sought to manage the Beatles came from a higher economic-social background than they did and was ten years their senior. However, Brian Epstein was from a different cultural background – Jewish minority – living in the British society, one divided by a very clear class-system. Due to his sexual orientation – at the time considered illegal – he was vulnerable living in a society, which had the choice to mock, bully and prosecute him. As he revealed in his memoirs, he had failed to meet the expectations of the mainstream educational system as well as his family's, and showed an interest towards creativity that was not considered of any use in ensuring him a secure professional and financial future. His self-image construction mirrored by his social surroundings was one of a misfit, *"one of those out-of-sort boys who never quite fit, who are ragged, nagged and bullied and beloved of neither boys nor masters"* (Epstein, p. 69). At the time Epstein became aware of the Beatles he had retracted from his ambition to become a 'dress-designer', because in his father's and teachers' minds *"there was nothing less manly"* (Epstein, p. 76) and later from pursuing an acting career because *"the narcissism appalled me, and the detachment of the actor, from other people and their problems, left me quite amazed"* (Epstein, p. 88). He worked in the family store, and indulged his creativity by decorating the store window, and suggesting purchases to the clients. Although he also managed the record section of the store, and was aware of the public's rising interest in the pop genre, he showed no personal interest in it, considering himself out of the age group.

Business-fuelled curiosity made Epstein see the Beatles play live. He found their performance to be *"captivating and honest"* and the band members *"extremely amusing in a rough 'take it or leave it way'"* (Epstein, p. 98-99), so much so that he decided to become their manager although he had no any prior knowledge or experience in that business field. The standard contracts of the day, binding artists to managers, were *"drawn up by people who knew more about a fast buck [...] an inhuman document providing simply for the enslavement of any artist eager and gullible enough to place his name over a stamp"* (Epstein, p. 105-106), at the *"borderline of fraudulent appropriation of funds and enslavement of the artist"* (Blaney, p. 35) *"even in an era when musicians were considered scum"* (Bramwell, p. 55). Instead of the standard 40 per cent commission, Epstein took a 25 per cent from the band's earnings, and – at a time when beat bands only played in small venues, dingy clubs, coffee bars, and working men's social clubs – *"the big halls, and ballrooms didn't allow beat groups in until the Beatles made it, though because, beat groups were considered the lowest of the low"*

(Bramwell, p. 19) – he promised to secure them better career opportunities.

Epstein is presented by his collaborators as "*a terrifically good servant to them [the Beatles]*" (D. Taylor, in Epstein, p. 24), a man who loved his artists but also had a clear idea of the society he lived in. He decided to manage only one woman artist, Cilla Black, not wanting to dilute his attention by managing a female competitor, because as he had observed "*the disc charts cannot stand very many girls, however gorgeous they may look on stage*" (Epstein, p. 134-135). A contemporary of the Beatles noted, "*Brian was very sensitive and put his heart into things he believed in. But he wasn't interested in anything unless he was convinced that it would be a financial success.*" (Blaney, p. 48). The constraints of his reality allowed him to visualize the Beatles as pop stars, but he could not grasp the possibility of 'a bit small and Jewish-looking' Paul Simon, as being pop star material, commenting "*I don't think the mass audience would go for him*" (Bramwell, p. 152). He did not favor presenting the Beatles as a leader and backing group combo, which was the pattern format (Cliff Richard and the Shadows, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Buddy Holly and the Crickets, etc), and the one both producer George Martin and press agent Tony Barrow suggested, instead he retained their image as a group of equals (Blaney, p. 137). He insisted the Beatles change their scruffy outfits for suits (Frontani, 2007, p. 130, Vlachou, p. 26), thus building a bridge between the opposite camps of mods and rockers in terms of the band's image – as the Beatles did with their 'mix and match' influences on their sound (Marwick, p. 139; Vlachou, p. 16-18) – in order for the band to become presentable to a wider audience, but he did not interfere with their sound. Instead of asking the Beatles to repeat a successful musical formula – another common practice – Epstein supported their experimentation and thus their creative development. His theory was that "*the artists should only have to worry about their performance. Nothing else*" (A. Taylor, in Epstein, p. 25). He had stated, "*I shall never attempt to dragoon my artists into unnatural postures, for the very reason I engage performers is that I see in them a quality of stardom which, if warped or altered, would be lost*" (Epstein, p. 195).

Epstein went into concert promotion, arranging for the Beatles to appear alongside international stars Little Richard and Gene Vincent, in order to associate the Beatles' name to acts of a 'bigger calibre'. He organized concerts for all his artists to appear together, enforcing the Mersey Beat sound brand, and thus offered to all of them the exposure benefit, and the association of lesser known acts to more famous ones. In doing so, he also had "*control of where, when and with whom the Beatles appeared*" (Blaney, p. 43). For that reason he is compared to Motown's Berry Gordy, who also took artist development seriously, and not just for professional reasons but also to promote Motown's

artists as positive ambassadors of their African-American cultural background (Blaney, p. 43). In the case of Epstein it was the sound of the working-class in the bleak British north as manifested in what was named the Mersey Beat and "*termed the provincial breakthrough*" (Epstein, p. 201). In the early days, he resented and protested against receiving payment on behalf of the Beatles in coins – as if it were small change (Epstein, p. 122-123), but even after they released their first single and had become more famous than any of their Liverpoolian peers he insisted on honouring agreements with low fees that had been set prior to the Beatles' success, making no attempt to renegotiate them (Blaney, p. 45, p. 55; Epstein, p. 200; Bramwell, p. 99). He was also making sure to enhance the Beatles' image and good name by arranging performances for them at charity events (Blaney, p. 55). For the Beatles' performances at the Ed Sullivan Show in the US, he offered a bargain fee, but insisted his artists receive top billing (Blaney, p. 48; Pieper - Path, p. 159). "*We knew that America would make us or break us as world stars. In fact she made us.*" (Epstein, p. 66). Kane from his viewpoint as a reporter noted,

*"One aspect of the Beatles' life that Brian Epstein couldn't control was what the press wrote and said. But he could control press access to the band members. And Brian, Derek Taylor and later Tony Barrow did their best to make a good impression on the press they allowed in. Those three are right up there in the top percentile of 'spinners' and handlers that I've encountered in my career"* (Kane, p. 65).

*"Image was very important to him [Epstein]. For instance, the boys were never allowed off the plane until all the press was in place, especially the photographers."* (Kane, p. 251). During the 1964 US tour, Epstein had decided not to book outdoor stadiums, fearing he would not manage to sell-out the concerts and considering that the possible sight of empty seats would not promote the reputation of his emerging superstars. The next year "*realizing the potential to make profits and history, Epstein took a big gamble [...] by booking the Beatles into a huge new facility in New York City, Shea Stadium*" (Kane, p. 208). The Beatles direct image – as opposed to mop-top merchandise – was also protected by prohibition, neither news cameras except for still photography, nor audio taping were allowed during concerts (Kane, p. 65).

Epstein knowing nothing about managing pop acts, followed his intuition and improvised, relying on his understanding for promotion and marketing; however, he lacked in financing knowledge. Two major mistakes lost him and the Beatles significant earnings. The first mistake was that the license to use the band's name and image for merchandise was signed off cheap – in retrospect. But in England until 1950s the only person associated with merchandize was the Queen, whereas in the US, the examples were of Disney licensing Micky Mouse in 1930 in order to finance its future productions – a choice which proved to be more profitable than expected, and Colonel Tom Parker

licensing Elvis' image in order to profit from merchandise (Blaney, p. 192-193). Epstein was dealing with a situation that had no precedence, but what the Beatles and their manager lost in profit, they made up for constant visual exposure. His second mistake was signing the publishing rights for the Lennon-McCartney song catalogue to Northern Songs; these were handed over practically for nothing – again, in retrospect. Although, Epstein followed the standard procedure of the day, investigated and considered the best of the given options, he did not check what song publishing actually meant and the profit it could generate, consequently he could neither inform, nor offer proper advice to his clients. However, at the time it was unusual for artists to own the rights to their songs – in the rare occasions that they had written the songs themselves. In any case, the publisher Dick James did offer them a deal which still allowed Epstein, Lennon and McCartney to keep 49 per cent of the copyright earnings. Moreover James – at that time not established in his business – worked hard at promoting the songs (Blaney, p. 111).

D. Taylor, the Beatles' publicist, commented that Epstein "*created a whole new form of management*" (Geller, in Blaney, p. 43) in combining his knowledge on how to run a retail department with his understanding of the theatre and its management, "*he devised a blueprint for band management that is still used today*" (Blaney, p. 43). D. Taylor also stated, "*Untainted by dispute or contractual agreement, Brian Epstein's management stands for all time as a model of trust*" (Lewis, in Epstein, p. 44). "*As the Beatles themselves readily admitted, such was their utter faith in Brian [Epstein] that they never read a single contract he gave them to sign*" (Bramwell, p. 88). In 1964, during the restructuring of his company NEMS, due to share value increase, Epstein without any obligation to do so, signed 10 per cent of it over to Lennon, McCartney, Harrison and Starkey (Blaney, p. 60). Around the same time, since the Beatles had been proven 'big business', Epstein received offers to sign them over and, as he had admitted, he was considering the option in fear that he did not have the capacity to represent them with his limited professional knowledge in the field. On discussing the possibility with them, he was met with their disbelief that such an option could ever exist. Their responses, he recalled, varied from "*tell us again*", "*you're joking*", "*get stuffed*", to the more elaborate "*sell us and we'll pack up completely. We'll throw the whole lot up tomorrow*" (Epstein, p. 182-183).

With Epstein's death in 1967, the Beatles were left without managerial guidance. Neil Aspinall – schoolmate, road manager, personal assistant to the Beatles over the years – was asked to become their manager, to which he agreed only until they could find someone adequate as a replacement. While he was making his way through their legal documents, the band-members decided to manage themselves, but this created problems in their artistic partnership, due to the fact that in McCartney as-

suming also the role of the organizer, the balance in the team's self-proclaimed creative equality gradually became disturbed; irrespective of the fact that Lennon seemed uninterested or unable to claim that role for himself, and the improbability of either Starkey or Harrison posing as candidates. D. Taylor remembered McCartney gathering the Apple staff and telling them, "*Don't forget you're not very good, any of you. You know that, don't you?*" (Doggett, p. 49), and although D. Taylor admitted that few of the staff knew 'anything about the record business' he also noted that "*The Beatles certainly didn't. When they were struggling, they just knew it as something that said no to them, and then when they were big, they knew it as a thing that didn't know how to say no to them.*" (Doggett, p. 49). "*The Beatles were finished after Eppy [Epstein] died. I knew, deep inside me, that that was it. Without him, we'd had it.*" (Lennon, in Epstein, p. 6-7).

Disappointed by Epstein's financial shortcomings and unable to take care of their finances themselves the Beatles opted for a new manager / financial adviser. American Allen Klein, financial mentor to successful acts like Sam Cooke and Bobby Darin, had attempted twice to get the Beatles away from EMI, by offering them a recording contract with American RCA, but had stumbled upon Epstein's loyalty to EMI. At the time of Epstein's death he was already managing the financial affairs of British acts, the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, the Animals, the Dave Clark Five, Herman's Hermits and Donovan, and worked his way into buying many of their song-catalogues, which he represented (Doggett, p. 66-67; Blaney, p. 84-85). Upon hearing of Epstein's death on the radio he had admitted saying to himself "*I got 'em!*" (Doggett, p. 67). Meanwhile, the Beatles had no one they trusted to protect their financial interests, and investors "*were circling like a pack of hungry hyenas*" (Blaney, p. 118). Klein was suggested by D. Taylor with a warning that "*he might get them a good financial deal but might not be someone you would want to take home to your mother*" (Doggett, p. 66). Faithfull – then girlfriend to Jagger of the Rolling Stones – has suggested that Jagger was keen on Klein managing the Beatles in the hope that he would lose interest in the Rolling Stones (Doggett, p. 70). Lennon invited Klein, considering him "*a real shark – someone to keep the other sharks away*" (Doggett, p. 68), to sort out the financial mess their company Apple was in, attempt to gain control of their song copyrights, and secure them a better royalty rate from EMI. Harrison and Starkey agreed to give Klein 20 per cent of the increased royalty he would negotiate, and on top of that 10 per cent of the gross income generated by Apple Records as he asked, which to McCartney seemed too much, given that the Beatles were the biggest entertainment act in the world, and Klein had no previous contribution in their making – as opposed to Epstein; McCartney suggested instead that 15 per cent should be enough (Doggett, p. 82-85).

The disagreements about their management fueled further disagreements in artistic approaches between the Beatles, who were already tired of being trapped inside the 'Beatles exoskeleton', feeling it prevented each of them from further evolving as artists. During his management, Klein did increase the Beatles' royalty agreements and he also improved the band-members' income dramatically (Blaney, p. 90), however unlike Epstein, he did not have "*a golden reputation for integrity*" (Coleman, in Epstein, p. 44) about how he handled his own as well as his clients' finances. As a consequence the British government, the Inland Revenue, the Bank of England started scrutinizing over the Beatles' financial affairs (Doggett, p. 200) and this resulted in tarnishing their reputation in the process. Moreover, the fact that "*Klein was more careful with columns of figures than with people and their fragile emotions*" (Doggett, p. 140), and he did not hesitate to patronize his clients did not help matters. Bramwell resumed that "*Allen Klein had achieved his ambition of managing the Beatles, but in doing so he blew them apart*" (Doggett, p. 86). The dissolution of the Beatles partnership took place amidst trials that lasted years, during which the band-members, once named the 'four-headed monster' by the press because they always stood together thus resembling a solid unit, ended up suing each other as well as Klein.

McCartney, during Klein's management, had requested that Aspinall collect as much of the existing film material on the band that was circulating in the media (material from television stations around the world, newsreel footage, promotional clips, etc) before it disappeared (Doggett, p. 93) in order to create a documentary on the band's career (Doggett, p. 138). A first rough cut was completed in 1971 (Doggett, p. 178) but after sending copies to each Beatle, Aspinall shelved the project until 1972, when Klein still managing the Beatles' affairs, showed interest in publishing it along with a greatest hits album. The master reels were dismantled by Aspinall who formed his own company *Standby Films* to prevent the documentary from becoming part of a financial and copyrights dispute between the Beatles and Klein in the future, sensing that Klein's reign on Apple was close to ending. After the dissolution of the collaboration between Klein and the Beatles, Aspinall was reinstated as Apple manager (Doggett, p. 205), and later as chief executive of the Beatles' Apple Corps. He became responsible of guarding the Beatles' legacy in court cases against Klein, EMI, and Apple Computer, as well as their image and works in producing the *Anthology* documentary project and supervising the marketing of music, music videos, and merchandise. He continued to offer advice to the surviving Beatles, as well as Lennon's and Harrison's estates, after retiring in 2007, and oversaw, until his death in 2008, the remastering of the Beatles' complete back-catalogue, which was released in 2009.

## Producing the Beatles

*"At the start, I was like a master with his pupils, and they did what I said. They knew nothing about recording, but heaven knows they learned quickly: and by the end, of course, I was to be the servant while they were the masters."* (Martin, p. 133)

About the unsuccessful early attempts to secure the Beatles a recording contract, despite his claim that they would be bigger than Elvis, Epstein observed *"I have long since forgiven all the record companies their disbelief of my wilder claims. What I cannot understand or forget is their indifference to the sound of the Beatles"* (Epstein, p. 110). The fundamental difference in the approach of professionals in the music industry is obvious in his recollection of excerpts of dialogue with two significant ones in the Beatles saga, *"The boys won't go Mr. Epstein. We know these things. You have a good record business in Liverpool. Stick to that."* (Epstein, p. 110) said Dick Rowe of Decca, while George Martin of Parlophone commented *"I know very little about groups, Brian, but I believe you have something very good here"* (Epstein, p. 117). Parlophone – originally a German label founded in the 19th century, was bought by Columbia which later merged in EMI – enjoyed a high status as a UK jazz label until the 1930s, but later *"had been reduced almost to extinction"* (Martin, p. 38). In 1955, when Martin became the head of Parlophone, the label was producing a diverse selection of genres, Scottish music, classical music, spoken word and comedy recordings. Martin had been recording Peter Ustinov, Peter Sellers, Spike Milligan, The Goons, and Dudley Moore's 'Beyond the Fringe', before he met the Beatles' manager and agreed to give the band a chance. He was captured by the Beatles' charismatic performance, their personalities combined into the 'Beatles package', more than their musical competence and composing abilities at the time (Blaney, p. 71-72). *"They had an independent, cussed streak about them, not giving a damn about anybody, which was one of the things I liked about them in the first place, and one of the factors which made me decide to sign them."* (Martin, p. 166). He planned on finding 'suitable material' for them to sing (Martin, p. 123), as he planned of choosing one of them to be the front man, *"my thinking was so coloured by the success of people like Tommy Steele and Cliff Richard that I couldn't imagine a group being successful as a group"* (Martin, p. 124). However, anticipating that he would be changing the nature of the group, he chose to allow the pattern to change. *"It hadn't been done before – but then, I'd made a lot of records that hadn't been 'done before'. Why not experiment in pop as I had in comedy?"* (Martin, p. 124).

Martin described the job of the record producer as that of an organizer (Martin, p. 104), who would listen to a new number, make suggestions to improve it, and then *"would make sure that the song ran for approximately two and a half minutes, that it was in the right key for their voices, and that it was tidy, with the right proportion and form"* (Martin, p. 132).

He noted, "a lot of the songs we made into hits started life as not very good embryos." (Martin, p. 131). "My specialty was the introductions and the endings, and any instrumental passages" (Martin, p. 132). The collaboration between the studio staff and the artists affected the final form of the songs even in the beginning when the time spent in the studio was considered time spent to record material which had been finalized – music and lyrics completed, and tested live in front of an audience numerous times; as was the case of the Beatles first album *Please Please Me* (1963), which consisted of the set of songs they were performing at the Cavern Club, in Liverpool. Sound engineer Geoff Emerick recalled the Beatles – on their first recording as EMI artists – insisting to record their own song as a single. Martin accepted to listen to it, then suggested it needed something more to stand out and proposed that Lennon play a bluesy harmonica solo, thus leaving for McCartney the lead vocal on *Love Me Do* (Lennon-McCartney, 1962). "The way they first sang 'Can't Buy Me Love' was by starting on the verse, but I said: 'We've got to have an introduction, something that catches the ear immediately, a hook. So let's start off with a chorus.'" (Martin, p. 133) which was an innovation.

"Norman [Smith, EMI engineer] came up with the brilliant suggestion of simply fading in the song, instead of having everything come crashing in at full volume. Innovative for its time, this also aided in the record's success because it made it easy for the radio disk jockeys to crossfade the start of 'Eight Days A Week' with another single" (Emerick, p. 92).

Martin's formal classical music training as oboist, did not confine his understanding and appreciation of music in specific frames according to the melody and its manifestation in a specific orchestration form. "All I wanted from them was good songs. And those they gave me" (Martin, p. 166). Moreover, his open-minded approach, to look further than the primary obligation of a pop band to release hits, allowed the Beatles to grow into something more, especially since they were fulfilling their formal obligation towards EMI.

"Composition is a cerebral exercise of musical line and harmony, and whether it's performed on a synthesizer or by a hundred piece orchestra, it's still the same music. The basic design doesn't change. What orchestration does is to give it life. And however you choose to do that colouring changes totally the way in which the audience receives the basic line. This struck me forcibly when the Beatles came along. There were many people who couldn't assimilate their tunes, because they couldn't hear the music for the noise." (Martin, p. 34).

Meanwhile, Martin was aware of the limitations his own formal music training posed, as is evident in his comment,

"Once you start being taught things, your mind is channeled in a particular way. Paul [McCartney] didn't have that channeling, so he had freedom, and could think of things that I would have considered outrageous. I could admire them, but my musical training would have prevented



me from thinking of them myself" (Martin, p. 139).

Martin included the Beatles in the production process from their first recording,

*"I wanted to get them involved from the start in the techniques of recording, so after the first run-through I called them out to the control room to hear a playback. 'This is what you've been doing [...] You must listen to it, and if there's anything you don't like, tell me and we'll try and do something about it.'"* (Martin, 126).

Martin took guitar lessons in order to improve the communication between himself and the Beatles since they could not read music, and a suggestion played on the piano did not help them to 'transfer' it on their guitars. Meanwhile, Lennon and McCartney started playing the piano (Martin, p. 138). *"George [Martin] hadn't done rock'n'roll and we'd never been in a studio. So we did a lot of learning together. He had great musical knowledge and background."* (Lennon, in *Anthology I*, 1:12:08-1:12:23). Emerick revealed that Martin would rely on the engineers' literacy in pop music during the Beatles' recordings,

*"[...] George [Martin] realized that he himself was a bit out of his depth; he simply didn't know all that much about rock 'n' roll music. [...] Even though Norman [Smith] was George's age (or even older – we were never sure), he seemed to relate well to pop musicians because he was one himself. So George relied on Norman for musical, not just technical, input."* (Emerick, p. 58).

The experimentation in hybridizing musical forms and in recording methods and tricks informed by Martin's background in comedy recordings provided him with a further understanding for what a sound, an orchestration, an arrangement stands for contextually, in a cinematic, multi-modal way, beyond the quality of music itself.

*"The turning point probably came with the song 'Yesterday' [...] I started to leave my hallmark on the music, when a style started to emerge which was partly of my making [...] I started to score their music [...] we first used instruments and musicians other than the Beatles and myself"* (Martin, p. 166-167).

The unexpected ingredient – for pop music of the day – added in *Yesterday* (1965, Lennon-McCartney) was a string quartet; strings were used again in *Eleanor Rigby* (1966, Lennon-McCartney). On one occasion, Martin dubbed a keyboard solo on electric piano for *In My Life* (1965, Lennon-McCartney) at an early morning hour *"so that the group would hear the finished effect, rather than reject it before seeing what he had in mind"* (MacDonald, 1997, p. 152). In most cases however, he would be asked, suggest, and discuss scores and arrangements before proceeding, always in agreement with the Beatles – hence McCartney's negative response to Phil Spector's production and orchestra scoring additions in the Beatles' final album release *Let It Be* (1970); it was done in their absence and without prior consultation. Meanwhile, the Beatles familiarized themselves with the studio and its potential, and gained knowledge on a wide spectrum of music genres

and related instruments Martin could support them with. "They were getting more and more interested in unusual sounds. They were trying new instruments and saying to me, 'what ideas have you got for this?'" (Martin, in *Anthology V*, 0:28:23 - 0:28:30). Martin booked and scored a wide variety of instruments including woodwinds, brass and strings that appear in more than thirty Beatles' songs either sporadically (i.e. *You've Got To Hide Your Love Away*, 1965, Lennon-McCartney; *For No One*, 1966, Lennon-McCartney; *The Fool On The Hill*, 1967, Lennon-McCartney), or with the impact of a full orchestra, as was the case of *A Day In the Life* (1967, Lennon-McCartney) (MacDonald, 1997). Martin was also the most common uncredited musician on Beatles' recordings, having played piano, electric piano, pianette, celesta, harmonium, organ, Lowry organ, hammond organ, harpsichord and electric harpsichord in approximately forty Beatles' songs (MacDonald, 1997). Even before producing the Beatles he had come up with a creative solution for recording the piano at half speed and at a lower octave, the recording of which he then sped up and recorded together with another instrument (i.e. guitar), thus achieving a 'magical' sound which was his 'signature wound-up piano' (Emerick, p. 60).

Gradually the recording studio became the lab where songs would acquire their shape and characteristics due to sampling, loops, and sound effects from EMI's library for novelty recordings, or sound effects created on the spot, and which were incorporated during the production in the studio and because of it. The 'ambient sounds' (Reising, p. 112), in *Yellow Submarine* (1966, Lennon-McCartney); the farmyard noises and the closing with animal voices that fade into one another in a succession according to the order of nature's food chain on *Good Morning, Good Morning* (1967, Lennon-McCartney); the fairground sounds on *For The Benefit of Mr Kite*, (1967, Lennon-McCartney) which were random excerpts of "tapes from Victorian steam organs and calliopes cut up and edited into a kaleidoscopic wash" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 210) collected by Martin and Emerick, after Lennon's request that upon hearing the song one should be able to 'smell the sawdust' of the fairground; are a few examples of the collaboration and the input on behalf of the studio staff to the final product of a Beatles' song (MacDonald, 1997, p. 183, 207-208, 210). Moreover, Martin and his sound engineers had to respond creatively in order to produce sounds, after interpreting Lennon's impressionistic descriptions / requests, "...and I want my voice to sound like the Dalai Lama chanting from a mountaintop, miles away." (Emerick, p. 8), or "Give me the feel of James Dean gunning his motorcycle down a highway" (Emerick, p. 8). They were asked to make the Beatles 'sound like they were singing on the moon', or like 'a thousand Tibetan monks chanting on top of a mountain' during the band's psychedelic phase (MacDonald, 1997, p. 164-170; Vlachou, 2010). The studio staff experimented with equipment and instruments traditionally used for other

purposes – i.e. the revolving speakers (Leslie system) of a hammond organ rewired to broadcast the human voice as a source for recording, thus achieving the requested 'Dalai Lama on a mountain top' effect (Emerick, p. 8-10), and Martin's "creation of new tones by combining instruments, and by playing them with the tape sped up or slowed down." (Emerick, p. 60).

The Beatles' sound engineers made a habit of defying the EMI directives on recording and production. They were inspired by the Beatles who introduced the element of fun during sessions (Emerick, p. 54, p. 72-73), as well as by the band's daring creativity in spite of, or due to, their lack of formal musical training. "After all, I had gotten into recording because I was in search of unique sounds" (Emerick, p. 94). Instead of simply balancing the tracks of instruments recorded separately, adding echo, and making minor corrections to the tonal quality (Emerick, p. 46) the engineers violated the EMI rules on the positioning and / or the types of the microphones used (Emerick, p. 167), even by dipping a microphone into a milk bottle filled with water, and waterproofing it inside a condom (Emerick, p. 120-121). They deliberately overloaded circuits, used and connected the studio's devices in unorthodox ways (Emerick, p. 67). On occasion they even tampered with the Beatles' instruments – in *Ticket To Ride* (1965, Lennon-McCartney) – stuffing Starkey's bass drum with a woolen sweater (Emerick, p. 12-14), to achieve a more powerful, or a new, or a different sound. "I decided, what the hell. This was the Beatles we were talking about. If I couldn't try things out at their sessions, I probably would never get the opportunity on anybody else's session" (Emerick, p. 12). The engineers also disregarded the existing EMI directives on editing "[...] Norman generally ignored that edict. For one thing, he enjoyed doing edits; for another, doing them himself was the fastest, most expedient way" (Emerick, p. 61). The higher management 'looked the other way' "[...] a reflexion of how much money they [the Beatles] were starting to generate for the label" (Emerick, p. 61).

In this exploration of the possibilities the studio technology could offer, a creative path was being laid for future pop musicians, and the technical boundaries of the music industry were pushed further. In *Hey Jude* (1968, Lennon-McCartney) the technicians broke new ground in cutting vinyl records in order to 'fit' the seven minute single grooves in a surface reserved for half that duration, without compromising the sound quality, so that melodic structure of the song did not have to obey the existing form restrictions and be split into two three-and-a-half minute sides of a 45 rpm record. They made use of tape loops "crisscrossing in a random pattern of colliding circles" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 169), invented automatic double-tracking (ADT), came up with innovations "made out of elastic bands, sticky tape, and empty cotton reels [...] always in the service of a brilliant musical idea rather than in place of it." (Costello, in Emerick, p. x) and achieved to astonish their US counterparts who, working in more modern studios with technologically advanced

equipment, still tore apart whole studios and rearranged them searching "for a drum sound the Beatles could get" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 168). Emerick in admitting his struggle to match the American Tamla Motown's 'full, bass-rich sound' – only to realize that it was impossible due to the different type of equipment used in British EMI studio – reveals the rivalry among the various studios' staff, as well as the profound importance of their contribution to the sound of musicians (Emerick, p. 106).

"George Martin had a dry wit and a great sense on humor. Always well dressed and well mannered, he clearly enjoyed being an authoritarian figure, playing the schoolmaster to the four Beatles—who equally enjoyed their roles as prankish schoolboys." (Emerick, p. 98). Emerick observed, that the little mistakes made, if considered unimportant would be ignored, "unless George Martin caught it, or thought the mistake was too obvious, they [the Beatles] never brought it to anyone's attention.[...] kinds of mistakes that would never slip through on today's sanitized recordings... but I do think that they do impart character to some of those older records." (Emerick, p. 72). Martin, apparently was of the same opinion, "I happen to like a little bit of inaccuracy, a little bit of humanity." (Martin, p. 79). However, the lower management style of George Martin mirrored his love for the subject he was dealing with, namely sound and music, his respect for the people involved, and his position between the musicians and EMI. The sense of pride shared among his team for contributing to what the Beatles were achieving in the studio and out in the world, is evident in their recollections. On recording *She Loves You* (1963, Lennon-McCartney) Emerick remembered, "all the four Beatles were beaming, and Norman Smith was more hyped up and excited than I'd ever seen him before—he was actually dancing around the console in glee." (Emerick, p. 67). Emerick also revealed his own joy and pride "It marked the first time I'd seen a Beatles song all the way through, from backing track to completion, and for months afterward, whenever I heard the song being played on the radio, I'd find myself grinning from ear to ear." (Emerick, p. 69). Martin, excited when the Beatles conquered the US, commented he felt,

"[...] more bound up with the idea that something one had made was being heard in millions of homes throughout the world, that it was literally, becoming a part of the language. That thrilled me enormously, and gave me great satisfaction – even if it didn't bring me any wealth. I was still earning less than £3000 a year" (Martin, p. 165-166).

In the class-divided society within EMI studios "the pop people were looked down upon by the classical people, even though it was the money coming in from the sales of pop records that paid for the classical sessions" (Emerick, p. 56). In 1963-1964, EMI's sales amounted to £6.25 million, which – according to Sir Joseph Lockwood, the company's chairman at the time – were due to "the outstanding success everywhere of the Beatles" (Blaney, p. 79). Before the Beatles' success "American records used to outsell the home product by five to

one" (Martin, p. 158) noted Martin who, being aware of the profits EMI made due to Beatles' sales in 1964, attempted to negotiate for them a better contract than the one they had signed a year earlier, but was met with EMI's refusal (Martin, p. 187; Blaney, p. 72). The management at EMI was bureaucratic and unappreciative (Martin, p. 179-189; Emerick, p. 226-228), it drew clear lines between the various departments, which lead the departments into adopting defensive approaches in their interactions (Emerick, p. 188-198). The Beatles' growing resentment towards the company, may well have been compensated by their ever later starting sessions which sometimes lasted all night, and for which staff would have to work overtime. This caused a controversy concerning the accounting department in relation to the extra payment for working overtime, as well as issues with the management missing staff during the day, a result of them working nights (Emerick, p. 198-199). Studio staff that was 'caught between a rock and a hard place' – acting as a buffer – viewed by the Beatles both as the 'dreaded EMI' representatives, but at the same time being their worthy collaborators in the recording process. Martin, disappointed by EMI, had already left in 1965 along with the rest of the company's creative pop music producers their assistants and their secretaries, to found his own independent AIR studios and worked with the band as a hired – by EMI – independent contractor (Martin, p. 183; Emerick, p. 163). The Beatles chose to continue working with their familiar producer and team, while keeping EMI's studio and staff 'hostage' during their creative process, which in the last years involved not just shaping and recording an existing idea into a final product-song, but jamming in the studio for hours in order to get inspiration for new songs. *"By this point, the Beatles had a definite anti-EMI attitude, [...] I and the rest of the staff, unfortunately, came under that umbrella. Nonetheless, they didn't go off and do all their recording at Olympic or Trident, studios they kept raving about... but that didn't stop their constant complaining"* (Emerick, p. 249). Emerick left EMI in 1969 to become Apple's sound engineer, at the time refusing an offer by Martin to work at AIR studios, which nevertheless lingered, allowing them to reunite in 1970. Martin noted that the Beatles were never given any reason to feel loyalty towards EMI, which *"ended up having to pay through the nose for having the privilege of having the greatest group ever"* (Martin, p. 177). To prevent any interference by EMI, the Beatles went as far as to issue an edict that their recorded material *"must not be touched in any way. No one was to 'mutilate'"* their tapes (Martin, p. 146), an act which proved their utter trust to their producer and recording team, as well as their absolute distrust towards the management of the company. The EMI studio where the Beatles recorded most of their works, immortalized by their decision to name their last recorded album (*Ab-*

Abbey Road, 1969) after the road it was located on, was officially renamed after their album *Abbey Road Studios*, and is still today 'kept hostage' by their fame. In 2010 a rumor about EMI's possible intention to sell the building was met by public concern which caused "a tidal wave of messages on the social networking sites Twitter and Facebook, with a petition on the latter getting thousands of signatures" (Topping, *The Guardian*, 2010-02-21), calling the National Trust to save the studios by declaring the building a national monument of cultural significance.

### The Beatles Image Mediated by the Press

"No doubt, it was the toughest damn assignment I ever had." (Schreiber, in Kane, p. 188)

The emergence of youth culture from the 1950's and onwards, allowed an opening in the market of music magazines, which until then aimed to inform the musicians and the professionals of the music industry. Gradually these magazines focused on the teenage public. During the decade of 1960-1970, magazines such as *Melody Maker* and *NME (New Musical Express)* heavily promoted the Beatles, featuring them frequently on their covers and documenting their every move. Harrison was writing a column in the *Daily Express* – reporter Ivor Davis was ghostwriting it for him (Kane, p. 174); *Rolling Stone* appeared in 1967 with Lennon's image on its first cover, while *The Beatles Book* (known as *Beatles Monthly*) a magazine entirely devoted to the band was issued in 1963. The magazine's photographer had unrivalled access to the group throughout the 1960s. The band's roadies Aspinall and Evans wrote many of its articles. The *Mersey Beat*, a Liverpool publication which also 'gave' the name to the sound that originated from the city, was probably the first publication the Beatles appeared in. It shared news and ads about musicians, records' critiques, and information on the city's music scene. Closely associated to the Beatles, it offered exclusive stories and photos, published Lennon's early writings, and comical classified advertisements by him as space filler.

The Liverpool bands that got 'discovered' following the success of the Beatles all appeared under the umbrella of the 'Mersey Beat' or 'Mersey Sound.' In reality they didn't have much in common but their geographical origin, however a brand name provided an easy identification and classification system – albeit stereotypical – to journalists, and it stuck. Epstein, commented "much nonsense has been written of the Liverpool Sound, as if it were some instantly recognizable package-deal in electronic music" (Epstein, p. 157). The Beatles, when given the opportunity during interviews, also commented that "it's not really a 'Liverpool Sound' ...it just so happens that the new groups who've come out all happen to have come from Liverpool so people generalise a bit and say 'Aha – the Liverpool Sound'. But, really, if you listen to the groups,

*they're all quite different*" (McCartney, in Pieper - Path, p. 55). In fact, Bill Harry, publisher of the *Mersey Beat* noted in an interview that the diversity of the Liverpool scene was destroyed due to the fact that after the Beatles' success there was only interest in bands that sounded like the Beatles (Harry, in Egan, p. 536). Epstein, responsible for the Beatles and consequently for the '*provincial breakthrough*' (Epstein, p. 201) noted,

*"The Mersey Sound, so-called, had been noising loudly for more than eighteen months before an echo landed in any national newspaper office" and added "The Beatles had taken 'Please Please Me' to the top of the charts and played to wild packed houses in every British city before any journalist beyond disc reviewers took an interest in this extraordinary new group and the city which had launched them"* (Epstein, p. 177).

*"American trade papers reported on the Beatles as early as November 1962. But the general public didn't read Billboard or Cash Box."* (Blaney, p. 178). Goldsmith, recalling the time prior to the British Invasion, mentioned an incident involving Harrison's sister, who was living in the US, and who, having received her brother's band's single, tried to promote it to the local radio station KXOK in St Louis. Both the disc jockey as well as the station's operations director dismissed the unfamiliar tune as somewhat like 'country music with a British accent', a few weeks short of its chart-topping official US release (Goldsmith, p. 50).

Eponymity was acquired due to the noise the fans did, because the noise itself stirred the wider public's interest. Observing the mild teenage craze from a distance, serious reporters from the US hoped for 'science to come up with a cure', as NBC host Jack Paar commented in 1962, to add ironically: *"I'm glad that the English have finally risen to our cultural level"* (Frontani, p. 25). At first, journalists dealt with the Beatles as a piece of 'soft news' (Kane, p. 11). Epstein mentioned the case of a journalist telling him in 1963: *"By Christmas it will be impossible to look at the front page of any newspaper in England without seeing a reference to them."* (Epstein, p. 145). Meanwhile the Beatles were asked to predict how long their success would last and what they planned to do with their lives after 'the bubble would burst' (Blaney, p. 81-82; Hayworth for BBC, in Pieper - Path, p. 55; *This Week*, in Pieper - Path, p. 53-54; NBC, ABC, CBS, in Pieper - Path, p. 59; *The Beatles Christmas Show*, in Pieper - Path, p. 69; RTF, in Pieper - Path, p. 72). Most interview questions were dealing mainly with the looks and outfits, the origin of the Beatles' collarless jackets (Bisiach for RAI, in Pieper - Path, p. 43-44), Ringo's rings (Fordsythe - Springfield for *Ready, Steady, Go*, in Pieper - Path, p. 46; *Newsreel*, in Pieper - Path, p. 155, p. 157), their unusual haircuts (*This Week*, in Pieper - Path, p. 53-54; RTF, in Pieper - Path, p. 72), and during their US visit, whether their hair was real, to which McCartney replied *"is yours?"* (Kane, p. 26), whether they were in fact wearing wigs, to which Lennon and McCart-

ney both growing annoyed by the patronizing approach responded "Oh, we're all bald", "Don't tell anyone, please", "and deaf and dumb too" (CBS, *Yeab! Yeab! Yeab! The Beatles in New York*, DVD, *The 1st US Visit*, in Pieper - Path, p. 76). Kane documented the band's first US visit in 1964 and distributed daily reports to a syndicate of forty-five radio stations (Kane, p. 12), expecting the Beatles to be "a passing fad and a footnote to history" (Kane, p. 19). In the beginning of the US tour, the questions asked – when related to music – were aiming to reveal the Beatles' illiteracy in musical terminology; i.e. their ignorance of the 'Aeolian cadence' which one critic recognized in one of their compositions (Mann 1963, p. 45-47), or to comment about being reported on having 'unresolved leading tones, and false modal frames ending up as plain diatonic' (Press Conference, in Pieper - Path, p. 79) to which Lennon mockingly replied "We're going to see a doctor about that" (Press Conference, in Pieper - Path, p. 79), while Starkey expressed honest discomfort by asking in return "why couldn't he just say if it's good or bad?" (Press Conference, in Pieper - Path, p. 79).

From 1962 to 1965 the group's image was being promoted via record releases, radio airplay, television and movie appearances, and most of all by constant touring and live concerts covered extensively by the press: "[...] there were the usual symptoms of onrushing crowds, fainting teenagers and breathless police" (Kane, p. 90).

*"If those guys were singing songs I didn't know it. The screaming was endless, but the kids were cute and so were the Beatles. I was in front row with other reporters, and minutes after the concert got underway, I started pulling jellybeans and marshmallows from my hair. The marshmallows had messages written on them to the Beatles. Believe me, the real show wasn't just the Beatles. The show was the kids in the audience."* (DeWolf, in Kane, p. 85-86)

In London during the early days of the band's success, Bramwell observed "Their shyness and early diffidence was part of their charm and why journalists took to them and rarely wrote a bad thing about them. Girl reporters in particular were very protective of them." (Bramwell, p. 102). Kane was surprised to meet not the star entertainers he expected but four young men with "a naturalness rarely seen in the world of famous people" (Kane, p. 20). At the end of their second tour, he wondered, "Were we friends? Perhaps in a professional sense. But the Beatles and I managed to do our professional thing without compromising our respect for each other." (Kane, p. 256). Earlier, he had the opportunity to share thoughts with Ira Sidell, company manager for the 1965 tour, who had traveled with many entertainers from teen idols to Frank Sinatra and was 'well versed in the egos of superstars' (Kane, p. 215). Sidell showed his deep respect for the Beatles stating, "Truthfully, they're just wonderful kids, [...] success hasn't spoiled them. They've had this now three or four years. I shiver every time we get in a limousine, the kids run through the barricades, but to them it means nothing." (Kane, p. 215). Along with the promotion of the 'wonderful human qualities' the Beatles possessed, Epstein's policy of collaborating with few trusted mem-



bers of the press eliminated the possibility of the Beatles' image becoming 'smeared' by reports on their numerous casual 'interactions' with members of the opposite sex while on tour, or about their marijuana smoking and hallucinogenics intake. Until Epstein's death in 1967 the press confidantes obliged 'in keeping within the line' and allowing only official releases to be printed, presenting the favorable sides of the Beatles' image, knowing that otherwise they would be sued and worse still, blacklisted (Blaney, p. 157). *"In exchange they got a huge amount of special access and 'scoops'"* (Bramwell, p. 102-103).

Specialists were asked by the Press to comment on the 'psychological phenomenon' (McCandlish Phillips, in Frontani, 2007, p. 83) the 'Beatlemania', which seemed to occur on every occasion the Beatles appeared in public (*Ohio Girls, Cleveland to Bar Beatles*, in Frontani p. 84). *"An American psychiatrist said: 'The Beatles, I think, are perhaps Presley multiplied by four, and represent a manifestation of sexuality among teenagers.' He may be right. One thing is certain. Wherever the Beatles go, the girls scream."* (Hill, p. 78). Reporters were documenting the public interest on the Beatles rising and shifting from the dedicated – but viewed as superficial, pop-oriented, teenage-fan base to a more mature in terms of age, but also socially, and culturally diverse audience of young as well as older adults, whose response to the Beatles was merely less deafening (Kane, p. 54). At the Hollywood Bowl – a concert where, for a change, the music could be heard over the screaming, *"the fans were holding their hands high as if reaching out for manna from heaven, hoping to make a connection with their idols. [...] The Beatles were looking far and wide, enjoying their view. [...] Both the singers and the screamers were in a state of gratification"* (Kane, p. 54-55). At a Hollywood fund raiser party promoted with the catch-phrase 'buy a ticket and meet the Beatles' (Kane, p. 58), established movie stars of the day Dean Martin, Jack Lemmon and Jane Mansfield acted *"avid, eager and star-crazy themselves all over the Beatles"* (Kane, p. 58), or, as was the case with Jack Palance who stated rather bluntly, *"I don't go for the idolizing crap, but I'll tell you, the music is damn good"* (Kane, p. 59), it was gradually becoming evident that it was the music which was capturing everybody's attention in the same way.

The immense popularity of the band-members and the music by a very wide audience base, became recognized as an unparalleled cultural event, with various emerging social parameters in relation to handling big crowds; rising issues on safety and precaution, but also political power – even if not conscious – as various reports of the era show: *"Fearing the worst, Milwaukee police had erected ropes that kept fans at a distance. But what access they didn't get visually, the kids made up for verbally. The screams were so loud on the street that I could not sleep at night."* (Kane, p. 92); *"The Vancouver police were extraordinary, heroically forming lines of resistance around the barriers that were meant to prevent the*

*stampede that was happening nevertheless" (Kane, p. 49); "The boys were amazed at the thousands of fans who had waited at London Airport to welcome them home from Sweden. They proved to be a bigger security problem than the Prime Minister, Alec Douglas-Home, who was passing through the airport at the same time" (Hill, p. 40); "300.000 fans greeted them in Adelaide. More people than came to see the Queen" (DVD Anthology III, 1:01:10 - 1:20:00) "Not since Castro, Khrushchev, and Tito were all in town together in 1960 have the New York police had such a rough time." (Daily Mail, in Hill, p. 84); "They've all seen crowds before. This city, Atlantic City, has seen conventions. What they've never seen is a Beatle crowd. [...] It's not like Sinatra, Presley or the late President Kennedy. It's the Beatles and it's without precedent" (D. Taylor, in Kane, p. 79-80);*

*"There was no question in my mind that the Beatles tour, the assignment I had loathed earlier this year, was part of a bigger picture in American society that I was just starting to understand. The men themselves were a wonderful story [...] But in the crowds and along the police barriers, and mostly in the tenor of the experience, I could see my generation and even younger people moving in a new direction. [...] The way the fans across the country expressed their defiance of authority was the first thing worth noting. Crowds of middle-class kids forging ahead and piercing police lines had been unheard of in the fifties." (Kane, p. 108).*

The media were not only reporting on the Beatles' whereabouts, they were playing their music and broadcasting their performances. *"If you switched on the radio at any time of day or night, on any station, you would hear a Beatles song, and New York is certainly not short of radio stations" (Martin, p. 160). During the broadcast of the first live appearance of the Beatles on American television, which was witnessed by an estimated sixty percent of all American television viewers (approximately 73.000.000 people), the reported crime was lower than at any other point in the previous half century (Lewisoohn, p. 145; Norman, Shout, p. 224-225; Frontani, p. 31).*

*"[...] the connection between fan and Beatle was an extra ordinary phenomenon, a special link that traveled beyond idolatry and entered the world of one-to-one personal chemistry and communion. [...] the mixture of the music and the musicians and the reaction to both was amazing [...] but there's one thing I know for sure—there were no hallucinatory drugs on those premises to cause this phenomenon. It was a little early in the sixties for that. Those kids were on a natural high, in an altered state of focused obsession." (Kane, p. 86-87).*

The impact the Beatles had on the audience during live appearances, was echoed in their transmitted appearances also. Maysles Brothers did not have access to the studio premises in order to record the Beatles' appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show for their documentary *What's Happening! The Beatles In The USA* (1964); opting for a creative alternative plan, they decided to document the show from the remote viewers' point of view. They knocked on apartment doors in New York City, and were allowed in at one

household, thus they were able to document the expressions of a remote audience which appeared equally captured and ecstatic over their idols' aura as the viewers present in the studio, who were depicted on their television set (A. Maysles, in Dougherty, Frömke, Maysles, 1991, 2004, *Extras*, chapter: *Live in your living room*, 0:18:03 - 0:20:17).

When the Beatles stopped touring in 1966 due to issues relating to the safety of both the band as well as audiences of such magnitude, but also due to "*the massive noise produced by the audience [...] [which] revealed the band's doubt about the point of playing live music since no one was able to bear*" (Vlachou, 2010, p. 38), the question that arose was whether the Beatles could continue to exist as a band, and how they intended to proceed (Short, 1966, 2009, p. 129). "*Wherever the Beatles were going to be, the network knew beforehand and arrived en masse. The police were fed up with being stretched to the limit and complained. It became so unsafe for them to go anywhere officially as a group, that we decided to do our own promo clips and just send them out*" (Bramwell, p. 160). "*Out of convenience we decided we were not going to go to the TV studios to promote our records, it was too much of a hassle. We'll just make our own little films and we'll put them out. [...] In a way we invented MTV*" (Harrison, DVD Anthology V, 0:48:58 - 0:53:22). The idea behind the *Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) personas was to "*send the album on tour instead of the band*" (Aspinall, DVD Anthology VI, 0:43:00 - 0:43:30). The Beatles personal live television appearances, and radio broadcasts, may have been sporadic if not rare, in the years between 1967-1969 (1 concert performance on the Apple building's rooftop, 38 television appearances, 25 radio broadcasts), compared to the exposure of previous years (1962-1966: 778 concert performances, 118 radio broadcasts, 108 television appearances), however one of them had a very big symbolic value. The Beatles were chosen by BBC as one of two acts to represent Britain, in the first global satellite television broadcast *Our World* in 1967 (Vlachou, 2010, p. 20), for an audience of – originally estimated to 500 million people, later calculated to approximately – 350 million due to Russia's and East Germany's withdrawal from participation, according to Pieper - Path (Pieper - Path, p. 312-313); incidentally, Martin mentioned 200 million viewers (Martin, DVD Anthology VII, 0:02:54 - 0:03:38). For this occasion the Beatles wrote *All You Need Is Love* (1967), which they proceeded to perform with a live orchestra in the presence of a live audience, who also doubled as chorus in the studio during the global satellite broadcast, the live recording of which was soon released, with minor overdubs, as a single.

The Beatles continued receiving media coverage internationally. Their names and actions – be it as a band or individually – appeared on print media, radio and television, which reproduced their opinions offered in interviews related to the counterculture, their experimentation with drugs, and transcendental meditation (Pieper - Path, 2005; Lewisohn, 1994, 2004). Their image was present in a wide spectrum of Beatle-related

matters reported in newsreels: the forming of their company Apple, the opening and closing of their Apple Boutique, their participation in, and music contributions to feature films, their collaboration with other artists, the drug busts and trials of the Harrisons, Lennon and Ono – which had started earlier with British rock stars of lesser magnitude, political statements, holiday trips and further celebrity gossip (Pieper - Path, 2005; Lewisohn, 1994, 2004). Their music – and consequently their image – continued to reach the audience via promotion films for their songs, as well as in the feature films which involved them (*Magical Mystery Tour*, 1967; *Yellow Submarine*, 1968; *Let It Be*, 1970), but also in documentaries about music and psychedelia (Pieper - Path, 2005; Lewisohn, 1994, 2004). Incidentally, the broadcast of feature film *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), a color film presenting unstructured content in a nonconformist form, transmitted via a black and white BBC1 television channel on a bank holiday, proved to be the band's first commercial failure (*Daily Mail*, 1967-12-31, in Egan, 2009, p. 156-157; Ingham, 2003, in Egan, 2009, p. 397-399; Pieper - Path, p. 319). Nevertheless, it should be noted that with the presentation of odd characters who were familiar to the common people, the Beatles proposed a variation of Ken Kesey's hippie tour, but with the inclusion of 'straight' society. With the filming of *Let It Be* (1970), the Beatles planned to document themselves while working on an album from beginning to completion, and present the creative process in a film for television. "The original idea was that you'd see the Beatles rehearsing, jamming, making up stuff, getting their act together and finally we'd perform somewhere as the big end" (McCartney, DVD Anthology VIII, 0:23:42 - 0:24:00). However as it turned out, "the whole pressure of it finally got to us, so like people do when they're together, they start picking on each other [...] we were the only we had" (Lennon, DVD Anthology VIII, 0:28:35 - 0:28:53). Never having had much privacy anyway, the constant exposure to the cameras, led to tensions manifested and immortalized on film, transforming the creative process into a spectacle offered to the gaze of the world, in a way now familiar to audiences of reality shows such as *Big Brother*. *Let it Be* was shown in cinemas in 1970, won an Oscar and a Grammy award, but unlike other Beatles' films it has been blocked from release in DVD format because, "The film was so controversial when it first came out. When we got halfway through restoring it, we looked at the outtakes and realized: this stuff is still controversial. It raised a lot of old issues." (Aspinall, in Friedman, 2007).

The news about the breakup of the band were forwarded to British newspapers as a press release from Apple in the form of a self-interview by McCartney, stating that he quit the Beatles (McCartney, in Egan, 1970, 2009, p. 214-218). The news were embargoed from appearing at the *Evening Standard* (Doggett, p. 126), were headlines in the *Daily Mirror* (Doggett, p. 126; Short, in Egan, 1970, 2009, p. 220-221), were denied by *The Times* the next day (Doggett, p. 126) while an 'obituary' which appeared on the *Daily*

*Mail*, attempted to measure the band's effect on culture (Phillips, in Egan 1970, 2009, p. 222-223). Lennon, also responded with an interview, which, also, appeared only in a print medium, in *Rolling Stone* magazine (Doggett, p. 150).

### Capitalizing on the Beatles

*"By the summer of this year [1963], practically every senior citizen, king of commerce, aristocrat, and charity organizer was clamoring to illuminate his name or his industry or his promotion with the name 'Beatle'."* (Epstein, p. 145).

The most relevant to capitalize on the success of the Beatles were other artists who played beat music. Bramwell suggests, that Decca had decided to sign the Tremeloes instead of the Beatles in 1962, simply because they lived in Essex, just outside London, and not *"in the bleak north, where any telephone call was long distance and usually subject to numerous delays"* (Bramwell, p. 59). But the Beatles' success made it possible for beat groups to be accepted as mainstream instead of being seen as marginal, low-quality entertainment. *"Record companies are notorious for trying to hop on a bandwagon, and if there's a smell of anything new happening, they all rush after it"* (Martin, p. 136). Suddenly, *"northern became chic [...] we found that there were other people out there"* (Martin, p. 137) and these people were sought after by club owners, promoters and record producers alike. *"Even if they weren't recording songs by Lennon/McCartney, being produced by George Martin, or managed by Epstein, it was enough for beat groups and solo artists just to be able to say they came from Liverpool"* (Blaney, p. 56). The Beatles' 'Provincial Breakthrough' made it possible for artists like Gerry and The Pacemakers, The Searchers, The Swinging Blue Jeans and Cilla Black from Liverpool, Freddie and The Dreamers, Herman's Hermits and The Hollies from Manchester, The Spencer Davis Group and The Moody Blues from Birmingham, the Animals from Newcastle, Them from Belfast, to be given a chance to make records and get nationwide publicity. The precedent the Beatles set for their non-London based peers, they also set on a bigger scale for their fellow British artists. *"Before the Beatle breakthrough, in America very few records of British origin had been pressed in the USA in any case"* (Martin, p. 186). *"Until the Beatles emerged, British pop was seen as a pale imitation of its American counterpart"* (Blaney, p. 74). Once the Beatles 'conquered' the US, more British acts such as The Rolling Stones, The Animals, Herman's Hermits, Manfred Mann, The Kinks, The Troggs, The Who, The Zombies, Pink Floyd, Dusty Springfield were invited to flood the American market. The 'British Invasion' was the international equivalent of the national 'Provincial Breakthrough.' However, another aspect of the Beatles' success was, as producer Joe Meek observed, the concerning number of recording managers who wanted the Beatles' sound on other records (Blaney, p. 147).

Martin observed that "a Beatles song was a commercial certainty" (Martin, p. 168), "[...] what is certain is that their songs were great. [...] Starting with 'Please Please Me' we had twelve successive number ones. It was unique achievement [...] It became almost an accepted fact of nature. The question was not whether a record would get to number one, but how quickly." (Martin, p. 168).

The Beatles' success caused a revolution in the music industry. In an era when the 'single' 45 rpm record ruled and the extra songs contained in an album were termed 'fillers', the Beatles artistry and success promoted the 33 1/3 rpm album as a product of self-composed material created as a whole, from which the 'concept album' gradually emerged. Reising points to the importance of *Revolver* as 'an album of firsts' one of which is the concept approach, where "the album twists, turns and surges towards the transcendent vision of 'Tomorrow Never Knows', a lyrical tour de force that unites all of the album's tracks" (Reising, p. 112), instead of an album being simply a collection of non related tunes put together. The common practice of the day is evident in the Beatles' Capitol Records releases. The American label used to compile a different set of songs (12 songs instead of 14) sometimes taken from more than one albums, and released them under a slightly different title and with a different sleeve – infuriating the Beatles in the process, because they felt their work was 'butchered' while their decisions were not respected, not even taken into account – until the release of *Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band* in 1967. Emerick recalled the Beatles stating in the studio their decision to quit touring, which was met with utter disbelief by their producer. Their reasons were that they could not perform their latest songs live in a satisfactory way, with all the overdubs they were adding, whereas in the studio – since their success allowed them to do pretty much anything they wanted – they could, in Lennon's words, "record music that we won't ever have to play live, and that means we can create something that's never been heard before: a new kind of record with new kinds of sounds" (Emerick, p. 132). It is worth mentioning that the Beatles before resorting to this solution, had toured constantly for five years: in 1962, England, Germany, Scotland; in 1963, England, Sweden, Ireland, N. Ireland; in 1964, England, France, USA twice, Scotland twice, Denmark, The Netherlands, Hong-Kong, Australia, N. Zealand, Sweden, Canada, Wales; in 1965, England, Austria, France three times, Italy, Spain, USA, Canada, Scotland; in 1966, England, Germany twice, Japan, The Philippines, USA, Spain, India (Lewisohn, 1992, 2004), while at the same time, they also wrote a total of 99 new songs, recorded 7 albums, and appeared in 2 feature films. "By 1968, so much original material was pouring from what was by then called rock music that long playing records ('albums') for the first time exceeded singles in unit sales." (MacDonald, 2003, p. 194). The results of the Beatles' experimentation in the studio, having been proven

profitable, allowed pop acts with similar creative aspirations to take advantage of the facilities and technology provided by the record companies and create complicated works, knowing that even if they could not be reproduced during live performances, they could still reach the audience by sending "*the album on tour instead of the band*" (Aspinall, DVD Anthology VI, 0:43:00 - 0:43:30), as well as the promotional video-clips, a practice which gradually became the canon for pop acts.

The Beatles' success led to a complete reversal of royalty pay policy towards the artists by the record companies.

*"At the time the Beatles first signed, royalties were traditionally low. The highest we [EMI] ever paid was 5% [at the time the Beatles were paid 1%]. When the breakthrough came as a result of what had happened with the Beatles, royalties became astronomical, and the record companies had to completely reverse their policies, charging much higher prices for records"* (Martin, p. 177-178).

The Beatles failure to safeguard the copyrights to their songs taught a valuable lesson to aspiring songwriters from that era onwards. Publisher Dick James, may have worked hard on promoting the songs and he may have included Lennon, McCartney and Epstein in Northern Songs Ltd, but for every song they wrote that he published, James received 10 per cent of the gross receipts, the remaining amount then split 49 per cent to James, 19 per cent to Lennon, 20 per cent to McCartney, and 12 per cent to Epstein (Blaney, p. 109-110), Martin was also offered a share but declined considering his participation unethical (Martin, p. 129). The 50/50 split agreement was slightly better than the standards of the day, however "*an established songwriter such as McCartney would today expect a much higher royalty – perhaps even an 80/20 split in his favour – or might own the publishing outright but pay a publisher to administer it*" (Blaney, p. 103). Northern Songs Ltd made such profits in its first year, and had a forecast for profits for 1964-1965, that it got listed on the London Stock Market (Blaney, p. 112-113). Not only did James become a multi-millionaire, but Edward Heath, president of the Board of Trade at the time, has been quoted admitting, "*The Beatles have boosted our reserves*" (Time 1964-10-02, in Blaney, p. 114).

When the Beatles started recording for EMI in 1962 they were informed by Martin that their amplifiers were defective. Epstein took the initiative to secure them new equipment for free by Vox, offering in return the use of the Beatles' name for promotion for as long as he would remain their manager. Between 1963 and 1966, the Beatles were offered several specially-built or prototype Vox amplifiers in order to hear themselves over the noise of the screaming fans, who – according to Martin – sounded as 'the equivalent of putting a microphone by the end of a 747 jet' (Martin, DVD Anthology III, 0:08:04 - 0:08:55; Martin, in Kane, p. 55). Such a case was the model

AC100, which aimed to satisfy the Beatles' need – unsuccessfully – to hear themselves play during concerts. It cashed in on the company's affiliation with the band, becoming known in the US as the *Super Beatle*. However it was the model AC30 used by the Beatles, followed by the Rolling Stones, the Kinks and the Yardbirds, that produced the 'British Invasion' sound. Over the years, it has been used by numerous famous rock musicians, and is still in use today. After the Beatles' visit in America in 1964, the demand for Vox amplifiers was such that Jennings Organ Company, which was producing them could not keep up (Blaney, p. 50-51). When the Beatles were pioneering the large audience concerts by playing in Stadiums, the best sound they could acquire was through connecting their equipment to the Stadium's sound system, which was an insufficient solution due to the fact that such a system was designed for different, and arguably, less demanding purposes. At a concert in Germany, the solution chosen was to set three microphones put together in front of each singer, (DVD Anthology V, 0:39:00). The quality and volume capacity of amplification in big concert venues which soon became a trend had to evolve rapidly. Although the Beatles did not continue long enough to enjoy the improved sound quality themselves, by 1969, an audience of approximately five hundred thousand people at the Woodstock festival enjoyed the music pouring through a specifically designed innovative sound system engineered by Bill Hanley, which became known as the *Woodstock Bins*.

Musical instruments were offered as gifts to the Beatles as a way of promoting the products as well as the stores or companies that were offering them and, also, the media representatives that were present and interfered with the transaction. "*The first left hand model, was offered to McCartney in New York by Rickenbacker's boss F.C. Hall in February 1964.*" (MacDonald, p. 154), it was a Rickenbacker 4001S bass. At the end of a press conference in Minneapolis, in 1965, Harrison was presented with a brand new, experimental model Rickenbacker 360/12 guitar from B-Sharp Music, given to him by local radio station *WDGY* representative (*Newsreel*, in Pieper - Path, p. 223). Its strings were reversed in order to strike the lower pitched string first, and its unusual headstock design allowed for easier tuning (Babiuk, Bacon, Lewisohn, 2002, p. 110–112), it was this 12-string Rickenbacker guitar model, which inspired Jim McGuinn of the Byrds to trade his banjo for it, "*when he saw Harrison play [it] on A Hard Day's Night.*" (Vlachou, 2010, p. 27). In 1966, in New York at the end of another press conference, a Guild Starfire XII twelve-string guitar was given to Lennon (*Newsreel*, in Pieper - Path, p. 287-288). The Hofner 500/1, a violin-shaped bass which became known as *Beatle bass*, produced in 1956 may have been shaped after the EB bass, by Gibson produced in 1953, however Paul McCartney's use of the specific model made the Hofner brand



synonymous with violin basses (Vintage Guitars, 2011-06-25). The Beatles' use of the Indian sitar for the first time in *Norwegian Wood* (1965, Lennon-McCartney) drew the interest of fellow pop musicians towards Indian music and turned Indian culture into a legitimized source from which to extract fresh sound-ingredients for their music production. It also turned the spotlight towards non-western artist Ravi Shankar who was befriended by Harrison, allowing him to introduce his art and consequently his culture, to the large audiences of Monterey Pop festival (1967) and Woodstock festival (1969), and thus contributing into making him the best known Indian musician in the world. Indian culture did win a serious scholar in George Harrison, but Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, in inviting the Beatles to practice transcendental meditation in 1967 offered himself and his goal a level of exposure and publicity that ten years of world touring (1958-1968) had not managed to achieve. "I feel a great fondness for the younger generation. If the Beatles take up this transcendental meditation they are the ideal of energy and intelligence in the younger generation that will bring youth to a very good level of understanding and intelligence" (Maharishi, DVD Anthology VII, 0:12:17 - 0:12:50).

Aside from boosting the British and American record market, the Beatles helped to bolster the publishing market which dealt with music and lifestyle. "The Beatles were everywhere. If journalists were not writing about them, they were using them as an excuse to write about beat music in Liverpool" (Blaney, p. 146). Professional music press *Record Retailer*, *New Musical Express* (NME), *Melody Maker* and *Pop Weekly* may have refused to review the Beatles' first single, but caught up fast, when they realized the public interest and the up-coming success. *Melody Maker*, and *Pop Weekly*, had trouble to accurately describe the Beatles' music, but they repeatedly tried, offering them publicity in the process. NME which sold 200,000 copies per week, collaborated with British Television in broadcasting Poll Winners Concerts, between 1963-1966. The *Beat Monthly*, issued in 1963 by O'Mahony, was followed by *The Beatles Book* within a few months; its launch issue sold 80.000 copies and at its peak it sold 330.000 surpassing the best selling music weekly magazine NME by over 100.000 copies (Blaney, p. 148). While in the US, "if you could find a book to connect to the Beatles, it could affect your ratings. That, of course, meant more advertising dollars" (Stevens, in Kane, p. 232).

As MacDonald pointed out, in the beginning of the 1960s "pop music press ceased to be mainly for the use of professionals and began to cater to the interests of consumers" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 193). These consumers had been identified already in the late 1950s by the *Daily Mail*, as "a new world of young people with their own self-made heroes" (*Daily Mail*, in Blaney, p. 132). Epstein had noted "More has been written about them [the Beatles] than about any other entertainer of any era" (Epstein, p. 154). The *Billboard*, the *Cashbox*, *Melody Maker*, *Pop Weekly*,

along with the charts offered stories and pictures of the pop stars, as did lifestyle magazines *Boyfriend*, *Fabulous*, *Marilyn*, *Mirabelle*, *Romeo*, *Roxy*, *Valentine* – of which some were already existing and some were launched in the 1960s – to young consumers hungry for infotainment (Blaney, p. 149; Savage, 2009-09-06). "*The Beatles' arrival revolutionised pop publishing. Boyfriend's Big Beat No 2 (autumn '63) promised "12 colour pages and all the mod pop that's popping".*" (Savage, 2009-09-06).

"*Selling between 70,000 or so copies (Record Mirror) up to 200,000 (Fabulous, the New Musical Express) a week, their total circulations combined to several hundred thousand. This paralleled the unprecedented spike in singles sales in the years after the Beatles' breakthrough: reaching a peak of more than 70m in 1964.*" (Savage, 2009-09-06).

"*Magazines and books about the group began to fill the shelves of newsagents and bookshops. Some were hasty cash-ins; others were more carefully considered, but each was published with one thought in mind: making money*" (Blaney, p. 157). Presenting itself as counter cultural *Rolling Stone* magazine, may have chosen to sport the Beatles' self-appointed rivals' name as its title, however the picture choice for the sleeve on its launch issue in 1967 was an image of John Lennon. "*The Beatles had become a huge money-making machine.*" (Blaney, p. 157), and still remain so. MacDonald noted that, "*Music papers which in the nineties, found themselves desperately chasing readers, discovered, in the sixties, an ever-widening and more demanding readership.*" (MacDonald, p. 193). Between November 1993 and June 2011, twenty one (21) occurrences of the Beatles appearing as a band or as individuals on the sleeve of leading British monthly music magazine *Mojo* (from a total of 216 issues), have been counted. The Pink Floyd come second, having appeared on eleven (11) sleeves, Bob Dylan on nine (9), the Rolling Stones on seven (7), the third world's first mega-star, Jamaican Bob Marley on five (5), Jimi Hendrix on four (4). In the time span of eighteen years, only five female musicians appeared on a *Mojo* sleeve, Chrissie Hynde, Janis Joplin and Amy Winehouse on one each, Debby Harry on two, Kate Bush on three; eight (8) appearances of female artists in all. *Mojo* exploited the profitable fashion of publishing – instantly turned collectable – issues with 2-4 alternative sleeve choices, which depicted the Beatles. *Mojo* has also published thirteen (13) special collectable issues dealing exclusively with one musical genre or artist / band, out of which five (5) dealt with the Beatles, and one (1) with Lennon. Book publications on the Beatles are also profitable. "*A quick check on Amazon, reveals more than 1,300 Beatles-related titles.*" (Blaney, p. 159).

Meanwhile, in the years from 1966 to 1968, even a prefabricated pop group a quartet played by actors-singers – their music written by professional musicians – called The Monkees appeared on the American television network NBC. The series' creators, Bert Schneider and Bob Rafelson apparently had the idea for the weekly show

about a music group as early as 1960, but nobody seemed interested until 1965. Needless to say, the characters of the four Monkees were 'molded' around the characters of the Beatles. If the Monkees' purpose was to make an entertainment product, by showing a fictional group of musicians on television, the animated children's show, produced by ABC (Blaney, 223-225), which aired in 1965 and was called *The Beatles* aimed at spreading the appeal for the band to the children while exploiting that market pool (*Newsreel*, in Pieper - Path, p. 222). The show's sponsor, A.C. Gilbert Company, which produced toys, termed the Beatles "the most powerful salesmen in the world today" (Frontani, p. 92). "The show rated 51.9 per cent share of the viewing audience and was the second most successful Saturday morning show of the season" (Blaney, p. 224). As Barrow noted, this show also prolonged "the Beatles' career in the commercially important teenybopper's market" (Barrow, in Blaney, p. 224), moreover, it spawned the idea for the animation film *Yellow Submarine* (1968). Meanwhile, a wide variety of merchandise exploiting any possible association with the Beatles' image, simultaneously offered further exposure. "Our money comes in from all sides [...] from merchandising—the sale of Beatle wigs, talcum powder, chewing gum, guitars. Almost, literally, every product under the sun" (Epstein, p. 173). Both the appeal and the commercial power of the Beatles' image sold anything, whether directly or indirectly linked to the band. The Beatle name and image were used to enhance sales on existing line of products, while others were produced exclusively due to the opportunity. "Paris stores were full of Beatles wigs and several of them played the songs of Paul and John eight hours daily over their loudspeaker systems" (Epstein, p. 146). Beatles harmonicas by Hohner, Beatles' Yeah, Yeah, Yeah Candy by Nestle, inflatable Beatle Dolls, Beatle finger puppets, Beatle figurines with bobbing heads, sneakers, medallions, key-rings, lunch-boxes, water-color sets, rings, belts, promotional band-aids for *Help*, wristwatches, wallets, collectable bubble gum picture-cards, loose leaf notebooks, coat-hangers, duvet covers and pillowcases, soaps and bubble baths, patches, pins and buttons, flooded the market. Needless to say these collectable items are worth small fortunes today and licensed collectable items are still being produced and sold everywhere. The market of collectables is rivaled by the market of tourism. A visit to Liverpool is to a Beatle-fan the equivalent of an art lover's dream to visit Florence. The city of Liverpool 'World Capital of Pop' welcomes visitors who take the Magical Mystery Tour around the places the Beatles grew up and are mentioned in their songs, go to the reconstructed Cavern Club, and the Beatles Museum hosted at the Albert Docks, clutching maps named 'The Beatles Liverpool' and enjoy the Matthew Street Festival and the International Beatle Week. The Liverpool airport – until the middle of the nineties visitors of the city of Liverpool would choose to fly to Manchester airport instead – renovated

and renamed Liverpool John Lennon Airport became one of Europe's fastest growing airports, managing to increase its annual passenger numbers from 689,468 in 1997 to 5.47 million in 2007 (FOLA).

By the middle of the nineties the Beatles decided to promote and sell their main product, their music, and their image for its own sake in a commercial move which started with the BBC sessions, proceeded with the Anthology albums, videos, DVDs and book, and completed with the release of their remastered catalogue. At this point one might consider Frank Zappa's critique to the Beatles via album title *We're Only In It For The Money*' (1968) – the Mothers' of Invention creative response, intended to be released with a pepper-esque sleeve photograph of the band (it was Zappa's belief that the Beatles were cashing in on the psychedelia movement). However it would be wise to remember that the Beatles used the pun on themselves already the autumn of 1964, naming an album *Beatles for Sale*; one they were obliged to hastily record, after a US tour, amidst a UK tour, writing seven new songs and recording a total of fourteen in five weeks, to honour their EMI contract. Everybody has cashed in on the Beatles, now they make some extra profit on their own image and product.

### The Beatles Politics

*"They liked to see how far they could go, how much people would take."* (Martin, p. 175).

The Beatles often used small manifestations of disobedience as declarations of their intention to defy authority and act on their own terms. Epstein got a taste early on, during the meeting he planned to propose to become their manager. McCartney had not shown up and Epstein was informed that he was taking a bath. Epstein annoyed commented *"This is disrespectful, he's very late"* and received Harrison's smiling response, *"and very clean"* (Epstein, p. 102). Martin also got his taste right at the start of their collaboration, when, in welcoming the Beatles to inform him should they dislike anything in relation to the recordings – so the studio team could come up with improvements – received Harrison's dry wit response *"well, for a start, I don't like your tie"* (Martin, 126). Lennon often adopted a comic army-inspired routine towards authority figures (i.e. management at EMI studios), offering responses like *"Yes, sir, Mr Studio Manager, Sir! [...]"* while 'standing stiffly to attention' (Emerick, p. 121). Capitol Records, which released the Beatles' music in the US, got the Beatles' 'comment' – according to the Beatles' claim (Record Collector, p. 66-69) – on its policy of 'butchering' their albums by rearranging the choice and order of songs, when the Beatles sent their sleeve suggestion for the album *Yesterday and Today* (1966); a photograph of the Beatles wearing white butcher's coats, covered by decapitated dolls and pieces

of bloody, raw meat. The sleeves were printed, the album distributed and then withdrawn due to public outrage. The recalled sleeves had to be trashed and new sleeves with a different photo had to be printed. According to Schaffner (Schaffner, 1977), it was the only Beatles record to lose money for Capitol. Kane recalled an incident in the 1964 US tour, between an organizer – who had booked an extra concert in Kansas paying a record setting 150 thousand dollar fee – and Lennon. At Lennon's presence the businessman asked Epstein to arrange for the Beatles to play a little longer than their usual thirty to thirty-five minutes show, offering to raise their fee. Lennon refused. *"Each time the baseball magnate upped the ante, Lennon would stare at him and say no."* (Kane, 146). To the businessman's argument that he was already paying a very high fee, Lennon replied *"Chuck, you shouldn't have spent so much money on us"* (Kane, 146); the verbal sparring ended with the businessman storming out of the Beatles' dressing room infuriated. Although the Beatles refused to come to an agreement on the matter – Lennon's refusal had nothing to do with a bargain for extra money, as it turned out – they did play an extra song, Leiber-Stoller's *Kansas City*, which brought the concert house to its feet (Kane, 146).

A year earlier, in England, the Beatles had performed at the Royal Variety Show in the presence of the Queen. Young fans considered this an act of sell-out. The reporters questioned the Beatles' motives, a band of working class origin playing for the Queen and aristocrats. Starkey stated *"I want to play the drums before the Queen Mother. Is there anything wrong in that?"* (Epstein, p. 141). The evening of the performance, Lennon had a polite request for the audience *"For our last number I'd like to ask for your help. Would the people in the cheaper seats clap your hands, and the rest of you, if you'd just rattle your jewellery?"* (Lennon, DVD Anthology II, 0:51:36 - 0:51:51). The Beatles did not refuse to interact with members of society who belonged to a higher class, they refused to be looked down upon by them. They may have experienced the lack of privileges their class and upbringing meant socially, financially and politically, but they were not ashamed of their background nor did they try to hide it in order to become accepted. *"We were the first working class singers that stayed working class and pronounced it. Didn't try and change our accents which in England were looked down upon"* (Lennon, DVD Anthology II, 0:22:34 - 0:22:45). At the same time they expressed discomfort about the effects of stardom, manifested even within their longtime existing relations. *"It's not the same anymore. When I walk into a room of old friends and even family, there's a kind of shyness, a distance"*. (McCartney, in Bramwell, p 79). Starkey regretted the fact that, while fame was responsible for the ordinary fans' inability to approach the band, 'people with money' could meet them personally at various posh, social events (Kane, p. 59). Nevertheless, such events were accepted as part of

their promotion obligations. Lennon said to Kane during an interview, "[...] it is natural for us to play and sing. But it's unnatural to sit on a stool and shake hands. But we can do it, y'know" (Lennon, in Kane, p. 59), provided they were not treated as jokers, zoo animals or trophies.

"By 1964 it had become fashionable to be a Beatle fan. [...] It became clear that if you had a Beatle at a party you were 'made' socially" (Epstein, p. 145). While "Middle-aged men were walking down fifth Avenue wearing Beatle wigs, to show how in tune they were" (Martin, p. 160), Epstein recalled an incident at the presentation of Lennon's book *In His Own Write* (1964), where a middle-aged lady, clutching ten copies of the book to be autographed, said, "Put your name clearly just here" prodding on a page with her finger, and turned around to her friend to add "I never thought I would stoop to asking for such an autograph", to which an astonished Lennon remarked "And I never thought that I would be forced to sign my name for someone like you" (Epstein, p. 165). In 1965, controversy erupted in Britain, the Queen appointed the Beatles Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). The honour at the time primarily bestowed upon military veterans and civic leaders, caused some conservative recipients to return their insignia in protest. "English royalty places me on the same level as vulgar nincompoops" complained member of the Canadian Parliament H. Dupuis, returning his medal (Frontani, p. 85). In interviews British citizens were given the opportunity to offer their opinion on the matter: "The order being debased by everybody for giving MBE's to people who are not deserving of it" – old gentleman; "rewarded enough with the money they made" – young man; "slightly put out of being placed on the same level as a pop singer" – young man, upper class; "one side values the honour too highly, and the other too lowly" – young man; "where is the Empire?" – middle aged man; "the MBE is a bit of a joke, hundreds have got it in the past, why not the Beatles?" – middle aged man, working class; "they deserved it" – an old lady and a young woman; "they're young and vital and they give this country a kick and a lift. And my God we need it!" – middle aged lady (DVD Anthology IV, 0:59:32 - 1:03:40). The press asked, "Now last year in America your records sold no less than ten million dollars worth. Do you think your export sales have something to do with this?" (BCNI, 1965-06-12). A sixteen-year-old girl moaned, "they've become respectable and I don't want anything more to do with them" (Lewis, *Queen's Honors List Includes the Beatles*, New York Times, 1965-06-12, in Frontani, p. 85). The Beatles assured their fans that "we've got it [MBE] and it's nice to have. And it doesn't make you more respectable or anything, I don't think. Maybe other people think it does. It doesn't make me any more respectable, I'm STILL a scruff" (McCartney, in ITV Interview, 1965-06-12). They also proposed a different viewpoint on the matter by posing the question, why it should be considered acceptable for someone to be honoured for killing human beings, but not for making them feel happy (Lennon, in Anthology, p. 183). The same 'clash' between different value systems surfaced on the occasion of the Beatles' concert in Japan in 1966. The Japanese traditionalists were alarmed that

the Martial Arts Hall Nippon Budokan would be used for a pop concert, thinking it would defile the arena, act as an insult to the Japanese culture, and set a bad example for youth. McCartney argued, offering an opposite example, of Japanese traditional dance group performing in England, where nobody would feel insulted or culturally threatened, and that, in any case, the Beatles were there because they were asked to perform at Budokan in Japan, to which Lennon was quick to add, "*I'd rather watch singing than wrestling anyway*" (DVD Anthology V, 0:57:06 - 0:58:00).

Kane, the American reporter who traveled with the Beatles on their US tours in 1964 and 1965, noted that he got the assignment due to his business card which listed seven radio stations, thus giving the impression he was news boss in all. In reality six of those stations were aiming to African-American audiences and were playing mostly gospel and rhythm-and-blues music (Kane, p. 23). Partly by chance it seems, the music of the Beatles and reports on them were transmitted via radio stations aiming also to African-American audiences.

*"Some would claim that the Beatles did this exclusively for white kids, but I'm not sure of that. I have a black friend my age from a working-class family in Fort Worth, Texas, who swears that his brother owned, and wore, a Beatles wig."* (Tom Piazza, p. 331).

Singer / songwriter Smokey Robinson noted that the Beatles were the first white artists to ever admit that they grew up on black music (Skinner Sawyers, p. xlv), and they took every opportunity they could to state this fact as loud and clear as they could. The Beatles were keen to share their opinions over political and social issues, but in the beginning of their career, Epstein prevented them from voicing opinions, in fear that such acts could harm their image. Schreiber, one of the reporters who covered the first US tour recalled, "*He [Lennon] was especially fascinated about my coverage of John Kennedy's campaign in 1960 and his funeral in 1963, and my coverage of Martin Luther King, James Meredith and the Selma and Montgomery marches. [...] He was already forming opinions about the war in Vietnam*" (Schreiber, in Kane, p. 161). According to Kane, Starkey was another 'profoundly interested antiwar spokesman' on the escalating conflicts in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia and in Africa, in 1965 (Kane, p. 177). During their first US tour "*they made clear African-American musicians were among their major influences*" and invited Motown's Mary Wells to join them on their UK tour (Skinner Sawyers, p. xlv). They opposed openly the idea of racial segregation (Kane, p. 219-220) and stated that they would refuse to perform in front of a segregated audience. A report on promoters having ordered seating by race for a scheduled concert at the Old Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Florida, posed an issue (Kane, p. 39-40; Frontani, 2007, p. 98-99). As it turned out the Beatles played the Gator Bowl concert, while thirty- or forty-mile-an-hour winds

were blowing, right after a hurricane had turned the city into a disaster zone; they performed as they wished in front of a fully integrated audience, "blacks and whites sat side by side, sharing an experience" (Kane, p. 110-112).

The Beatles aimed to make contact with realities besides their own and share them with their audience. They questioned their own condition "How does it feel to be one of the beautiful people, Now that you know who you are what would you like to be?" (*Baby You're A Rich Man*, Lennon - McCartney, 1967), and took time to wonder "all the lonely people where do they all come from?" (*Eleanor Rigby*, Lennon - McCartney, 1966). Their hippie inspired film *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967) was not about the 'in-crowd', it depicted everyday characters from all walks of life, who despite their lack of charms – according to conventional views – were welcomed for the ride; their peculiarities viewed with a friendly gaze. "I had a friend called Jimmy Scott who was a Nigerian conga player, who used to meet in the clubs of London. He had a few expressions, one of which was 'Ob la di ob la da, life goes on, bra'" (McCartney, in Miles, p. 419). 'Ob la di ob la da' means 'life goes on' in Yoruba; McCartney asked whether he could use the expression and invited Scott to play congas on the recording of the song. McCartney chose 'Desmond' as the male character's name in the song, because it sounded Caribbean (Miles, p. 419). The Beatles' company defied the trade embargo on South Africa, distributed Apple records there through a South African small family-run company, Gallo, and took one further step, "Uniquely—something that happened nowhere else in the world—Gallo was allowed to put their own local bands—in Swahili or whatever—on the Apple label." (Bramwell, p. 24).

The Beatles did not show indifference to the women movement which was on the rise. In their songs they were pointing at flaws in society's existing power structures "I used to be cruel to my woman, I beat her and kept her apart from the things that she loved" (*Getting Better*, 1967, Lennon-McCartney), reflected on, and spoke out about issues single-mothers faced "children at your feet, wonder how you manage to make ends meet" (*Lady Madonna*, 1968, Lennon-McCartney). McCartney revealed about the writing of *Blackbird* (Lennon-McCartney, 1968) "I had in mind a black woman, rather than a bird. Those were the days of the civil rights movement, which all of us cared passionately about, so this was really a song from me to a black woman experiencing these problems in the States" (McCartney, in Miles, 1997, quoted in Mitchell, 2001 p. 19). The Beatles took the stereotype of the sex appeal of a man in uniform, and turned it around by suggesting that a woman in uniform is also sexy (*Lovely Rita*, 1967, Lennon-McCartney). They acknowledged the changes that occurred in the existing gender roles with their lyric "I once had a girl, or should I say, she once had me?" (*Norwegian Wood*, 1965, Lennon-McCartney). The massive, vibrant response of the female audiences to the music was a contribution in itself as an unconscious, unintended demonstra-



tion of power of the women movement, which seemed to declare that there is more to life than getting married. "[...] I realized that for many of these young women, their love and passion for the Beatles seemed to be the beginning of liberation and the end of innocence. I also realized that perhaps their individual actions would stimulate the transformation of an entire generation" (Kane, p. 72).

Epstein observed how people like Lord Montgomery, the British Prime Minister, and the Leader of his Opposition, during that era, all put "rival claims to the ownership of the Beatles" (Epstein, p. 195). In the US, during a reception at the British Embassy in Washington, a piece of Starkey's hair was snipped (Epstein, p. 151; Martin, p. 162; DVD Anthology III, 0:24:24 - 0:25:32). The Beatles may have felt an obligation to represent their own country, but after the British Embassy incident they chose to keep clear of such social events, more so since they rarely had days off while they were on tour. Using the 'day off' excuse, the Beatles declined an invitation to a breakfast reception at the Presidential Palace in the Philippines, while on tour in 1966; according to another version of the story, as presented by Bramwell, the Beatles were completely unaware of the invitation (Bramwell, p. 165-166). In any case, they were certainly unaware of the fact that the, then, first lady, Mrs Marcos had taken the liberty to announce their expected presence to the national press without waiting to receive their response. The reception took place without the honoured 'guests'; the Beatles absence transmitted live by the country's national media, "We just watched ourselves not arriving at the presidential palace" (Harrison, DVD Anthology VI, 0:00:00 - 0:08:30). The national news of the Philippines presented the Beatles as having snubbed the first family, which caused a backlash of riots, and resulted with the Beatles almost literally being 'kicked out of the country', while the profits from their two performances in the Philippines were withheld by the authorities (Frontani, p. 97; Bramwell, p. 165-166; DVD Anthology VI, 0:00:00 - 0:08:30). Aware or not of the invitation, conscious or not of the oppressive regime under which the Philippines were ruled at that time, the Beatles were viewed as refusing to be used as instruments to a political agenda they did not support.

The 'potentially rebellious' edge their image projected, along with the wide acceptance they enjoyed, was good enough reason for the band to be declared by various sources as dangerous of corrupting the youth or causing unrest. The Beatles were not allowed to perform in Israel; the Israeli authorities considered there was "no reason to why Israeli youth should be exposed to attacks of mass hysteria" (Israel Bars Beatles, New York Times, 1964-03-18, in Frontani, p. 94). In Indonesia, the Beatles' records and tapes were seized from shops in order to be burned "as part of the celebration of Indonesia's 20th Independence Day" (Jakarta to Burn Beatle Music, New York Times, 1965-08-09, in Frontani, p. 94). In communist regimes, the Beatles "became a symbol of 'cultural crisis' as young artists and intellectuals

*demanded more freedom*" (Frontani, p. 94). Their songs recorded illegally from Radio Luxembourg, or BBC, and cut into discarded hospital x-ray plates, were distributed through the black market. Gurevich recalled in his memoir *From Lenin To Lennon* (Gurevich, 1991) that the students paraphrased Mayakovsky, claiming that they would learn English if only because Lennon spoke it. He wrote that he could tell what sort of students the people who studied English in Russia were; noting he was able to distinguish the ones with the British accent, who had been practicing for hours, from the others, like himself, who got their accent from records and movies (Gurevich, 1991).

A myth was spread by word of mouth among Russian fans, that the Beatles landed somewhere in the USSR on their return from their Japanese concert, in order to re-fuel and that they performed a secret concert using the wing of the aeroplane as a stage. The Beatles never performed in the USSR, but wrote a song from a 'comrade's' point of view, who, on returning from Miami Beach to USSR (*Back In the USSR*, Lennon-McCartney, 1968), longed to hear 'the balalaikas ringing out', and meet again the Ukrainian girls that 'really knock me out, they leave the West behind', the Moscow girls that 'make me sing and shout' the Georgian [girls] 'always on my mind' (*Back in the USSR*, Lennon-McCartney, 1968).

"Back in the USSR, was my take off of Chuck Berry's *Back in the USA*. It's a typical American thing to say when they're away: I miss my doughnuts [...], laundrettes, [...] TV's got more channels... So I thought, Great, I'll do a spoof on that. This 'll be someone who hasn't got a lot but they'll still be every bit as proud as an American would be" (McCartney, in Miles, p. 422).

While "the Beatles (and rock and roll music) became emblematic of western cultural imperialism" (Frontani, p. 95) in the US, the religious right considered them to be "dupes of the international communist conspiracy" (Frontani, p. 95).

"You listen to this, Christians [...] These Beatles are completely anti-Christ. They are preparing our teenagers for riot and ultimate revolution against our Christian Republic. It's all part of the Communist Master music Plan, [...] The drum is the key—little Ringo.... In the excitatory state that the Beatles place these youngsters into, these young people will do anything they are told to do.... one day when the revolution is ripe... they [the Communists] could put the Beatles on TV and could mass hypnotize the American youth... This scares the wits out of me" (Reverend Noebel, *Beware*, Newsweek, 1965-02-15, in Frontani, p. 95).

No master plan had been orchestrated by a hostile force, it was just improvised acts of promotion techniques to 'push' an, arguably, good quality product, "Gradually we, spread our net and we'd send them [the promotion records] to all the places where we had troops stationed [...] for broadcasting on the British Forces radio stations." (Bramwell, p. 115).

"Whilst stood waiting for a bus in Singapore in 1965, I was suddenly surrounded by a large group of excited schoolgirls pointing, laughing and wanting to try out their English. The reason was not me but down to the fact that I was carrying a copy of the recently released "Help" album. They all wanted to know anything and everything about England and The Beatles and, although I missed my bus, I was more than happy to tell them what I knew. I was aged 21 and in the British Army at the time - I served 7 years, all of them abroad and wherever I went, The Beatles was the topic that was constant and genuinely united virtually everybody. I have travelled extensively since those days and I find that it is still more or less the same." (MMT, Ref: 12798 - male, 64)

On Beatles concerts in 1965 youth riots broke in Paris and Barcelona (*Beatles Greeted by Riot At Paris Sports Palace*, New York Times, 1965-06-21, in Frontani, p. 96; *2 US Students Held in Spain*, New York Times, 1965-07-06, in Frontani, p. 96). Due to such behavior becoming commonplace, the Pope warned against "frenzied agitation over some foolish entertainment" (*Pope Warns Youth on Wild Outbursts Over Entertainment*, New York Times, 1965-07-05, in Frontani, p. 96). In 1966, during an interview, Lennon stated, "Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue about that; I'm right and I will be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus; I don't know which will go first—rock 'n' roll or Christianity. Jesus was all right but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me." (Cleave, 1966, 2006, p. 88). While there were no reactions to the statement from the British public, when the interview was reprinted in an American teen magazine, it instigated a controversy. Radio stations invited listeners to burn Beatles records, "bring your Beatles trash and deposit it here to one of our 14 pickup points in Birmingham, Alabama" recalled Harrison (Harrison, DVD Anthology VI, 0:10:30 - 0:11:30). In a filmed interview, a Ku Klux Klan member threatened, "This is nothing but blasphemy and we'll stop it any terror way we can. We have ways and means to stop this. There'll be a lot of surprises when they [the Beatles] get here" (DVD Anthology VI, 0:11:30 - 0:18:00). The Beatles music was banned in thirty five radio stations in the US, and also in South Africa. Spain and the Vatican denounced Lennon. Although in 1964, D. Taylor had observed "the chilling vision of countless outstretched hands along the motorcade route, handicapped people throwing away their crutches at the mere sight of the boys [the Beatles], as if their presence could cure them of their ills" (Skinner Sawyers, p. 85), Lennon was compelled to apologize at a press conference for upsetting the public, and he attempted to clarify what he meant by his statement. "If I said television is more popular than Jesus, I might have got away with it [...] I just said 'they' [the Beatles] are having more influence on kids and things than anything else, including Jesus. [...] even though I never meant what people think I meant by it. I'm still sorry I opened my mouth." (Lennon, in Skinner Sawyers, p. 85). On the group's arrival for concerts in some city in the South of the US, newsreels show a banner that read 'Jesus

died for you John'. At a concert another banner read 'Lennon†Saves' (DVD Anthology VI, 0:18:00 - 0:18:50).

The Beatles, may have been amateurs in the way they interacted with the professionals who run the music industry and the media, but their actions reflected that if there was profit to be made, it would be made with honesty and integrity. "We had a rule that came out of sheer practicality, which was—if we couldn't remember the song the next day, then it was no good. We assumed if we, who had written it, couldn't remember it, what chance would an ordinary member of the public have of remembering it. And it was a rule we stuck to." (McCartney, in Lange, p. 96). They failed to make their company Apple what they dreamed, a record company where artists 'would not have to beg' (Starkey, DVD Anthology VII, 0:53:35) to get their work released, since good intentions alone do not run a successful business and neither of the four bothered with accounting. The Apple boutique, when it was proven ineffective in its purpose to save tax money, was closed down after all its remaining content was given away for free (one item per person). The rooftop concert offered one last chance to anyone lucky enough to be around to enjoy the Beatles play live, for free.

An article titled *Beatles lyrics and the words they used most* (Rogers, Guardian, 2010-11-16) revealed 'you' to be at the top of the list of words that appeared in their songs (2,262 times), followed by 'I' which appears 1,736 times. The ninth word and the first noun / verb showing on the top of this list is 'love' which appears 613 times. The word 'money', compared, appears 51 times. One could say, the Beatles did indeed brainwash generations of audiences into 'buying' their product, succeeding even to appropriate a decade and claim it as their own in a sense. Instead of offering a promising but deceiving "there will be no sorrow" they refrained by "speaking words of wisdom" (*Let It Be*, Lennon - McCartney, 1970). By choosing their words carefully, they did "take a sad song" (*Hey Jude*, Lennon - McCartney, 1968) of a decade and made it better, covering the ugly noise of this decade of turmoil with songs that succeeded to make people of "all ages, all classes, and both sexes" (Epstein, p. 146) happier or at least, feel "welcome, befriended" (Tompkins, p. 218).

The first chapter of the communication process, 'A socio-political contextual pool 1960-1970' served, as its title revealed, to present an image of the socio-political situation of the world, during the decade the Beatles appeared, an overall context within which they created their body of work. In the second chapter 'Managing and Promoting The Beatles', examples of the managing styles chosen by the two managers revealed the importance their choices and actions had on the development of

the Beatles' image as well as their work, and how the different managing styles and goals profoundly affected the Beatles and even lead to the resolution of the band in a certain manner, thus affecting the band's image. In the third chapter 'Producing the Beatles', examples relating to the technology used in the recording studios – viewed as the mediators which turned musical works into mass media products – revealed the ways in which the creation of the music itself was affected, as well as the manner in which certain types of management facilitated and / or prohibited the creation of the musical work and consequently the mass media product. The fourth chapter 'The Beatles Image Mediated' revealed the approaches of another mediator – the media as opinion leaders, who brought both the image and the work in touch with the public, and how certain viewpoints interfered with the creation of the image. The fifth chapter, 'Capitalizing on the Beatles' presented examples of economic, social and even political gains earned by the success of the Beatles and the association with their image. The sixth and last chapter 'The Beatles Politics' offered glimpses of the Beatles' choices and approaches towards the factors – management, media (production and press), finances, socio-political issues of the era – which were directly and indirectly related to their music production and / or their image.

## DISCUSSION

*"Whatever wind was blowing at the time moved the Beatles, too. I'm not saying we weren't flags on the top of a ship, but the whole boat was moving. [...] we tuned in to the message. That's all. I don't mean to belittle the Beatles when I say, they weren't this, they weren't that. I'm just trying not to overblow their importance as separate from society."* (Lennon, in Sheff, p. 215-216).

Context is defined as *"the set of facts, circumstances, environment, background, surrounding an event, or a situation, which determine, specify, or clarify it"* (Vlachou, 2010, p. 33), however, the determination, clarification or specification of the context relies on the interpretation of those facts. If the definition is evaluated in a quantitative manner it might offer the impression that in order for someone to comprehend the value of a context 'x' it would suffice to be given the facts and proceed to 'measure' their importance against one another. However, each of the facts is symbolically 'branded' by polysemy, consequently the interpretation is tied to the interpreter's system of values. *"Art emerges from within society, and exists within the contexts the society spawns"* (Vlachou, 2010), but although society is shaped by cultural, philosophical, political, economic factors linked in various combinations, according to specific time and place, for the definition of contexts by which we comprehend and in-

interpret the culture it forms, we can only rely on the interpreter's system of values. Furthermore, besides accepting that "*the occurrence of factors is not to be viewed as a static condition, but rather as a constantly changing process*" (Vlachou, 2010, p. 33), we should keep in mind that the same applies to the evaluations and interpretations offered. Considering the communication theories presented in the background studies, and measuring against them the examples presented in the communication process, the issues to be discussed in this part of the paper are the following:

The influence of socio-political contexts on artists' identity and the meaning of art. The ways in which socio-political contexts influenced the design and the image of the Beatles. Whether the Beatles' image is a result of a marketing intention or a co-design?

### **The influence of socio-political contexts on artists' identity and the meaning of art**

As mentioned in the earlier chapter on Background Studies, communication theories that attempt to explain the mechanisms of communication in general and mass communication more specifically, reveal that context is an essential factor which promotes meaning. The theories apply – provided that the roles of the components that facilitate communication have been mutually agreed upon by the co-communicators. The question is, what happens to the deterministic model proposed by Shannon and Weaver if one asks, what is considered *noise*? What is the role / function of the communicative *channel* – does it facilitate the transmission of a *message*? Does it filter it? Does it exclude the *noise*, or, possibly, the *messages* which it cannot recognize as such, which it is not programmed to recognize as such? According to the Knowledge Gap Theory (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970) context is indicated as a crucial factor in perceiving and understanding information. However the afore-mentioned questions reveal the issue of applying the theory from the opposite perspective. "*As Index of Censorship stresses, limiting free expression only leaves room for protecting the ideas or prejudices that those in power approve or don't find threatening.*" (Allen - Stremlau, p. 219).

Subcultures are recognized as cultures, consequently their codes and products while failing to be recognized as such by 'the outsiders' – who nevertheless constitute the mainstream – are still functional in their communication attempts and may even permeate the main communication channels, tolerated as 'low frequency noise'. The Dada movement, which emerged during WWI, is a relevant example. In time of war communications are being censored. To a number of artists who served their countries at that time, collage applied on postcards was a practical solution to bypass censorship by presenting messages in an oblique manner. This

'absurd communication' was proven successful. It also revealed the value of visually organizing ready-made components, the additional layering of meaning by texture which echoed sculpture's three-dimensional quality, the shape of type for aesthetic purposes, the combined use of text and image as a new artistic entity. On the other hand it revealed a problem in the existing system's ability to identify and 'dismiss' a category of *noises* – or *messages* that should be censored. An amoeba-like progression of creative thought re-shaping and spreading towards any direction is difficult to control. The binary approach of a machinist model which relied on the recognition of an element as *message*, or its dismissal as *noise*, failed to function when it was presented with degradation of shades between black and white – contrary to crude stereotypes, which unify even far-fetched relativities in a simplistic manner. The recognition of emerging expressive means called for readjustments in the categorization. The individualistic perspectives of 20th century German expressionism, which borrowed from the social cacophony of the era to give – what appeared to conservatives – revolting, shapeless *form* in order to express its agonizing *content*, was considered dangerous by regimes that aimed at achieving homogeneity of opinion in society. This *unwanted message* instead of getting censored was kept out of the *channel* by disqualification; it was presented as *noise*. With organized acts of flak the public was primed, according to Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1976) to view the works of modernist artists as 'Degenerate Art' as it was propagated by the Nazi regime in Germany before the outbreak of WWII.

During the same era, harmony in form and movement was being promoted in news reel films that depicted large groups of people – ordinary citizens, students, workers – doing calisthenic exercises, which promote group cohesion and discipline in perfect synchronization, with the precision of a well-tuned machine. The application of a mechanic quality to the performance of group physical activity in society – specifically one that promoted health and vitality – sent with the use of this allegory an oblique message. It proposed the advantages of homogeneity in content, through – pleasing to the eye – harmonious movement formations, that did everything but preach 'all together moving in synch towards one goal.' A culturally shared conceptual map (Givón, 2005, p. 91) was being drawn, with the help of the media, which gave shape to a social conception of reality (Cultivation Theory, Gerbner, 1976). The media acting as opinion leading forces in society cultivated attitudes, values and contexts for the society to identify with. Thus a feeling of Shared Intentionality between senders and receivers was achieved. In 1927, Lang ended his film *Metropolis* by depicting the individualistic bourgeois class agreeing

to cooperate with the working class. In the course of the film the oppressed and exploited working men had appeared to be moving / working like robots for the welfare of the free-moving upper classes. The metaphor of social order in the depiction of synchronized movement – the workers' moves in a designated, orderly fashion contrary to free movement of the upper class citizens, who were depicted leading a life of pointless pleasures – prevailed in the eyes of the viewers. Goebbels appropriated the film's message, which originally aimed to empower the forces of Labour, and proceeded to present it as part of the Nazi narrative – to the dismay of *Metropolis'* creator. Goebbels' propaganda aimed to win over the dissatisfied masses of the German workforce. The narrative which paired technological progress and industrialization with the emancipation of the masses, was already adopted by the Futurist movement in Italy (which was favoring fascism) and in the (then newly formed) communist USSR.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Chaplin in *Modern Times* (1936) commented on the dehumanizing effect technological progress had on his famous *little tramp* character, presenting him as a worker forced to perform repetitive, well calculated movements in a factory's assembly line. The character's failure to adjust to the rhythm dictated by the machine, and his erratic disorganized movements signified the revolt of the free, human spirit against the submission to a mechanistic, predetermined set of movements-actions that seemed to diminish human role to that of a machine component. The Interpretative and Interaction Theories (Watzlawick, 1974; Griffin, 1997) have pointed out the importance of a comprehensible *signifier* in order to make meaning of a *message*, and Pearce and Cronen's Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory (1980) suggested the notion of a co-construction of meaning that occurs between sender and receiver; based on these theories it makes sense to conclude that the movie's *message* was to be understood, due to the familiarity with the already famous character-*signifier*. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that although this particular movie was a 'talkie', Chaplin felt compelled to maintain the *little tramp's* silent quality, because it was in the silent movies that the specific character had attained fame, and Chaplin feared that speech would alter the hero's character. Chaplin's decision was based on his guess about the expectations the audience would have on the familiar character. The notion of social pressure application resulted in the reinforcement of a role, as it is described in the Theory of the Altercasting Strategy (Pratkanis, 2000). In that case the person-character was expected to be consistent with his role and thus, the role of the misfit *little tramp* reinforced itself, perhaps preventing Chaplin from developing it further.



Aside from artistic expressions which commented on the technological progress and its effects on politics and society, artistic movements were also inspired, formed and / or heavily influenced by it. The movements of Constructivism and Bauhaus, present excellent examples on the process in creating the images of industrialism, urbanity and modernism, which aimed to inspire the common man. A sense of Shared Intentionality among society was achieved in the case of Constructivism and its products for as long as Soviet propaganda supported it, but this took place in an environment which effectively hushed alternative propositions and opposing voices. Bauhaus on the other hand, did not enjoy the support of the reigning political party in Germany. Its goal to improve everyday life for the average citizen, by the removal of *noisy* useless decorative forms, and by revealing the beauty of spaces and objects through functional design, failed to directly charm the masses. In an era of political and economical uncertainty, the German society sought comfort, which was *signified* in the familiarity of the conservative *völkisch* movement. According to the Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) people acted within their context of pre-existing social structures, which were dictated by norms and laws, distinct from the ones suggested by the Modernists. The peoples' choice, to invest in the familiar, was somewhat predetermined according to the contextual rules they were following. However, simplified modern forms were acceptable in objects and appliances that were mass produced and entered the homes for the first time. A couch design suggested by Bauhaus may have been viewed as uninviting to sit on, but an electric appliance, inspired by the Bauhaus slogan '*Kunst und Technik - eine neue Einheit (Art and technology - a new unity)*' (1923) seemed fitting (Hagener, 2007, p. 131). This happened due to the fact that electric appliances started entering the homes at that time, thus people had no prior knowledge, no expectations about what these should look like, no preceding image and no existing contexts to draw from and react against. Modernist movements appeared before WWII, however in the minds of the wide public, the common people, they mainly remained movements for the elite until after the war. It was then that society – in its need to put behind the traumatic past which lay in ruins, to visualize a future and proceed building it – pushed Modernism to the foreground, made it worth investing on, welcomed and widely accepted it.

The example of Lang's proposed meaning in *Metropolis*, one could suggest, is not unlike Benjamin's pendulum-quality uncertainty in his speculations on what technology would offer to the arts, in the era of mechanical reproduction. They both examined and presented the facts, and identified the existence of ambivalence. Goebbels' appropriation of the meaning of Lang's film, is affirmative to Baudrillard's critical

stance towards the power of the media. Society was primed and was offered a frame of mind, which it accepted along with the role of passive *receivers*. Chaplin and Adorno alike, turned their backs to a technological and social progress, which to their eyes appeared to be dehumanizing, thus unacceptable and unfitting to the human spirit and form. The allegorical use of form, and synchronized movement served various socio-political goals in the first part of the twentieth century. Form, harmonious or not, is the *signifier* used to express content (that which is *signified*) in the field of arts.

Aside from the individual choices that inform perception, one should keep in mind that in the constant flow of time, signifiers are enriched with more qualities, and they get interpreted, re-negotiated, and appropriated by senders, receivers, and intermediates alike. The signifiers' meaning gets affected even by the 'inactive,' non-participating, seemingly inorganic environment a communication takes place in – Baudrillard in his *Requiem for the Media* (1981) goes as far as to suggest that forms of communication and thus their meaning may well be becoming crystallized because of it. It is revealed that in Sullivan's modernist slogan 'form follows function' (Sullivan, 1896), the *form* which encapsulates the function may serve as a sarcophagus which preserves a function mummified and worshipped – not unlike iconolatry – as long as it maintains its shape, and passes unquestioned, as axiomatic, while its living *meaning*, its reason for existing may well have 'left the building'. The example of the Dada movement, its original use of the collage, the identification of qualitative values, the evolution of its language, the appropriation of expressive elements borrowed by different arts and bequeathed to further artistic movements, reveals that creation is informed and constantly re-shaped by a never ending dialogue between the creator and her / his environment. The simplification of communication in set components and stages in order to achieve a 'smooth' progression of meaning making – such as communication models propose – exists only in theory. "*As they interact, social discourses engage in processes of domination, resistance, and negotiation; in each of these processes, cultural meanings are produced, circulated, and consumed*" (Geertz, 1973; Rodriguez, 2005, p. 381). The question is whether such iconoclasm simply serve to promote the next dogma. If, neither the politics involved in each of those stages, nor the politics involved in each of those components / roles are taken into consideration – when faced with the fluidity which characterizes reality – this happens either due to indifference, or inadequacy on behalf of those who facilitate the communication act. As the Adaptive Structuration Theory (Desanctis and Poole, 1994) suggests, information technology and the production and reproduction of social systems by its members forms their perceptions about technology's role and utility through their

related activities. But those, it is noted, vary according to the social aspects, across groups. "Any technology represents a cultural invention, in the sense that it brings forth a world; it emerges out of particular cultural conditions and in turn helps create new ones" (Escobar, 1994, in Granqvist, 2005, p. 290-291). Thus, the casting for the role of the intermediate in the transmission of a message in communication is crucial. It is also political since the one who regulates the type, the quality, and the amount of information offered, regulates and controls opinion making, by suggesting an opinion from an established, therefore legitimized, thus leading position.

A documented statement symbolically bears a hallmark of importance and authenticity as opposed to a spoken statement that may be bypassed and forgotten. The etymological origin of the Greek word meaning 'truth' (ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ) signifies the negation of forgetfulness (Α-ΛΗΘΗ); it means *that which cannot be forgotten*. Thus in our minds, the qualities of importance and authenticity may be signified simply by the act of documentation, that is, the decision to document. As the Theory of Speech Act (Searle, 1969) suggests, in order to make meaning one must have an understanding of the intention, the *message* – that which is *signified*, and also be able to comprehend the *signifier* which bears it. If such is the case, it is easy to be led to the assumption that something documented must have been something important to hold on to. After all, we recognize history as such due to the fact that it was documented in written word – however not everything written is called history. Claims on importance and authenticity may be deceiving as photography has proved so often. The ultimate art of documentation by mechanical means, professed objectivity, it *signified* it due to the lack of human intervention during the act of documentation of *that which has been there* – the existence supporting the truthfulness of the photographic statement. The objectivity is often declared by the use of technology and technology allows for mass communication. Fame and recognizability are acquired by repetitive views and mentions via the mass media. Being 'famous' is presented as the equivalent of being 'memorable', and being 'memorable' as the equivalent of being 'truthful.' McLuhan's Medium Theory (1964) revealed just that, how content – *the signified* which is encapsulated within the *channel* – medium, is in turn a *signifier* that bears its own context, as the symbolic *environment* of the communication act.

To present communication theories as tools which may raise expectations for pre-fabricated solutions and outcomes in communication among people, may allow these theories to be presented conveniently as crystallized 'axioms' with the purpose of achieving a wished for result. However the unexpected ways in which people will choose to respond, according to the numerous factors which affect their decisions, are

not always rational, or rather not viewed as rational according to the contextually uninformed observer. Thus presented results may appear to be completely different according to the interpretation offered. Context has the utmost importance when attempting to express and perceive the *content* of communication. Taking into account as many possible individual threads, which constitute its fabric allows for a better or a more holistic interpretation of the meaning, whether one considers oneself standing at the *sending* or the *receiving* end in a communicative act. The position – or role – each component considers having in a communication act perplexes the matter. The position each component expects the other components to have in the communication act is another factor. Within acts of communication each of the components play more than one role at the same time – whether they are aware of that fact or not and that in itself makes for additional contextual information. Thus, socio-political contexts affect, influence, feed, appropriate, challenge and re-negotiate the meaning of art for various reasons as it was pointed out. "*No matter whether the artistic products are in agreement with the contexts that spawned them or not, they are related to them and the art's meaning opens, or continues a dialogue with them.*" (Vlachou, 2010).

### **The ways in which socio-political contexts influenced the design and the image of the Beatles**

"*Britain in the fifties and sixties was a society in transition and the emerging teenage culture was, in part, a response to this situation.*" (Whiteley, 2009, p. 205). The afore-mentioned teenagers were the baby-boomers, the generation who's sheer force due to its numbers, could effectively reshape society. "*The baby-boom came into its own as an economic and cultural force.*" (Frontani, 2007, p. 52-53). The 1950s saw the Angry Young Men of British literature emerge. In socio-political terms they were the equivalent of the American Beat Poets, they proposed a social narrative, that stemmed from the bottom and aimed upwards, instead of the canonical top down approach, which reigned in the rigid class-divided British society. The stripped down, street level written word used in their literature, must have appeared as some sort of equivalent to the accent of the spoken word (scouse) on the Merseyside, which differentiated the provincial northern population from the cultural epicenter Londoners represented. Liverpool was a harbour city, where sailors brought with them music records from the places they travelled to. Sung in the English language, the records of the American black people were enjoyed and valued, irrespective of the connotations they were branded with in the US. If anything, these connotations that defined dominant and non-dominant groups in society, based on race segregation, could be viewed as analogous to the strict class divisions in the

British society. The Beatles, belonging to the non-dominant, low-income, low-middle class / working class society, not satisfied with their socially inherited lifestyle options, actively aimed to improve the prospects offered in this social transition.

*"[...] what was inspiring about the Beatles in their Cavern days was the certainty with which they claimed American music for themselves, and the most striking sign of this confidence was John Lennon's voice. The Beatles sang American music in a Liverpool accent—nasal rather than throaty, detached, passion expressed with a conversational cynicism."* (Frith, p. 225)

Elvis Presley was the star who, via the media, presented rock and roll as an alternative to the regular, far from exciting, adult lifestyle, but to the Beatles it was "local hero Lonnie Donegan, who with his proximity to their own social reality made this dream seem feasible." (Vlachou, 2010). Elvis appeared reformed from 'rebel' to commercial artist after he returned from the US army service, but in the UK obligation to National Service ended in the beginning of 1960s, thus removing from the Beatles' minds the gloomy prospect of becoming 'reformed' and adjusted according to the rules of society. By eliminating the obligation to physically participate in armed conflicts, a whole generation was allowed to distance itself from the reality of armed conflicts, in many of which the British Empire found itself being involved, and which were breaking out literally everywhere around the world at the time. Meanwhile, "the relation between fashion, the arts and popular music was pivotal to 1960s popular culture" (Whiteley, 2009, p. 206), where art colleges proposed a creative channel for expression to 'clever but wayward boys and girls' (Whiteley, 2009, p. 206). "In such an environment, one might interact with a wide spectrum of people, regardless of class or education, and draw from a multitude of activities often taking place in the same hall [...]" (MacDonald, 1997, p. xiv). Thus, "young people did not simply consume but began to produce mass culture in a way never before experienced." (Frontani, 2007, p. 52-53). Restricted by tight skirts, and not allowed to wear trousers, young women demanded the skirts become shorter to allow for free movement. The reality of young listeners being given the option of pirate radio stations caused BBC's ratings to drop significantly, forcing it to seek alterations and evolve from its conservative programme. Social changes occurring early in the decade in the UK, allowed the celebration of the carefree spirit that – as we have been told by the media of the dominant culture – characterized the youth of the 1960s. "Longstanding barriers collapsed overnight as northern and cockney accents penetrated the hitherto exclusively Oxbridge domains of television, advertising and public relations" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 12), due to the elected Labour Party's emphasis on modernity and technology, which promoted meritocracy; although – as Whiteley observed, and race riots during the era reveal – at the same time Commonwealth immigrants were encountering discrimination in employment as well as in housing (Whiteley, 2009, p. 208). Socio-political decisions to make contraceptive

pills available on British National Health Care System, and to clear *Lady Chatterley's Lover* 'reputation' of obscenity charges, allowed the sexual revolution to emerge swinging in the British capital for the mainstream – homosexuality was legalized much later in the decade, and *Last exit to Brooklyn* remained characterized obscene, by court ruling. MacDonald points to the previous social constraints that artists of the sixties 'fought' against, to explain the aura which 'crowns' the specific decade and its actors, "true individualism, it seems, requires constraints to push against. A society in which constraints are removed, loses the pressure needed to produce the sort of concentrated and focused individualism last observed in the transitional sixties." (MacDonald, 2003, p. 208). However, it is evident that social pressure was released selectively and gradually from specific pressure points.

As heterosexual males of the working class and lower middle class, the Beatles can be viewed in the British social context as the dominant members within the non-dominant population, as opposed to their female peers, such as Cilla Black – the only female artist Epstein chose to represent. Epstein was aware that even the lower percentage of women artists would have to 'fight' fiercely for the limited time and space offered to them by the music industry and the media – something which remains true to this day; female artists are still the exception to the canon of a male-dominated world in rock and roll as the *Mojo* example revealed. Laing uses the term 'homosocial' (Kosovsky Sedgwick, 1985), to describe single-sex affinity in the British society, which canonized gender division in the education system and the working place, at the time (Laing, 2009, p 20). Epstein, the Beatles' manager, due to the 'otherness' of his cultural background and the prohibition against his sexual orientation, was in a socially challenged position. "In this slow-thinking world, as yet unaccelerated by television, gentle neighbourliness co-existed with half conscious prejudices against outsiders – Jews, blacks, 'queers' – and complacently censorious ideas of what was proper and decent." (MacDonald, 1997, p. 8). Epstein's standpoint explains his understanding of the importance of keeping up with appearances, the presentation of the best possible image of oneself at all times, the value of diplomacy, the need to carefully calculate each decision. He used his own life's experience and social strategies, in the making of the Beatles' image. Due to him, they were presented,

"[...] dressed impeccably in smart suits, and highly polished Chelsea boots, looking for all the world like a quartet of modern-day Apollos – gods of ordered beauty, clarity and restraint. But beneath that polished exterior lurked the rebellious spirit of Dionysus, the wild god of music, passion, excess and instinct. All at once the Beatles were safe but dangerous, sophisticated yet vulgar, smooth and composed yet coarse and frenzied. Familiar but somehow different." (Blaney, p. 176).

To Epstein' eyes, the Beatles – unlike Paul Simon, as his own assessment revealed – rep-

resented the characteristics, qualities and potential he himself wished to have had, the creativity, the will, and courage to speak and act as one wished, albeit in terms not defined by righteousness or sheer masculinity. *"What a relief! Their voices did not have that authoritarian baritone of a lot of male singers who declared, with every note, the supremacy of the male point of view."* (Tompkins, p. 216-217). His proximity to the Beatles can be identified in the analogy of the limitations their own social background posed on them, to the ones posed on him. The establishment considered them all socially inferior, even if for different reasons. The stylistic choices and communicative approaches Epstein enriched the Beatles' appearance and performances with, aimed at presenting an image that would be 'clean and glossy' enough to be allowed to penetrate the media. According to that image *"The Beatles were never characterized as 'cock rock,' [...] the Beatles come across as being acceptable"* (Whiteley, 2006, p. 61), however, *"the Beatles were sexy; the girls were the ones who perceived them as sexy". In short, the girls were the pursuers"* (Ehrenreich, Hess and Jacobs, in Whiteley, 2006, p. 56). Conveniently, the Beatles, those members of the proposed dominant gender, seemed to be 'playing along,' mocking the established distinctions. Frontani suggests that according to Adorno's observations on the effects of media – and Ehrenreich, Hess and Jacobs do not oppose to that fact – the girls were exhibiting conformity; however, he notes that the importance of their observation lies in the exhibition of a conformity *against* the dominant social values (Frontani, 2007, p. 38).

The Beatles' producer and his team of technicians at EMI, also complied with the rules of conformity and the regulations of the business organization they worked for. *"Back then, the technology of analog recording – sound waves directly imprinted on tape or disk – even at EMI, allowed little creativity beyond the straightforward performance of songs."* (Zolten, p. 38). Technicians made the most of the two-track recording technology they had at hand until the Beatles' financial success allowed them access to four track, and later still, eight-track recording facilities. However, *"the conditions from which the Beatles' astonishing musical growth stemmed, of course, are precisely those unavailable to less successful groups"* (Decker, p. 192). The Beatles managed to intrude, due to their commercial success, and make use of the best facilities that EMI generally saved for the 'serious musicians'. *"Very few artists in the era of mass art have been able to pursue an artistic vision unencumbered by restrictions imposed by those funding the effort."* (Frontani, 2007, p. 137-138). At the time the technology of studio recording was accelerating, and perceptive producers and artists with a creative approach towards it, were unraveling its potential *"as [an] application that contributed to the music's ability to convey meaning and provoke emotional response"* (Zolten, p. 37). The Beatles inspired the technicians with their carefree, rebellious approach towards authority, rules and regulations and of course towards their own work, but

these technicians proved to be their worthy counterparts in inventiveness, by shifting the role of the studio to a place designated "*not simply to store but to construct musical compositions*" (Kimsey, p. 232). More than happy to be accommodated by the Beatles' commercial success, the technicians took the chance to begin their own journey of sonic explorations. Martin's preservation of his 'schoolmaster' facade in the face of the Beatles as 'school-boy pranksters' – while refusing to promote small-politics that would set the artists and technicians at opposing positions – retained a certain balance, which was "*required between tutored professionalism and spontaneous amateurism*" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 206), and thus achieved a collaboration, where he and the sound engineers complemented the creative ideas expressed in impressionistic terms, by 'translating' these ideas into actual sounds. "*Studio technique abounded, and functioned as an instrument itself, wholly integrated into the art of the music.*" (Zolten, p. 45). Instead of setting boundaries which would safeguard one professional field against another, Martin and his team interacted with the Beatles in a manner which allowed technology and art to 'leak and hybridize' one another – a policy, contrary to Spector's (also a visionary in the field of sound production), who preferred to keep the boundaries visible. In the collaboration between the Beatles and Martin, the fields of creation and production became significantly enriched in their respective objects of professional interest. Both the artists and the production team were empowered by the collectively achieved outcome, which as a consequence caused the elevation of their professional status, and complemented each others' work in a way which did not overshadow either effort.

The trade press, and news coverage in the press about the noise the Beatles' fans made, offered the band recognizability, but they were still considered 'bubblegum' music material; at best one that had produced a big bubble, nevertheless, one which would eventually burst and disappear into obscurity. These judgements were based on previous knowledge on pop music and its ephemeral stars, "*the manufactured pop idol, single, boyish, white, good-looking, and replaceable, so allowing for swings in fashion both in terms of music and image*" (Whiteley, 2006, p. 57). The questions set during press conferences were designed to further fuel the young audiences' interest for their current idols, aiming to provide profits for both branches of the media – the press and the music industry by this synergy, while the occasional 'trick question' aimed to prove the inferiority of the interviewees against the superiority of the interviewers, and the 'lightness' of such a subject, if measured against serious news. But, "*the jaded beat reporters sent to cover the Beatles' arrival at John. F. Kennedy Airport [...] were no match for the band's disarming wit. Casual though it seemed, the band's verbal acuity [...] was a weapon in an as yet undeclared war on adult cynicism and complacency.*" (DeCurtis, p. 303). Furthermore, the Beatles' sense of humor on the critics'



and the audience's reception, as well as about themselves, revealed a higher moral stature than that of their interviewers, who aimed at best to patronize, and at worst to insult their interviewees. *"The band's vaunted irreverence would open up a space for the Beatles to comment on society and issues of particular relevance to their generation. It provided an important avenue to test the limits of that generation's insertion of itself into the discussion on topics as varied as fashion and politics."* (Frontani, 2007, p 43).

As success strengthened the Beatles' image, their manager became empowered to control the interaction with the press to the convenience and advantage of the band, and thus further direct the image's projection and the amount and quality of exposure. In this era a variety of media simultaneously available to the masses allowed for the first time constant exposure of one's image. Technological progress in the field of communications was in the process of rapidly shaping what McLuhan termed in 1964 'the global village'. The western world was compensated for its economic and political losses due to the loss of its former colonies, by re-claiming them via its reigning position in information distribution. In the US, newspapers after 1950, and magazines in the 1960s, were adapting, after a decline period, to the new market realities, within which they were seeking thematic specialization in order to re-define themselves and thus hold on to, or gain readers (Potter, p. 389, 393). Radio, after the arrival of television, was shifting towards specialized entertainment formats, instead of its prior generalized family-oriented approach, while its newly introduced mobility, should be viewed as analogous to the effect of mobile telephony on society, as it was allowed to accompany and entertain listeners outside the home, as opposed to television, which in the 1960s reached its peak stage (Potter, p. 402-403, 405). At the Ed Sullivan Show, *"teenage fans in the studio audience of more than 700 screamed, jumped and went wild as the Beatles performed. The close-miked television broadcast provided home viewers a better bearing than those actually in the studio."* (Zolten, p. 42). Via the mediated performance, which allowed various viewpoints and zooming in by use of the camera, the remote viewers were 'brought closer' to the artists, than if they had been present in the studio. The television sets, having found their place in the homes of Americans and gradually finding it also in the homes of Europeans, were an advantage to the Beatles' image projection. It is not accidental that the Beatles, believed that success in the USA would mean for them success worldwide. However, the achieved success entailed the reality of an evermore gruesome work-schedule, which constantly demanded live appearances, and which led the Beatles to resort to the solution of distributing pre-recorded, mediated performances, in the form promotional films.

The Beatles' extended experience on having their image exposed to the various types of media, provided them with insight, as to which type of media to choose, when,

and how to use them, according to what mode, or combinations of modes, different media offered, to best express what they had to say. Artistically, they progressed from live performance mediated via sound amplification to song recording. The truthfulness of the live performance was proven by the lack of pre-recorded sonic additives. When the studio became instrumental in the music creation, their 'investment' on honesty demanded they should not attempt to perform live what could not be accurately reproduced in a live performance. It was then that their priority shifted from the song to the "folk-technological artefact of the record." (MacDonald, 1997, p. 21). Their comprehension of media effects is evident in MacDonald's following description of the life and work approach, these 'perfect MacLuhanites' (MacDonald, 1997, p. 20) chose.

*"The Beatles liked to surround themselves with a continuous low-level media babble of loosely scattered newspapers and magazines and permanently murmuring radios and TVs. Apart from the fact that it amused them to live like this – relishing the coincidences and clashes of high and low style that it entailed – they valued simultaneity for its random cross-references which suggested ideas that might otherwise not have occurred to them. Many Beatles songs stemmed from chance meetings between scraps from the day's papers and half-attentive toying with bars from songs on the radio."* (MacDonald, 1997, p. 20-21).

The existence of such media at the time made this 'infotainment' living approach possible. The need to retain truthfulness in pre-recorded, mediated performances, which incorporated the use of a variety of instruments and sounds that the Beatles could not produce in a real time performance, demanded an alternative approach to the lip-synched clips, which would seem as fake as a puppet theatre. "Having been at the forefront in creating promotional films, primarily lip-synched performance clips, the Beatles now turned to nonperformance/nonpresentational filmmaking." (Frontani, 2007, p. 132). These predecessors to today's music videos, due to the artists' inclinations pointed towards the counterculture and avant-garde art. "This was a time in which the arts were invigorated by the youth culture, and in which the art of the youth culture began to follow and direct creative current within the art world." (Frontani, 2007, p. 136). The specific qualities were projected and thus promoted to the mainstream, due to the band's reigning position in the music industry's star-system, which allowed them privileged access, since they were welcomed – more likely sought after – to appear and add their glamour to ground-breaking media events, as was the first global satellite broadcast in 1967. This event offered the Beatles the opportunity to perform in front of a unique 'ecclesiastical' gathering. Their decision to record this live performance witnessed by millions as their next single symbolically 'captured' the aura of the remote viewers-witnesses and thus they delivered this unique shared communal experience in a mass produced memento. With their last media experiment as a band,

the visual documentation of a whole album (*Let it Be*, 1970) as a work in progress, from start to completion, the Beatles were exposed to, and allowed the detrimental effects of media on the subject by the constant projection of its image as a spectacle to be revealed. The notification about the band's break up involved no multimedia exposure, a skimmed communication approach was chosen in the plainest of modes, a written statement was sent to the newspapers. In taking full advantage of the technological progress in the field of communications their era offered, they showed that the temporal dimension could override the spatial dimension's importance as the crucial factor in remote mass communication and interaction. The impact of the Beatles exhilarating effect on remote audiences / viewers revealed the ritualistic potential, which was encapsulated in the multimodality the media were offering. Due to their experimental nature it was revealed how far the media effects could reach, by proving that the constant documentation of the subject in order for the resulting 'holographic' image to substitute the subject in a complete and constant representation, results in the implosion and disintegration of the subject itself.

The capitalization on the Beatles' accomplishments, made the 'provincial breakthrough' possible, causing the interest of the music industry to switch towards new directions, and to reveal 'hidden treasures' in 'uncharted territories'. The Beatles' outspoken appreciation of American black artists and their music, their use of Indian and other – now termed – 'world music' elements in their music directed audiences to notice and appreciate music genres which held marginalized spots in the mainstream music production. At the same time, the interest that was generated towards the production of popular music, won for the British music industry a reigning position in the global market, and revealed that ownership of song royalties could be a significant investment, and popular music a commercial product which could boost the British reserves. "*The pace of the Beatles' genesis as self-conscious promoters of their various products dwarfs the explosion of Beatlemania itself.*" (Womack - Davis, p. 98-99). Consequently, the Beatles were allowed 'freedom of movement in the recording studio', which resulted in ground-breaking approaches in sound creation, and which was achieved with the support of the producer and the sound engineers, thus elevating their role and professional status. The turn of interest towards sound creation in the studio accompanied by the potential to send the record on tour instead of the band – as the Beatles proved – allowed many pop artists to choose experimental paths, released them of the obligation and cost to tour, while still giving them the opportunity to reach the public, by the medium of the record album. Thus the Beatles revealed "*what could be done in single songs but also on entire albums, which were put together more like operas, or collections of short stories, than rock records [...] the order of songs as tied to keys, and*

*the emotions they represent, as much to content, which gives them their power.*" (Cooper, 2006). As a result the approach towards the record as a medium changed from it being the physical object which 'carried' the music, to that of a potential 'conceptual container', promoting the market of 33 rpm record (LP, or long play), and putting it in a reigning position in relation to the 45 rpm record (single), which took a secondary role in the market. On a different path, the Beatles proved that organizing big concerts was also a profitable possibility, which in turn pointed to a market need to produce adequate sound amplification, while by association to the Beatles, the promotion and sales of musical instruments and related equipment also got a boost.

Besides the effect on markets directly related to their work, the Beatles also affected markets which were indirectly related, and even markets with which they had no relation whatsoever. Music magazines, originally serving as information sources for the professionals in the music industry, shifted their interest to a young audience 'thirsty' for infotainment, and saw their profits multiply. Lifestyle magazines found an additional subject to fill their – gradually shifting to color print – pages and in doing so, they promoted the concept of appreciating a music style, as a lifestyle which affected all aspects of one's life. *"Identification with the counterculture, whether committed or casual, was commonly manifested through consumer products such as clothes and music."* (Frontani, 2007, p. 209). This in turn put various alternative cultures and lifestyles under the spotlight, and created a viable market for them. Aside from the periodical press, the publication of books presenting and examining the Beatles phenomenon from every possible thematic angle remains a financially promising endeavor fifty years on. *"My point is not that the Beatles deserve this level of scholarly, quasi-scholarly, journalistic, and fan attention – they probably do, but in any case the publications indicate that the Beatles enjoy a canonical status that is unprecedented for popular musicians."* (Burns, p. 228). The mainstream market, with its innumerable consumer products, seized the opportunity to sell any product marketers could think of to associate with the Beatles' name and / or image, and even created Beatles-related and Beatles-inspired television shows in order to sell expensive advertising time and consumer products. Liverpool is visited by millions of tourists – pilgrims, who leave considerable profits to the city every year, as the increasing annual passenger numbers of the Liverpool Airport (re-named 'John Lennon Airport') alone reveal. The numbers, both of visitors and profits, have risen significantly after the band members 'told' their story in the Anthology release (in video / dvd and book). It *"presents the voices of the Beatles in a polyphonic tapestry"*, and as Kimsey argues *"the Beatles' greatness is taken for granted"* not *"explained, explored, or considered in any critical depth"* (Kimsey, p. 238). Nevertheless we should accept the purpose of

an autobiography, its role as a mythology that aims to construct an identity for the author / subject (Kimsey, p. 239). Last but not least, in London, EMI's re-named *Abbey Road Studios* building is held hostage by its symbolic value.

Epstein focused on social values he considered non-existent in the music industry. He insisted for artistic value to be complimented by the 'weight' of an image that should reflect, not only artistic importance and success but also, honesty and integrity; his own exemplary approach, step by step, earned the band's trust, his practices towards them proved that he himself highly valued honesty and integrity. Perhaps, Epstein recognized a need to actively promote these qualities, in an era when the British conservative politics – the socio-political establishment – presented a 'face' corroded by scandals, starring members of the upper classes who were in charge "*because of their hereditary status*" (Whiteley, 2009, p. 207), while the show business world – another social elite – seemed in his eyes detached from social problems and realities. As Whiteley observed at that time in Britain, "*public opinion indicated that the country needed a new aristocracy, a new image.*" (Whiteley, 2009, p. 207). Nevertheless, the Beatles strove to give the audience real value, for their money. Their inability to read (and write down) music, meant that once they had come up with a new tune they had to remember it. If the tune could not be proven memorable enough for the people who composed it, they did not expect the public to remember it, thus they simply dismissed it. This quality-test for content proved to be an infallible method. They did not expect their audience to settle for less. They proposed new approaches-forms with every step they took and refused to simply repeat successful formulas. They approached both songwriting and performance with 'truthfulness' and honesty that clashed with everything that the 'well-behaved, polite and professional' pop media had known before. The pop mainstream was in direct contrast to the "*ragged soulfulness, sheer larynx-ripping commitment [...] street quality, a sonic revolution*" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 107-108) the Beatles introduced with their performances. "*They set out to surpass what had gone before them in youth-oriented popular music, but also had a conception of songwriting as a craft older and more widely established than what had immediately preceded the Beatles. [...] As songwriters, John and Paul had no snobbery, drawing on a variety of traditions without creative compromise*" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 47-48). They never missed to name the artists they considered their sources of inspiration, and thus responsible for the band's musical origins. Contrary to the typical pop star model, the Beatles constantly aimed to evolve instead of repeating the same successful patterns. Instead of adapting their work to the image, they allowed the image to evolve to compliment the work.

Challenging both authority figures and norms was a necessity for the Beatles

in order to establish their own manner of function. It was also to be understood as a statement of their belief that, irrespective of legitimate power, age difference, social background, professional position, respect should still be earned. The Beatles questioned various facets of the establishment, because they considered that those who constituted the social, political, religious, professional, economic rule-setting aristocracy, were not who they were supposed to be, that is, the best in their respective fields (etymological definition of the word 'aristocracy' from the Greek 'ΑΡΙΣΤΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ', 'ΑΡΙΣΤΟΣ' meaning 'best' + 'ΚΡΑΤΟΣ' the rule-setting state). The Beatles considered the opinions the establishment expressed and the positions it represented, mainly being practices to retain inherited advantages. The Beatles' acts of disobedience were crucial in setting their own boundaries, and in putting the occasional opposing party off balance in order to extract a spontaneous, non-premeditated, therefore honest response, while at the same time they were given the opportunity to measure their opponent's-co-communicator's perception. Their approach proved honesty a good enough 'weapon' to counter the establishment's cynic complacency. Additionally, attempts on behalf of the establishment to associate with, and appropriate the Beatles' image and the importance it 'carried' as a 'trend' – be it middle aged ladies demanding autographs, middle aged men wearing wigs, or politicians of British or any other nationality who sought to 'rub on' some of the good fame – were instantly recognized by the band-members as mere opportunism. The association of the Beatles' art and brand, with various causes was accepted and even offered by the band-members as long as it did serve a cause they supported – towards a society "more responsive to human needs, whether of a functional nature (food, shelter) or something less tangible, such as spiritual and intellectual development" (Frontani, 2007, p. 235) – or at least causes that did not interfere with, or oppose to the beliefs and values the Beatles' image encapsulated.

The Beatles' statements and responses in relation to fans, and relatives show their wish to be considered as equals, neither of higher nor of lower stature; and they were open to address and interact with people from any professional, cultural and / or social background, as long as they and their work were respected. "The ground the Beatles occupied, the area of struggle between the dominant culture and the counterculture, was also the location for assimilation of much of the counterculture's program into the 'compromise equilibrium' (Gramsci, 1972) of hegemony." (Frontani, 2007, p. 210). The Beatles addressed in their work and statements the socio-political affairs of their day – civil rights movement, racial segregation, gender politics, class division, social unrest. They called attention, and on occasion pointed the spotlight towards groups and issues, which otherwise would have been dismissed as being of marginal interest, irrelevant to their mainstream young audience.

At other times they discreetly supported causes they considered worthy, such as offering the Apple records label to South African recordings of the Gallo company. Thus they achieved *"the balance we yearn to achieve: to be a member of a community, or a society, and at the same time to have an individual voice"* (Marshall, p. 32).

Due to their impact in society, the Beatles were often used as an easy target; the scapegoats to attack in order to fend off anxieties triggered by social and political uncertainties of the day. *"The fact remains that when the Beatles talk—about drugs, the war in Viet Nam, religion—millions listen, and this in a new situation in the pop music world"* (Porterfield and Birnbaum, in Frontani, 2007, p. 158). Thus they could be presented as the negative end in proposed polarities, due to their outspoken opinions, which were in the spirit of the era, but often clashed with the established values. *"Lennon's comment about Jesus Christ, and the ensuing furor, were far more important for what they exposed about the growing influence of the youth culture than for their content."* (Frontani, 2007, p. 123). Meanings to the Beatles' work and image were attributed according to the standpoint and values of those who offered them, presenting the band-members as dangerous atheists to the god-fearing, undercover communist agents to Americans 'infused' in cold war doctrines, decadent capitalists, who offered deviation paths to youths in communist regimes, radicals to traditionalists, 'respectable' sell-outs to revolting youths and counterculture radicals; *"[...] the relationship between popular culture and media brings with it the concept of mediations, in which culture is constantly resisted, negotiated and contextualized, and yet it is provisional"* (Obregon and Mosquera, 2005, p. 236). Counter to such practices favouring polarities, cultural, social and political divisions, and exclusion *"the Beatles told us that ours was a time of coldness, conformity, constraint, materialism, and violence"* (Marshall, p. 30). However, the paradigm set by their work, presence, and statements welcomed *"unity within diversity and diversity punctuating unity"* (Reising, p. 125). The 'you' they proposed included mods and rockers, young and old, beautiful and lonely people, of either gender, and any race. They borrowed and transferred meanings, promoted analogies and intertwined contexts in a manner that everyone was invited to identify with. Tompkins resumed the message the Beatles shared as being that, *"kindness, fantasy, creativity and vulnerability could go together and were not necessarily unmarketable traits"* (Tompkins, p. 219).

### **Is the Beatles' image a result of a marketing intention or is it a co-design?**

The Beatles were society's unexpected beneficiaries, according to the Knowledge Gap Theory (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970), which proposes context as a crucial factor in perceiving and understanding information. They took advan-

tage of seemingly 'low frequency *noise*', which in fact were *messages* sent by various subcultures, they interpreted, transferred and reapplied the *signs* in a new *message* undetected, exactly because the ruling class dismissed it all at worst as simple *noise*, at best as a *channel* through which money flowed in order to finance more 'serious endeavors'. In the same manner the Beatles' manager, penetrated the professional circle of show business promoters and music industry executives with practices they did dismiss as amateurish – 'low frequency *noise*' in a metaphorical sense. To him, according to his statements and actions, the Beatles represented first and foremost a *message*, while the music industry viewed and evaluated them as a commodity, in other words a *channel*. According to the Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) the music industry executives acted within their context of pre-existing social structures, which were dictated by existing norms and laws they did nothing more than follow. As Powdermaker has noted, "*the executives who technically have the freedom of choice do not actually have it, because they usually lack the knowledge and imagination necessary for making such a choice.*" (Powdermaker, 1950, p. 165). What most music industry executives failed to 'hear' – due to their fixation on supposed axioms based on given stereotypical views on the potential of financial profit – was recognized and deciphered as a distinguished *message* by the one producer who paid attention to the specific example of 'beat groups' he was presented with, and who apparently lacked neither the knowledge nor the imagination to recognize it as a *message*, as opposed to the general, stereotypical idea of what a pop group was supposed to be, and what purpose it was supposed to serve. One should remember that Martin occupied a head position in a marginal sub-company of EMI, which dealt with acts unrelated to the mainstream music production, thus he, also, was an outsider in a sense. His actions and choices were considered within the medium as 'low frequency *noise*' that would have little, if any, impact in the mainstream music production.

Two agents, the manager and the producer, originating from different standpoints, according to the Interpretative and Interaction Theories (Watzlawick, 1974; Griffin, 1997) recognized a comprehensible *signifier* which the band embodied, and which facilitated meaning-making of their image as *message*, and they invested on it. Between the band as *senders* and the manager and producer as *receivers* a meaning was co-constructed (Pearce and Cronen's Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory, 1980), which in turn was shaped into a product-*message* – constituted by the work and the image of the band – that would be acceptable by the media-*channel*, in order for it to be transmitted to a wider audience. The part of the product-*message* which dealt with the image was negotiated between the band and the manager,



while the part of the product-*message* which dealt with the work – that is, the songs and records – was negotiated between the band and the producer. The Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) applied in their case, to the extent that they pretended to accept a context of pre-existing social structures, dictated by norms and laws, distinct from other social structures, and they acted within it. In reality as the examples of their conduct reveal they went 'against the tide' choosing any experimental approach they could imagine in order to reach their goal. In fact, the choices of the first producer and his team show – contrary to the Theory of Adaptive Structuration (Desanctis and Poole, 1994), which states that information technology and the production and reproduction of social systems by its members forms their perceptions about technology's role and utility through their related activities – that they took every opportunity and were welcomed to merge their technical work with the artistic work, which as a consequence led to the – until now – unprecedented achievement of the Beatles' artistic production.

Klein and Spector, successors to the former manager and producer respectively, failed to have the same effect. The reasons are that these successors: a) had more traditional beliefs about the manner in which management and production should be approached, but also, b) the timing of their involvement with the Beatles and the status the band enjoyed due to their success demanded a different communicative relation between the band and these agents, compared to the one they had with their original manager and producer. The interaction between the band and their first manager and producer involved collaboration in all areas, in a manner which reveals an understanding of the intention, the *message* – that which is *signified*, and also comprehension of the *signifier* which bears it (Theory of Speech Act, Searle, 1969). Their second manager and producer worked in a directional manner, targeting few specific aspects, compared. The manager left areas, which demanded his attention untreated, considering the existence of the band as an indisputable fact, which could rely on functions set on 'auto-pilot', and he disregarded the factor of entropy and its detrimental effects. The producer defined clear boundaries between recording and production, contrary to his predecessor's exemplary approach, which produced ground-breaking results. Therefore one could state that between the band and their second manager and producer no feeling of Shared Intentionality was achieved. Their respective choices which reveal specific professional manner of conduct according to the Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984), show that they acted within a context of pre-existing social structures, dictated by norms and laws, distinct from other social structures, their actions were predetermined to

some extent according to the various contextual rules they followed. But those, it is noted, vary according to the social aspects, across groups. Manager and producer are two agents, who can also be viewed as the *channels* that facilitated the communication between the band and the media – which dealt with the production and the distribution, as well as the information and promotion – in order for the media to be activated as the *channels*, which enabled the communication between the band and the wider and / or remote audience.

The *message* of the Beatles was then transmitted, and their image projected to the public through the media and the market, which profited and is still profiting from their success, and made use of the Beatles' image for a variety of products in various levels. To the Beatles as *senders*, the media were the *channel*, via which their *message* could be transmitted to the public, and thus reach their audience – that is the *receivers*. The regulations dictated and applied by the media-*channel*, could thus be considered by the Beatles as the *noise*, which disturbed the transmission of their *message*. Nevertheless, this was the available, the given *channel* with its advantages and disadvantages, and thus compromise had to be made to achieve the main goal, which was to get accepted and have their *message* transmitted.

The *channel* operated according to specific rules of conduct, where pop groups fell into a category which was considered 'soft news'. They represented infotainment, and the purpose they served was to sell copies and thus advertisement space, or time – depending on the type of medium, to the market. According to the media-*channel*, the Beatles were considered a product-*channel* through which money was transferred from an advertising company-*sender* to the media-*receiver* and consequently promote the sale of various products. The operators of the *channel*, reporters and journalists obliged to the organizational rules of conduct, their views were expected to correspond with the official media view. They themselves were subjected to the cultivation (Cultivation Theory, Gerbner, 1976) of a specific point of view, which served the *channel's* purposes and in extent the market's purposes. Among those who worked for the *channel* a conceptual map was culturally shared (Givón, 2005, p. 91), without which a feeling of Shared Intentionality could not have been achieved. A feeling of Shared Intentionality promoted the interpretation of the *signifier*-pop group in order to make meaning of the *message*-infotainment in such a way as to interact accordingly (Interpretative and Interaction Theories, Watzlawick, 1974; Griffin, 1997). Thus a co-construction of meaning was achieved between *senders*-channel management and *receivers*-journalists, which agrees with Pearce and Cronen's Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory (1980). Jour-

nalists, functioned according to the Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) and were accepting a context of pre-existing social structures where pop idols-*channels* (their purpose being money exchange) and their cultural products-*noise* – held no significant cultural status, contrary to 'serious' musicians of classical music – a valued cultural *message*. The journalists' role was to present pop musicians within this frame, which agreed with the existing shared contextual map (Givón, 2005, p. 91). The journalists did apply social pressure to the Beatles, by asking specific types of questions designed to frame them within their expected social role, which was also a role cultivated by the market – that of the popular puppet-idols, as described in the Theory of the Altercasting Strategy (Pratkanis, 2000).

The Adaptive Structuration Theory (Desanctis and Poole, 1994), which deals with information technology and the production and reproduction of social systems by its members – who according to the theory are forming their perceptions about technology's role and utility through their related activities, although those vary according to the social aspects, across groups – is possibly the most revealing in this interaction between the Beatles and the media. The fact that new technologies allowed at the time of the Beatles' appearance on the scene of popular culture, their image to be projected and transmitted simultaneously via so many different media through a variety of *channels* to choose from for each medium, made possible for the Beatles to seem ever present in the eyes of the public. For the *channel* this was an opportunity to test the effectiveness of media-penetration – its ability to shape the social conceptions of reality via cultivation (Cultivation Theory, Gerbner, 1976), thus the amount of power the media could exercise over audiences – how big an image the media could co-create in collaboration with the artists, but even the effect achieved via the unintentional synergy among competing media in projecting the very same idol-image, since the cultural product-*message* was also a commodity for the sake of profit – a *channel* through which money was being poured into the media business. The constant projection of the Beatles image was also to the benefit of the market. Various related products linked their marketing narrative to the image and the myth of the Beatles.

If we revisit McLuhan's Medium Theory (1964) which revealed how content – *the signified* which is encapsulated within the *channel* – medium, is in turn a *signifier* that bears its own context, as the symbolic *environment* of the communication act, and his famous related statement 'the medium is the message,' it becomes quite obvious that the Beatles' image-*message* was becoming validated, accepted and legitimized by way of constant projection and transmission via the media-*channel* – the accepted,

legitimate, officially appointed, opinion leaders. However, the Beatles with their countercultural approach, managed to give this theory a twist. If we consider them as the *message*, which went through the *channel*-medium, then they managed to alter the medium's profile and redefine it as a *channel* which can and may promote alternative opinions than the established, expected ones. On the other hand, if we consider the Beatles as the medium-*channel*, which was the market's notion, then the *message* was expected to be that, whatever product could be associated with them carried the same values that were invested on them as a *medium*. In the Knowledge Gap Theory (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970) context is indicated as a crucial factor in perceiving and understanding information, since it offers the potency to evaluate information according to acquired knowledge on related topics. In that sense, the markets and the media as profit-seeking industries, interpreted the Beatles and made use of their work and image as a *channel* through which financial profits could exchange hands.

Regarding the socio-political, and economic conditions of the era, the Beatles politics, the way the Beatles presented themselves and informed their work and image, Frontani commented, "*It is a measure of the image's effectiveness in ameliorating apparent contradictions that the Beatles could at once continue to enjoy broad appeal and also model the values of an oppositional youth culture.*" (Frontani, 2007, p. 11). The Beatles emerged in an era during which socio-political and economic forces promoted the notion that society's members exchange their role as citizens for the role of consumers; the media shifting their goal from informing to entertaining. But the Beatles' *message* offered a social narrative, that stemmed from the bottom and aimed upwards, instead of the canonical top down approach, in that sense according to the Interpretative and Interaction Theories (Watzlawick, 1974; Griffin, 1997) they proposed comprehensible *signifiers* to a potential audience which could make meaning of their *message*. This narrative-*message* proved that there could exist a possibility for an alternative reality than the established one. "*The Beatles smarts suggested that young people could have their own way of seeing the world and could articulate their views as well, if not better than grown-ups who were supposedly running things.*" (DeCurtis, p. 303). Considering that the Beatles were part of the young people eager to speak their own minds, the notion of the existence of a co-construction of meaning (Theory of Coordinated Management of Meaning, Pearce and Cronen, 1980) as a bi-directional process between *senders*-artists and *receivers*-audience, is justified. Initially, what was considered the provincial *noise* did not get identified as a *message* by the *communicative pool* – the wide public who constituted the mainstream, but to the inner circle were nevertheless viewed as out-

siders. Eventually, the Beatles' narrative-message achieved to travel via the *channel* of the existing media and thus reached the wider public. This differentiation occurred within the *channel*. The band's northern England background initially interpreted as irrelevant *noise*, which previously prevented them from achieving admission to the *channel*-music industry, once they became admitted and accepted, switched into becoming an asset-message, as did many other music 'goldmines'-messages which were discovered in every provincial city. As Martin's observation revealed, "*northern became chic [...] we found that there were other people out there*" (Martin, p. 137). The music industry's – the *channel*'s interest was not about the *message* itself, but rather, the music's role as a *channel* through which profit would flow.

The Beatles managed to penetrate the rigid national media sectors of Britain, which allowed few time-slots for pop music programmes, and then proceeded to do the same in other European countries, with a little help from their friends. Youths tuned in to pop oriented 'pirate' radio stations, which gained more listeners than the BBC. The *noise* from the audiences became the *message* to be heard. Aside from the actual *message* – the music, the Beatles' image was promoted via newspapers and magazines, media which, due to the *noise-message* produced by the audience, became obliged to cover the news on the youths' reactions to their idols' performances and appearances. Success strengthened the Beatles' position in negotiations, their manager was empowered to control the interaction with the press to the convenience and advantage of the band, and thus control the quality of the image's projection as well as the amount of exposure; his regulatory power was analogous to that of a *channel* via which the image-message of the Beatles-senders was being projected to the press-receivers, and from there to the public-receivers. The *noise-message* heard from Europe resulted in the US media paying attention, and allowing that *message* to get distributed via the US-channel. Due to the Beatles' success in 'conquering' USA (its media, its audience, its market), and because of the US' reigning economic, political and cultural position, the Beatles were symbolically facilitated in gaining access to media-channels globally. The cultural invasion and conquering of the USA – as a *channel*, symbolically signified the importance of the Beatles' *message* on a global scale. What should not escape our attention is the fact that the Beatles would not have achieved the provincial breakthrough had they been non-dominant members of a non-dominant group within society (i.e. a band of female artists), nor would they have enjoyed such a level of fame had they emerged from a culturally non-dominant language, which had no means to globally 'control' the media (i.e. had they been a band of Japanese artists). What is important about the role the Beatles chose to play

is that they declared and actively promoted the various cultural origins their inspiration was drawing from, thus recognizing themselves as a *channel* through which various cultural *messages* could pass and get distributed to the wide public-*receivers*, due to the Beatles' legitimized authority – as the ultimately successful popular artists.

The coverage of Beatles' related information was proving profitable. The repetitive broadcasting of the Beatles' songs further assisted the unforgettability of the songs, priming the audience and cultivating the Beatles' image (Cultivation Theory, Gerbner, 1976). By their exposure to the Beatles via the mass media the audience's perception was gradually molded to accept and fit into the reality of Beatlemania. The sum of the *noises* (*the noise-music, the visual noise, the social noise of the fans*) was becoming too loud to be disregarded as *meaningless*. The media started to decode and attribute meanings to the *message* of the phenomenon of beatlemania they previously disregarded as *noise*. Various groups and professionals among society were filling in the knowledge gaps (Knowledge Gap Theory, Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970) about marginal contexts – once irrelevant, which in the new light were becoming mainstream and as such relevant. In effect of the new view pop culture and its derivatives were being re-framed. Financial-profit potential aside, the socio-political impact was becoming evident in "[...] *the usual symptoms of onrushing crowds, fainting teenagers and breathless police*" (Kane, p. 90), the ability to motivate big crowds, the crowds' defiance of established authorities – political, cultural or religious – but also the potential gain for "[...] *every senior citizen, king of commerce, aristocrat, and charity organizer [who] was clamoring to illuminate his name or his industry or his promotion with the name 'Beatle'.*" (Epstein, p. 145), that is for the established authority figures themselves. One can even speak of the application of social pressure among people in expressing acceptance, aside from the reinforcement of the fan's role as it came to be known during the Beatlemania era, according to the Theory of the Altercasting Strategy (Pratkanis, 2000). The reporting of the fans reactions, the screaming and the mass hysteria, turned the reactions into a reality which was reinforcing itself. It even 'fuelled' the expectancy for reactions, which were becoming somewhat designated – a situation to be expected, thus legitimized.

The Beatles inspired their peers en masse, and thus achieved to shift the role of pop music "*from a stable medium of social confirmation to a proliferating culture of musical postcards and diary jottings: a cryptic forum for the exchange of individual impressions of accelerating multifocal change*" (MacDonald, 1997, p. 22). The Beatles picked cues from the *communicative pool* – the environment they were positioned in and utilized their role as *senders*. Then they proceeded to utilize the power they extracted due to their fame

– which could very well be perceived as a *channel* in the metaphorical sense – and used the media-*channel* to their benefit in order to distribute their *message* to the audience. They did adjust their image-*form* to some extent in order to get accepted by the *channel*, but they did not compromise their message-*content*. It was always clear to them and whenever needed, they clarified to their audience, and anyone else involved, what their communication acts, according to the Theory of Speech Act (Searle, 1969), were about. Although as pop idols, it can be said that the Beatles did on occasion make bad decisions (i.e. the 'bigger than Jesus' statement), it was essentially such 'wrong professional moves' which secured their stature as honest artists who kept the integrity of their image intact. Had they perceived themselves firstly as a product to be distributed by the media – or had they allowed themselves to be manipulated into a position where they would accept they had to take all the 'right steps' and make all the 'right moves' – their image would be perceived by the public as 'suspiciously perfect' and their *message* merely a *channel* aiming to reach to the pockets of the audience. In the same way, although a whole market of counter-cultural products and its potential for profit was revealed due to their inclinations, which brought counterculture to the forefront, neither these inclinations nor their social impact did uniquely define the Beatles' image. It seems they were instinctively aware of the importance that McLuhans statement 'the medium is the message' (1964) revealed, about how contexts affect communication – and not just in the literal sense which refers to the media. It is no wonder then that they were the ones who provided the official soundtrack to what McLuhan termed the 'global village.'

## CONCLUSION

*"The revolutionary mix that marks the Beatle product is as complex as a computer – with soul."*  
(John Cage, in Frontani, 2007, p. 156).

In this paper the relation of *content* and *form* was 'viewed through the prism' of context. The influence of socio-political contexts on the artwork and identity of artists was discussed in relation to the *forms content* may take in order to be expressed. Cross-examination with the theories of communication in various examples at various socio-political situations, taking into consideration how additional factors such as the market and the media (*channels*) may affect, or even create contexts, revealed how harmonious or disharmonious *forms (signifiers)* may be used to express *content (the signified)* according to the meaning that needs to be uttered. Additionally it revealed the culprits of the interpretation of *form* and consequently its meaning (*message or noise?*) according to the contexts within which one's evaluation systems are embedded, and the weight the

occasional socio-political situation (*environment*) may burden such evaluations with, even when clear and rational thought is considered to have been employed in the process. Socio-political context affects both the artistic choices made, as well as the evaluations and interpretations of art and the artist's image in relation to their *environment*. However, neither the choices made nor the interpretations offered can really be 'objectively' predicted as communication theories supporters might suggest, because such predictions and interpretations are also directly affected by the position the interpreters find themselves in, or consider themselves to be situated in. As the theories on communication discussed in this paper and applied to the Beatles paradigm suggest, theories can be proven both right and wrong according to one's standpoint and expectations in a communicative interaction, that is, according to the contexts one is situated in and the meaning-making these contexts may facilitate.

The Beatles art constitutes a paradigm of co-design between artist and its socio-political context. The Beatles did not get diverted from their goal to create meaningful *content*, but they experimented with every possible *form* in order to express their *message*. They kept their eyes and ears open to socio-political events, recognized codes, which they brought to the forefront in order to reveal the existing contexts they recognized, but also and proceeded to use them as threads in order to weave with them further contexts. Fame offered them the opportunity to get in touch with information and cultures that were distant and seemingly irrelevant. Their achievement would not have been possible without the help and support of a circle of people who recognized the importance of their message and identified themselves as part of the creative process as a whole.

The mechanism of the media, as the intermediates, in this communication process, besides serving its role as an objective technological tool in facilitating communication for the artists as *senders*, also played the role of the regulator within the communication *environment*, dictating approaches and choices according to existing norms. In the interaction which occurred within the media organizations between artists-*senders* and media-*channel*, if they are viewed as components in a communication mechanism, they both consider playing themselves the 'leading role', and view the other component as serving a secondary role. However it becomes evident that within the mechanism of the media-*channel*, the human factor may at any time deviate from the organizational directive and thus offer unexpected communication results. It is not unfair to conclude that as a result of such a process did the Beatles' work and image achieve to constitute a very rich, multifaceted context in themselves, one that people identify as such and one they identify with.



*"The kids of 2000 AD will draw from the music much the same sense of well being and warmth as we do today. For the magic of the Beatles is, I suspect, timeless and ageless. It has cut through differences of race, age and class. It is adored by the world."* (D. Taylor, liner notes on the sleeve of *Beatles for Sale*, 1964).

## REFERENCES

- Adorno, Th., (2006). *Current of Music: Elements of a Radio Theory*, Suhrkamp
- Allen, T., & Stremlau, N., (2005). *Media policy, peace and state reconstruction*, ed. Hemmer, O., - Tufte, *Media & Glocal Change, Rethinking Communication for Development*, (2005). Th., Glacso Books
- Babiuk, A., Bacon, T. & Lewisohn, M., (revised edition 2002). *Beatles Gear*, Backbeat Books
- Baudrillard, J., (1981). *Requiem for the Media, (For a critique of a political economy of the sign)*, (2003). ed. Wardrip-Fruin N. - Montfort, N., *The New Media Reader*, The MIT Press
- Beatles, the, (2000). *The Beatles Anthology*, Cassell & Co
- Beatles, the, (2003). *The Beatles Anthology (5DVD)*, Capitol
- Benjamin, W., (1936), (1968), (1988). *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, ed. Arendt, H., *Illuminations*, Schocken
- Berman, G., (2008). *"We're going to see the Beatles" an oral history of Beatlemania by the fans who were there*, Santa Monica Press
- Beyer, H. & Holtzblatt, K. (1998). *Contextual Design: Defining Customer-Centered Systems*. Academic Press: Kaufmann Publishers.
- Blaney, J., (2008). *Beatles for Sale How Everything They Touched Turned to Gold*, Jawbone
- Bramwell, T. - Kingsland, R. (2005). *Magical Mystery Tours. My Life with the Beatles*, Portico
- British Calendar News Interview (BCNI), 1965-06-12, retrieved 2011-07-10 <<http://www.beatlesinterviews.org/db1965.0612.beatles.html>>
- Burns, G., (2009). *Beatles news: Product line extensions and the rock canon*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press
- Cleave, M., (1966). *How Does a Beatle Live? John Lennon Lives Like This*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Cooper, W., (2006). *"Girls Screaming"*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Costello, E., (04-04-15). *On the Beatles*, from RS 946, retrieved 10-05-19: <[http://www.elviscostello.info/wiki/index.php/Elvis\\_on...\\_The\\_Beatles](http://www.elviscostello.info/wiki/index.php/Elvis_on..._The_Beatles)>
- DeCurtis, W., (2006). *"Crossing the Line: The Beatles in My Life"*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Decker, J. M., (2006). *The Beatles, ideology and the cultural movement*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Decker, J. M., (2009). *"Try thinking more": Rubber Soul and The Beatles' transformation of pop*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press
- Desanctis, G. & Poole, M. S. (1994). *Capturing the Complexity in Advanced Technology Use: Adaptive Structuration Theory*. *Organization Science*. 5
- Domke, D., Shah, D.V., & Wackman, D.B. (1998). *Media priming effects: accessibility, association, and activa-*

- tion. *Communications abstracts*, 21( 6).
- Doggett, P., (2009). *You Never Give Me Your Money. The Battle for the Soul of The Beatles*, Vintage
- Emerick, G. - Massey, H., (2006). *Here, There and Everywhere: My life recording the music of the Beatles*, Gotham Books
- Enzensberger, H. M., (1970). *Constituents of a Theory of the Media*. (2003). ed. Wardrip-Fruin N. - Montfort, N., *The New Media Reader*, The MIT Press
- Epstein, B. -Taylor, D., (1967), (1998). *A Cellarful of Noise: The autobiography of the man who made the Beatles*, Pocket Books
- Davis, T. F., (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Fairhurst, G. & Star, R. (1996). *The art of Framing*. Jossey-Bass.
- Friedman, R., (2007-02-12). *Beatles Ready for Legal Downloading Soon*, retrieved 11-06-16 <<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,251410,00.html>>
- Friends of Liverpool Airport (FOLA), retrieved 11-07-17, <<http://www.foa.org.uk/current.html>>
- Frontani, M. R., (2007). *The Beatles, Image and the Media*, Mississippi, University Press
- Frith, S., (1988). "Something to Be—John Lennon" from *Music for Pleasure: Essays in the Sociology of Pop*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Giddens, A., (1984). *The constitution of society: outline of the theory of structuration*. University of California Press.
- Gillett, Ch., (1970), (rev. ed. 1983). *The Sound of the City*, Souvenir Press
- Givón, T., (2005). *Context as Other Minds. The Pragmatics of Sociality, Cognition and Communication*. John Benjamins Publishing Company
- Gleed, P., (2006). "The rest of you, if you'll just rattle your jewelry": *The Beatles and questions of Mass and High Culture*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Gramsci, A., (1972). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. and ed. Hoare, Q., and Nowell-Smith, G., International Publishers
- Granqvist, M., *Assessing ICT in development: a critical perspective*, ed. Hemmer, O., - Tufte, Th., (2005). *Media & Glocal Change, Rethinking Communication for Development*, Glacso Books.
- Griffin, E. (1997). *A first look at Communication Theory*. The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Goethals, G. (1997). *Escape from Time. Ritual Dimensions of Popular Culture*. ed. Hoover, S.M., - Lundby, K., (2005). *Rethinking Media, Religion and Culture*, Sage Publications.
- Goldsmith, M., (2004). from *The Beatles Come to America*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Gould, J., (2008). *Can't Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America*, Three Rivers Press
- Gurevich, D., (1991). *From Lenin to Lennon: A Memoir of Russia in the Sixties*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- Hagener, M., (2007) *Moving Forward, Looking Back. The European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919-1939*, p. 131. Amsterdam University Press.
- Hall, (2006). *Inside Mendips*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Hannerz, U. - Boyer, D., (2006). *Introduction. Worlds of Journalism, in Ethnography (specialnummer Worlds of*

- Journalism*), <http://sagepub.com> (p13).
- Heider, F. (1958). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. Wiley.
- Herman, E. S., - Chomsky, N., (1988). *Manufacturing Consent. The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Pantheon Books.
- Hill, T., (2007). *The Beatles, Then there was music*, Transatlantic Press
- Hughes, R.L., Ginnett, R.C., Curphy G.J., (2009). *Leadership. Enhancing the Lessons of Experience*, McGraw-Hill
- Inglis, I., (2009). *Revolution*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press
- Johnson, P., (1964). *The Menace of Beatlism*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Kahn, A., (2006). "All You Need", ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Kane, L., (2003). *Ticket to Ride*, Running Press
- Kimsey, J., (2006). *Spinning the historical record: Lennon, McCartney, and museum politics*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Lewisohn, M., (1992), (2004). *The Complete Beatles Chronicle*, EMI
- MacDonald, I., (2003). *The People's Music*, (2003). *The People's Music*, Pimlico
- MacDonald, I., (1994), (rev. ed., 1997). *Revolution in the Head*, Pimlico
- Martin, G. - Hornsby, J., (1977) *All You Need is Ears*, St. Martin's Press
- Martin, G. - Pearson, W., (1995). *With a Little Help from My Friends: The Making of Sgt. Pepper*, Little Brown & Co
- Marshall, I., (2006). "I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together": Bakhtin and the Beatles, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- McCarron, K., (2006). *A universal childhood: Tourism, Pilgrimage, and the Beatles*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- McCartney, P., 1965-06-12, *ITV Interview*, retrieved 2011-07-10 <<http://www.beatlesinterviews.org/db1965.0612.beatles.html>>
- McLuhan, M., (1964). *The Medium is the Message (from Understanding Media)*, (2003). ed. Wardrip-Fruin N. - Montfort, N., *The New Media Reader*, The MIT Press
- Marcus, G., (1976, 1980). *Another Version of the Chair*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Magical Memory Tour (MMT), retrieved 10-05-22 <<http://www.magicalmemorytour.com/view-memories.php>>
- Miles, B., (1997). *Paul McCartney: Many Years from Now*, Vintage
- Mitchell, A., ed. (2001). *Blackbird Singing: Poems and Lyrics, 1965-1999 / by Paul McCartney*, Norton
- Mojo Magazine, <<http://cover.mojo4music.com>>
- Monkees, the, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Monkees\\_\(TV\\_series\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Monkees_(TV_series))>

- Norem, N., *The Beatles* (1967), ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Northcutt, W. M., (2006). *The Spectacle of Alienation: Death, loss and the crowd in Sgt. Pepper's lonely hearts club band*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Obregon, R. - Mosquera, M., *Participatory and cultural challenges for research and practice in health communication*, ed. Hemmer, O., - Tufte, Th., (2005). *Media & Glocal Change, Rethinking Communication for Development*, Glacso Books.
- Pearce, W. B., & Cronen, V. (1980). *Communication, action, and meaning: The creation of social realities*. Praeger.
- Peirce, C. S. (1931-58). *Collected Writings* (8 Vols.). (ed. Hartshorne, Ch., Weiss P., & Burks, A. W.). Harvard University Press.
- Piazza, T., (1964). *Where You Once Belonged*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Pieper - Path, (2005). *The Beatles Film & TV Chronicle*, Premium Publishing
- Pratkanis, A. R., (2000). *Altercasting as an influence tactic*. ed. In D. J. Terry & M. A. Hagg, *Attitudes, behaviour and social context: the role of norms and group membership*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Ass.
- Potter, W. J., (2005). *Media Literacy*, Sage Publications
- Powdermaker, H., (1950). *Hollywood: The Dream Factory. An Anthropologist Looks at the Moviemakers*. ed. Askew, K. - Wilk, R.R., *The Anthropology of Media. A Reader*. (2002), Blackwell Publishers
- Record Collector, (2009). *The 11 Million Dollar Sleeve*, issue 368, p. 66-69
- Reeve, A. J., (1969). *Turn me on dean man: The Beatles and the Paul-is-dead hoax*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Reising, R., (2006). *Vacio Luminoso: "Tomorrow Never Knows" and the Coherence of the Impossible*. ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press.
- Reising, R. - LeBlanc, J., (2009). *Magical mystery tours, and other trips: yellow submarines, newspaper taxis, and the Beatles' psychedelic years*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press
- Roessner, J., (2006). *We All Want To Change the World: Postmodern Politics and the Beatles' White Album*. ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press
- Rodriguez, C., *From the Santinista revolution to the telenovelas: the case of Puntos de Encuentro*, ed. Hemmer, O., - Tufte, Th., (2005). *Media & Glocal Change, Rethinking Communication for Development*, Glacso Books.
- Rogers, S., (2010-11-16). *Beatles lyrics and the words they used most*, guardian.co.uk, retrieved 2011-07-11, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/datablog/2010/nov/16/beatles-lyrics-words-music-itunes>>
- Sarris, A., (1964). *A Hard Day's Night*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books
- Saussure, F. de (1983). *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Roy Harris). Duckworth.
- Savage, J., (2009-09-06) *The magazine explosion*, from The Observer, retrieved 11-06-19: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/sep/06/sixties-60s-pop-magazines-beatles>>
- Schaffner, N., (1977). *The Beatles Forever*, Harrisburg, PA: Cameron House, retrieved 11-06-05 <<http://>>

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yesterday\_and\_Today#cite\_ref-Schaffner2\_3-2>

Searle, J.R., (1969). *Speech Acts: an essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.

Steinem, G., (1964). *Beatle with a Future*, ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books

Sullivan, L.H., (1896), retrieved, 2011-08-30, <<http://academics.triton.edu/faculty/fheitzman/tallofficebuilding.html>>

Tichenor, P.J., Donohue, G.A. and Olien, C.N. (1970). *Mass Media Flow and Differential Growth in Knowledge*, Public Opinion Quarterly 34: Colombia University Press.

Turner, S., (2000), (rev. ed. 2005).

Tompkins, J., (2006). *Afterword: I Want to Hold Your Hand*. ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press

Tufte, Th., *Entertainment-education in development communication, between marketing behaviors and empowering people*, ed. Hemmer, O., - Tufte, Th., (2005). *Media & Glocal Change, Retbinking Communication for Development*, Glacso Books.

University of Twente, <<http://www.cw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/>>

Vintage Guitars, retrieved 2011-06-25 <<http://www.vintageguitars.org.uk/hofner500-1.php>>

Vlachou, E. D., (2010). "Nothing is Beatleproof!" *In what context? - Art and the artist's image as communication* <<http://hdl.handle.net/2077/28566>>

Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J.H., Fisch, R. (1974). *Changing a system*. Change, W.W. Norton.

Weaver, W. - Shannon, C. L., (1963). *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Univ. of Illinois Press.

Whiteley, Sh., (2006). "Love, love, love": *Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Selected Songs by the Beatles*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press

Whiteley, Sh., (2009). *The Beatles as Zeitgeist*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press

Wentworth, W. M., (1980). *Context and Understanding: An inquiry into socialization theory*, Elsevier

Wiener, J., (1991). "May'68: Rock against Revolution", ed. J. Skinner Sawyers, (2006). *Read the Beatles*, Penguin Books

Wiener, N., (1950). *The Human Use of Human Beings, Cybernetics and Society*, Da Capo

Wright, S., (1998) *The politicization of 'culture'*, in *Anthropology Today* Vol. 14, No 1, p.7-15.  
<http://links.jstor.org>

Womack, K., - Davis, T. F., (2006). *Mythology, remythology, and demythology: The Beatles on Film*, ed. Womack - Davis, (2006). *Reading the Beatles, cultural studies, literary criticism and the fab four*, State University of New York Press

Zolten, J., (2009). *The Beatles as recording artists*, ed. Womack, (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge University Press