

Harry Benson, The Beatles, Collector's Edition



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The Fab Five: Behind Beatlemania

These photos convey a really happy period for them and for me. It all comes down to music, they were without a doubt the greatest band of the 20th century, and that's why these photographs are so important. – Harry Benson, 2012

In early 1964, Harry Benson was getting on a plane for a foreign assignment in Africa, when he got a call from the photo editor of London newspaper *The Daily Express*. He was now going with The Beatles to Paris to document French Beatlemania and what followed was the biggest (ticket to) ride of his life.

Benson was warmly welcomed into The Beatles' inner sanctum, resulting in some of the most intimate photographs ever taken of the band, then on the cusp of world domination. In Paris, he took the famous photograph of the Fab Four having a pillow fight at the George V Hotel; he shot their groundbreaking first visit to the United States, the full impact of New York hysteria, their famous appearance on The Ed Sullivan show, the band in Florida, including their surprising encounter with Cassius Clay; as well as on the set of *A Hard Day's Night*. The relationship continued in 1966, including George's honeymoon in Barbados and their notorious US tour, under the shadow cast by Lennon's comment that the Beatles were "bigger than Jesus Christ."

Benson's luminous black and white photographs show at close quarters The Beatles composing, performing, encountering their fans, relaxing, and engaging with each other, while trying to cope with their increasingly isolating fame. In addition to hundreds of photographs, many previously unseen, there is an introductory essay by Benson as well as quotes and newspaper clippings from the period.

The photographer:

Glasgow-born Harry Benson has photographed every US President since Eisenhower, the Civil Rights movement, and was next to Robert Kennedy when he was assassinated. As well as The Beatles, he has shot some of the biggest personalities of the last 50 years, including Michael Jackson, Elizabeth Taylor and Her Majesty The Queen. In 2009, he was made Commander of the British Empire (CBE).

The Beatles is Taschen's 1000th title. Congratulations Taschen.