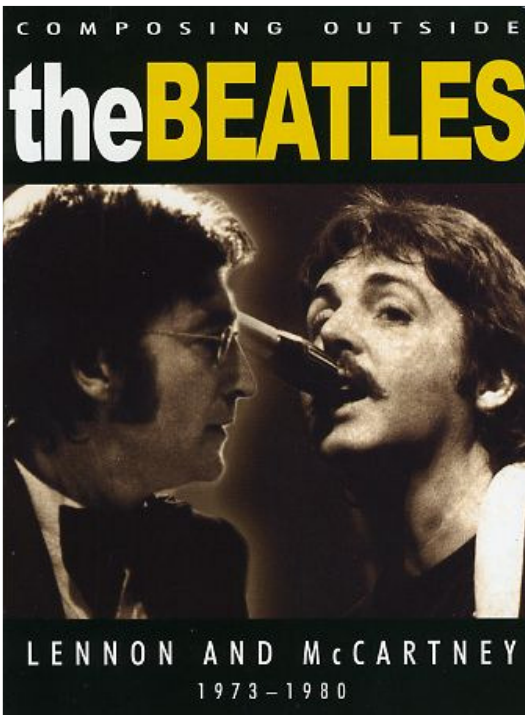


FAME Review: Lennon &amp; McCartney: Composing Outside the Beatles: 1973 - 1980 (DVD)

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## Composing Outside the Beatles: 1973 - 1980

[Lennon](#) & [McCartney](#)

*Pride - PGDVD142 (DVD)*

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange  
by **Mark S. Tucker**  
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In the final chapter to the Lennon & McCartney triptych, the *Pride* label brings now the denouement segment, wherein the most influential pop composers ever to tread the hitbound rainbow get tossed out of the spotlight and into the real world of wildly fluctuating triumphs and disappointments. The first two installments of this epic saga ([here](#) and [here](#)) ranged from the heydays of 1966 - 1970 where the lads could hardly hiccup without it becoming a #1 smash, and this new **1973 - 1980** chronicle commences the realpolitik of having to go it separately, discovering that chemistry's a stone bitch when it evaporates.

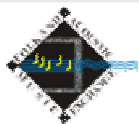
The omnipresent inclusion of Robert Christgau in the series is viewed wryly within the more erudite segment of the critic community. Once a name to be reckoned with, Da Christ long ago, along with compadre Dave Marsh, sold out, now a hackneyed gushafount here waxing lubriciously over every song Lennon ever crafted as the pinnacle of human existence. It's indeed amusing, a cautionary lesson to budding writers, especially when butted up against the far more sober and discerning eye and ear of Chris Ingham, who clearly dominates the disc, neither sentimentalist nor agendaed. When Christgau declares the Plastic Ono Band LP to be "a work of genius", even the dry demeanor of the document's voiceover takes a shot at him, commenting that it is only "apparent brilliance". Ya hafta love a film that will play its cards that subtly.

Lennon and McCartney indeed suffered a chest of broken arrows in struggling to carry over their non-stop bounty from the group glory days; Fate was not particularly kind. In point of fact, McCartney, by any measure other than Dear Robaire's, came out the obvious ace in the seven years after the Beatles' break-up until the curtainfall of Lennon's murder, especially with the monumental *Band on the Run* LP. John mostly foundered in a mediocrity underlit only occasionally by flashes of inspiration. This contrastive reality lends ever more credence to the series' increasingly influential thesis statement, subtly stated, that it was McCartney and not Lennon who was the more able of the two. John, a clever Thompson and no mistake, via innumerable bad boyisms, outrages, media manipulations, and a soap opera life, caged the press' all too familiar gullibilities, accruing long-lived referential gold. That argente substance, it can now be seen retrospectively however, was not what it seemed, not quite.

For well over two hours, each LP and every interpolated twist of life is assessed and weighed, with, as said, Ingham rendering the fairest verdicts and the most cogent criticisms. Denny Laine reveals an abundance of insights, as Klaus Voorman, a very interesting bloke, weighs in with embellishments. If you've picked up the first two of the series, this is absolutely indispensable and the crown jewel to the label's daring assertion. If you've not seen any, then all three are a must and will re-align your conception of what exactly was what, just as they've changed my viewpoint. We are now, ladies and gentlemen, in the period when rock and roll is finally receiving not its history but its historiography, and that's a very arresting time indeed.

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