



The Beatles - LOVE

Since their inception almost 45 years ago, The Beatles and their organization always saw fit to release a new project just in time for the busy holiday season. Singles like “Hello Goodbye”, “Day Tripper”, “I Feel Fine”, “I Want To Hold Your Hand” and the iconic LPs “Rubber Soul” and “The White Album” all came out between Thanksgiving and Christmas, thus giving us notoriously insatiable Beatles fans much to include on their gift wish lists. Even after their breakup in 1970, seasonally-timed projects still trickled out from Apple ranging from ill-conceived hit compilations like 1976’s “Rock & Roll Music”, to the unmatched celebrated treasure trove of unreleased goodies known as The Beatles Anthology (Vols. 1-3) in the early winter of 1994.

2006 is by no means an exception to this Beatlerule. This month sees the release of “Love”, soundtrack to the new Fab Four-themed Cirque du Soleil extravaganza at the Mirage in Las Vegas. Granted, to most people the words “Beatles” and “Las Vegas” generally don’t go together. Elvis sure, but The Beatles? As a lifelong fan, the connection seemed tenuous at best, blasphemous at worst. However when one discovers that Love’s inception initiated within the friendship of Cirque’s founder Guy Laliberté and George Harrison, suddenly the show’s feasibility is lent instant credibility.

The 90-minute performance contains much of the faire that casino patrons have long come to expect from Cirque du Soleil, with the added charge of bringing the greatest Beatles songs to life in a 3-D, sensory perception overload. Thus, the soundtrack had to be much more than a collection of songs taken from worn-out third-generation tapes. Accordingly, under the loving care of legendary Beatle producer George Martin and his apprentice son Giles, seven-years of masters were pawed over, pulled apart, and resembled into a modern day “mash-up”. Though no additional sounds were recorded in today’s time, backing tracks from one song were isolated with the vocals from another meticulously placed on top. Thus, in one shining example we are presented with George Harrison’s haunting sitar raga “Within You Without You” reinserted over Lennon’s tape-loop tour de force “Tomorrow Never Knows”.

Beatle purists may cringe - they always do. Even co-producer Giles Martin likens the endeavor to “painting a moustache on the Mona Lisa.” But given the fact that half of the band have gone on to deified rock infamy, Love is the next best thing to a 21st century holiday Beatle release.