

Forever George

George Harrison was never the world's greatest guitarist, vocalist or songwriter. But he was as essential to the Fab Four formula as John Lennon's rebellious smile or Paul McCartney's great cow eyes. He was "the quiet one", the serious musician who held the beat together while John and Paul were skylarking¹⁾ at the mike. Beatles fans who screamed for George were a curious but dedicated minority.

Harrison's grievances²⁾ began from the moment he joined the Quarrymen, the skiffle group that was to metamorphose³⁾ into the Beatles, as 15-year-old school friend of McCartney's in 1958. The story goes that they let him in only because, unlike the others, he knew how to tune guitars and he happened to know how to play a then popular instrumental number.

Harrison was lead guitarist, traditionally a starring or costarring role. But in his case it would be neither. From the very first the band was dominated by Lennon and McCartney, by their energy, their rival sex appeal and their increasingly prolific and brilliant songwriting. Harrison's main role was painfully mastering the guitar riffs to the *Chuck Berry* and *Buddy Holly* numbers that padded out their early albums. Shy, self-conscious and undemonstrative, he found himself relegated to an inner "second division" with Starr.

Although Harrison, too, soon began writing songs they were always doomed to be eclipsed by Lennon and McCartney's torrential output.

His greatest influence within the Beatles came during their "Indian" period of 1966 ~ 1968. Harrison took up the sitar, became a pupil of the instrument's greatest living maestro⁴⁾, Ravi Shankar, and brought a twangy Indian feel to Beatles tracks such as *Within You Without You* and *Norwegian Wood*. As Martin later remembered, it gave him an authority in the studio that he'd never had before.

The band's break-up, an unofficial fact by 1969 although not officially ratified until 1971, had little to do with Harrison, being predominantly a fight to the finish between Lennon and McCartney over money, leadership and their respective new wives, Yoko and Linda.

The band's break-up seemed to plunge Harrison into depression. Ironically, in the immediate post-break-up period Harrison's solo career seemed to leap ahead of both Lennon's and McCartney's. His triple album, *All Things Must Pass*, released in late 1970, was a massive British and American hit. With it came an international number one single, the mantra-like *My Sweet Lord*. A year later he conceived the two charity Concerts for Bangladesh at New York's Madison Square Garden, persuading superstar friends such as Clapton, Bob Dylan and Leon Russell to perform gratis⁵⁾ for the famine-stricken⁶⁾ millions of former East Pakistan.

One tribute⁷⁾ once called him "a great humanitarian"; if that was putting it rather strong, the Concert for Bangladesh undoubtedly gave rock its first inkling of social conscience, paving the way for Live Aid and similar events in the 1980s.

In the early 1980s a wholly unexpected new career beckoned thanks to Harrison's friendship with Michael Palin and other members of the Monty Python team. The Pythons were in the midst of making their hilariously⁸⁾ sacrilegious⁹⁾ *Life of Brian* film, but suddenly

had the plug pulled on them by their backers. Harrison stepped in, mortgaging Friar Park to raise enough for the film to be completed.

It was the basis of a production company, HandMade, part-owned by Harrison, which led the British film renaissance of the 1980s with memorable productions such as *Mona Lisa* and *The Long Good Friday*.

With HandMade prospering, he also enjoyed a minor musical renaissance with a surprise hit single, *Got My Mind Set on You*.

Harrison's death is a tragedy for his family and many friends. He was no giant. But he was the indispensable limb of a giant—the most powerful engine for creating human happiness that the entertainment world has ever seen.

□by Philip Norman

永远的乔治

乔治·哈里森绝非世界上最伟大的吉他手、歌手或是歌曲作者，但在甲壳虫乐队绝佳的四人组合中却是必不可少的，就像约翰·列侬富于反叛精神的微笑或是保罗·麦卡特尼的一双大眼睛一样。他是一个“沉默寡言”的人，一个表情严肃的乐师，当约翰和保罗面对麦克风激情演唱的时候，他用和谐的乐曲予以伴奏。为乔治喝彩的甲壳虫歌迷虽然不多，却是好奇而忠实的一族。

1958年，15岁的哈里森作为麦卡特尼的同学，加入了后来成为甲壳虫乐队的噪音爵士乐组合“采石工”。从这时起，他对乐队就有所不满。据说他们吸收他加入只是因为，不同于他人，他会给吉他调弦，而且他恰巧还会演奏一种后来十分流行的器乐。哈里森是首席吉他手，按惯例在乐队中应处于核心或是同属核心的位置。但他的情况并非如此。列侬和麦卡特尼以充沛的精力、无以匹敌的吸引力及其富于创造力且才华横溢的词曲创作，在乐队中一开始就占据了显著的位置。哈里森的主要职责是努力掌握如何用吉他演奏爵士乐中的连复段，来拉长他们早期唱片集中诸如《掷草莓》和《老友冬青》之类的歌曲。腼腆羞涩，拘谨矜持，哈里森发现自己实际上和斯塔尔一起被置于“乙级队”的行列。尽管哈里森很快也开始创作歌曲，但是这些作品在列侬和麦卡特尼如激流般奔涌的创作面前，总是注定要黯然失色。

在1966到1968年这段被称为“印度时期”的时间里，哈里森对甲壳虫乐队的的影响最大。哈里森对锡塔尔琴发生了浓厚的兴趣，他拜依然健在的锡塔尔琴演奏大师拉维·申卡尔为师，把有拨弦声的印度乐感带入了甲壳虫乐队的作品，如《与你相依却无你相伴》和《挪威的树林》等。后来马丁回忆，这件事使哈里森在录音棚里拥有了他以前从未有过的权威。

乐队的解散在1971年才得到官方的批准，但在1969年已是名存实亡。这与哈里森没有任何关系，主要是列侬和麦卡特尼之间由于金钱、对乐队的领导权以及他们各自的新任妻子大野洋子和琳达等问题的争执不休的结果。

乐队的分崩离析使哈里森极度消沉。具有讽刺意味的是，乐队解散后的一段时间内，哈里森的独唱生涯似乎超过了列侬和麦卡特尼。他在1970年末期发行的3张名为《一切必成过去》的唱片在英国和美国引起了巨大的轰动。与此同时，他具有曼特罗风格的歌曲《我甜蜜的夫君》成了世界排名第一的热门歌曲。一年后他在纽约麦迪逊广场花园为孟加拉国举行了两场慈善音乐会。他说服好友克拉普顿、鲍勃·迪伦及利昂·拉塞尔等超级巨星为数百

万饱受饥荒之苦的前东巴基斯坦人民举行义演。

有人赞誉他是“伟大的人道主义者”。如果这样说有点言过其实的话，那么为孟加拉国举行义演无疑使摇滚乐首次与社会良知有了些许联系，也为他们在20世纪80年代举行“实际援助”等一系列类似的活动作了准备。

80年代初，一项完全出乎意料的崭新的事业开始吸引哈里森，这起因于他和迈克尔·巴林及其他巨蟒组合成员的友谊。巨蟒组合正在制作《布莱恩的一生》，一部滑稽的有亵渎神圣之嫌的电影，他们的赞助人突然取消了赞助费。哈里森介入了电影的制作，他抵押了弗拉庄庄园，筹集到了足够的资金把电影拍完。

这就是制片公司“手工制作”的开始阶段，哈里森拥有部分股权。这家公司制作了许多让人记忆犹新的电影，如《蒙娜·丽莎》、《漫长美好的星期五》等。这些电影在20世纪80年代英国电影的复兴中起到了引领潮流的作用。

随着“手工制作”的兴旺发展，哈里森在音乐方面又小有成就，一首《让我的心属于你》让人吃惊地火了起来。

哈里森的去世无论对他的家庭，还是对他许许多多的朋友来说，都是巨大的不幸。他不是巨人，但他却是巨人不可或缺的一只臂膀，而这个巨人就是娱乐界所曾见识过的创造人类欢乐的最为强大有力的发动机。

NOTE 注释：

skylarking ['skaɪlɑ:kɪŋ] n. 嬉戏，欢笑

grievance ['gri:vəns] n. 委屈，不平

metamorphose [ˌmetə'mɔ:fəʊz] v. 使变成

maestro [mə:'estrou] n. 艺术大师，名作曲家

gratis ['greɪtɪs] adv. 免费，白送

famine-stricken ['fæmɪn 'strɪkən] adj. 遭受饥荒的

tribute ['trɪbjʊ:t] n. 颂词，赞誉

hilariously [hɪ'læəriəsli] adv. 滑稽地

sacrilegious [sækri'lɪdʒəs] adj. 冒渎的，该受天谴的