



THE BEATLES

Handout 2 - Excerpt from "The Beatles: Produced by George Martin" *Melody Maker, August 21, 1971*

George Martin:

1. My first sessions with [The Beatles] were [spent] looking for *the* voice. I thought they're great people, but who am I going to make the lead voice? I spent an afternoon with each of them in turn, listening to them...They were singing together, but occasionally one would burst out in solo. Then it suddenly hit me that I was being stupid - I was looking for a solo voice when I didn't need to, I should just take them as they were.
2. I was determined to find a hit song for them. I was scouring the publisher's office looking for material, which nobody wanted to know about. EMI [The Beatles' new record label] heard the Beatles, which they thought was a silly name anyway, and they didn't attach too much importance to it. "Comedy man tries to get into the pop field," you know.
3. I found them this song by Mitch Murray which I thought was just ideal for them...they didn't like it...They actually recorded it...John sang the solo, quite well actually, but he came to me and pleaded with me. He said, "Look, I think we can do better than this. If we write something better can we do it?" I said yes...They quickly came back with "Please Please Me," and I must confess it knocked me out.
4. It all happened so fast then, events moved so quickly. Brian [Epstein] was pressuring them all the time to write new material, and they were caught up in this success whirlwind and they wanted to continue writing. They'd come to me and say, "what do you think of this?" and that's how "From Me to You" happened. It needed a bit of polishing here and there...[We] decided to make an album very quickly...It was a very happy year, but it was terribly hard work. I was in the studios the whole time, and I've never worked so hard in my whole life.
5. Even though they'd written their own songs, they had them as songs rather than as record[ings]. They were thinking of a chorus, a middle eight, and an ending. When I started off with them I'd organise their beginnings and endings and their solos. It seems terribly elementary now, but when they sang the song first I'd time a chorus, and when it came to one minute and 20 seconds I'd say, "Right, it's not long enough - go back to the middle eight" or else we'd have a little guitar solo or a bit of piano. It was all dead simple, and gradually the collaboration grew. It was just the four of them and if there was any keyboard stuff I'd put it in.



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