

TEACHERS' NOTES

SECONDARY ART

Beatles to Bowie: the 60s exposed

National Portrait Gallery

15 October 2009 – 24 January 2010

This major exhibition explores the leading pop music personalities who helped create 'Swinging London' in the 1960s. Over 150 photographs, together with a range of memorabilia, illustrate how the photographic image, music and performance made these popstars the leading icons of their time.

Featuring key pop cultural figures, the exhibition begins in 1960 with hit groups such as The Shadows and The John Barry Seven, Cliff Richard, Adam Faith. As the decade progressed, early portraits of singers such as and Billy Fury were followed by those of bands such as The Kinks and The Who.

Huge cultural and social changes were reflected in the styles and imagery of the pop music scene. The classic rivalry between The Beatles and The Rolling Stones is played out visually by a variety of top photographers such as David Bailey, Gered Mankowitz and Robert Whitaker, who helped create their changing images.

Beatles to Bowie explores the dramatic developments of pop music and culture, from pure pop, through psychedelia and the birth of progressive music and their lasting impact that continues to live on today. The exhibition is split into sections displaying photography and relevant ephemera, year by year.

Further information can be found in the exhibition itself, including the events leaflet with the Swinging London map and the website www.npg.org.uk. The exhibition microsite <http://www.npg.org.uk:8080/beatles/index2.htm> is rich source of additional information and images. Also see the exhibition catalogue written by the National Portrait Gallery Curator of Photography and curator of *Beatles to Bowie*, Terence Pepper, with an introductory essay by Jon Savage.

HOW TO USE THESE NOTES

The National Portrait Gallery has developed these Teachers' Notes to assist teachers when preparing self-directed class visits to *Beatles to Bowie: the 60s exposed*, and developing post-visit assignments and artwork inspired by key works.

To assist with exploring the diverse artworks and approaches in *Beatles to Bowie*, we have suggested seven key themes to help with the development of exhibition worksheets or focus activities for your students. We have also included some workshop ideas for classroom activity.

These lesson and activity ideas are intended for students covering assessment objectives for GCSE, AS, and A2 level including gathering and selecting information in a work journal or sketchbook, recording observations, analysing formal elements, researching the work of other artists, analysing using formal language and critical vocabulary and will start to develop their own ideas. This resource is also suitable for the study of the Creative and Media Diploma and Btech.

WORKSHEET IDEAS FOR USE IN THE EXHIBITION

1. Pop Culture

A

Look at *Cliff Richard* by Cornel Lucas, 1960. As the changing Post-War Britain looked to America as a nation that defined itself by its youth and actively promoted consumerism as a way of life, huge American influences can be seen e.g. James Dean and Jerry Lee Lewis.

Cliff Richard was Britain's most popular teen-idol. His image, the dark, brooding pose, costume and quiff, reference the most popular American pop star of the time, Elvis Presley.

Can you describe the mood of Cornel Lucas's portrait? How has he achieved this?
--

B

Now look at these publicity materials in the 1960 ephemera case:

The Sound of Fury record sleeve, 1960

Beat Girl starring Adam Faith, film advertisement, 1959

With a gradual boost to the British economy since the end of the Second World War, it was the first time that the teenage population had a disposable income and, as America was the birthplace of the teenage heroes, Hollywood glitz and glamour. Billy Fury's album cover shows him in his boxy gold lamé suit, again reminiscent of Elvis. The design of the *Beat Girl* film poster with pop star Adam Faith emulated the 'Pulp Fiction' style of the American popular film genre.

Now choose two more pieces of publicity and describe the layout. How has the design described the product?

2. Location: Inside/Outside

Notice the contrast in setting between *The Shadows* by Angus McBean, 1960, and *The Yardbirds*, by Gered Mankowitz, 1966.

Choose one photograph where the photograph has been taken in an internal space and one taken in an external setting.

Make a quick diagrammatic sketch and add annotated notes.

Describe the setting, composition, vantage point, pose, focus etc.

Why do you think the photographer has chosen this particular setting?

What kind of image are they trying to promote? What does it attempt to say about the performer or band?

If you were photographing your favourite band where and how would you place yourself?

Notice how the environment moves from urban to rural in the photographs towards the end of the decade e.g. *Fleetwood Mac* by Araldo di Crollanza 1969. Why do you think this changed?

3. Pose

A

Look at the more deliberately staged or dramatically lit studio-based shots e.g. *The Moody Blues* by Terence Donovan, 1965, *The Beatles, Hamburg*, by Astrid Kirchherr 1962, and *The Who* by Colin Jones, 1966.

Choose two examples of posed shots in black and white and study the images in terms of composition. Make a diagrammatic sketch and add annotated notes. How do the setting, props, vantage point, light, pose and focus, format of image, cropping and angle enhance the character of the person? How has the photographer used the musicians' reputation to inform the image? Have they distorted and therefore manipulated our vision? Do we understand anything more about the private person beneath the public persona? Describe the steps and decisions which could have been involved in setting up the shot.

B

Now look at the following two photographs: *Cliff Richard, Blackpool* by Norman Parkinson, early 1960s, and *Cliff Richard with his mother, Dorothy Webb, and sisters Jacqui and Joan* by John Pratt, 1963. The pop star is described in two different ways, the public and the private. In the image on the right Cliff is depicted as a 'beach boy', leaning against what looks like an American car, again, making links with his successful counterparts from the USA, and the other, a more domestic scene, at home, with his family.

Describe the two different messages depicted here. How does the scene on the left compare to the scene on the right? How has the photographer constructed our view of Cliff Richard in each work? What contrasting messages does each portrait give the audience about the pop star?

C

Now find two different action shots e.g. The Bee Gees on a space hopper, in *The Bee Gees* by Bill Zygmont, 1968; Lulu bowling in *Lulu and the Luvvers* by Bill Orchard, 1964, and the Beatles jumping in *The Beatles, Euston Road*, by Fiona Adams, 1963.

Make quick sketches of each and annotate. What image or messages is the photographer trying to relate to the audience? How has this been achieved? How do you think the band may have collaborated with the photographer? Describe the composition, vantage point, lighting, tone and camera angles.

4. Colour

Notice that most of the colour images emerge towards the end of the exhibition; this is a reflection of the changes in magazine printing processes, including new colour supplements in Sunday newspapers, but also the influence of new art movements such as Pop Art and Op Art as well as the increasing popularity of colour television.

Analyse the use of colour and lighting to create mood and atmosphere in *Jimi Hendrix* by Fiona Adams, 1967.
Now find two other contrasting colour images, describe what you see.
Compare them with the Hendrix shot.
Choose one of the large black and white prints by David Bailey on the back wall and compare it to one of the portraits in colour. Why do you think the photographer chose to work with or without colour?
How do the coloured photographs compare to the colourful publicity samples in the cabinets?

5. Experimentation

The year 1967 was a time of rebellion and experimentation, innovation and psychedelia. New processes in photography were mirrored by new printing processes of the time and also a way for photographers and the artists themselves to give a subversive edge to the image

From this era emerged demonstrations, mind-altering drugs, protest marches and music festivals. The Beatles and The Rolling Stones embraced an interest in transcendental meditation and hallucinogenic drugs, which were visually manifest in Michael Cooper's two masterpiece album covers: *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, 1967 and *Their Satanic Majesties Request* of 1967.

Look at *Pink Floyd* by Storm Thorgerson, 1969 (a photographer who became well known for his experimental album covers and rock posters) and *Pink Floyd* by Vic Singh, 1967. Now find another photograph that shows experimentation and make a quick annotated sketch. Compare and contrast with one of the Pink Floyd images and describe the framing, composition, line, mood, atmosphere, tone, texture and setting of the two.

6. Blurring Boundaries

A

Music, photography and fashion have always made connections but the jazz boom this heralded the beginning of a new visual agenda for Swinging London in the early 1960s. A new generation of photographers, roughly the same age as the performers they photographed, were already experienced in fashion work for magazines. Among them were David Bailey, Terence Donovan and Brian Duffy. Look at the earlier photographs of models with bands eg. *The Shadows with Ros Watkins* by Brian Duffy, 1961. Together the photographers redefined not only the aesthetic of photography but also the place of the photographer within industry. This merging of photographic styles introduced a new status for models.

Look at the fashion of the time in the magazine covers and the clothes worn by the mannequins by Adel Rootstein dressed in vintage samples; describe the changing styles throughout the decade with some quick sketches or a timeline. Look at the portrait of *Julie Driscoll* by Steve Hiett, 1968 and *Tyrannosaurus Rex* by Ray Stevenson, 1968.

Choose three examples across the decade and track the changes in fashion, hair, clothes, styling etc.

Analyse four images that evoke innocence and experience, e.g. Marianne Faithfull looking youthful in knee-socks sitting in a pub in the Gered Mankowitz photograph of 1964, compared to *Marianne Faithfull* by Tony Frank 1965 and *Marianne Faithfull* during the filming of *The Girl on a Motorcycle* by John Kelly 1967 or The Beatles in *The Beatles, Liverpool*, by Michael Ward, 1963 looking like fresh-faced boys-next-door compared with later images showing longer hair and more fashionable clothes.

B

Music, photography and art. Many of the photographers were influenced by art movements of the time, also many of the musicians went to art school, such as Paul McCartney and John Lennon. Pink Floyd were architecture students. Some musicians also became art collectors.

In a photo shoot for the *Observer* in 1966, photographer Colin Jones took down a union flag from a Manchester hotel flagpole to create the backdrop for a cover portrait of *The Who* which became one of the defining Pop Art shoots of the time.

Look at *The Who* by Colin Jones, 1966, and *The Who* by Tony Frank, 1965, showing the band wearing t-shirts with targets and jackets with a Union Jack, referencing the bold colours and symbols found in Op Art and Pop Art. These symbols were adopted by the Mods, a subculture that originated in London, England in the late 1950s, who followed The Who at the time.

Some photographers used historical art references, e.g. the nod to Caravaggio's extreme dark to light in the *Moody Blues* portrait by Terence Donovan (1965), and, more explicitly, *The Rolling Stones*, 1968, where Michael Joseph shot the band in the style of a Dutch still-life painting for the album *Beggars Banquet*, 1968.

Make a quick annotated sketch of a member of *The Rolling Stones* by Michael Joseph 1968 describing the narrative, composition, pose, setting and props. List all the props in the 1968 image. Now find a comparative old master painting and describe the visual connections.

C

Publicity and Art. Remember that the photographs were usually a product of a marketing or publicity campaign, and further images were commissioned after the album release. See *The Beatles* by Fiona Adams, 1963 for 'Extra Special Portrait Pin-up' in the magazine *Boyfriend*, and *The Who* by Colin Jones 1966

Compare the album cover *Dusty in New York*, 1965, in the glass case, with the original photograph Dusty Springfield by Bill Francis, 1965. How has the layout and location changed the message, mood or atmosphere of the piece? Describe the use of colour, font, composition and line in each. What additions have been made to enhance the EP cover?

7. Celebrity

A

As the musicians became more popular photographers became more interested in their personal lives as well as their music.

Consider the 'Who Shot Pop' display where the curator has chosen to display portraits of the photographic stars working in the 1960s who helped define and create the visual representation of pop music through photography.

Analyse the image *Rolling Stones Photo-call* by Peter Stone 1967, taken during a press call for assembled photographers in Green Park. Describe the scene, e.g. vantage, view points, composition and setting. Who is looking at whom? If the Rolling Stones are looking out of the frame towards the viewer, what does this make the role of the viewer? How does this compare with the paparazzi shots of today? E.g. *Heat* magazine

B

The photographers of the time developed their own celebrity status in popular culture, such as David Bailey who provided inspiration for the photographer in Michelangelo Antonioni's cult film *Blow Up* (1966).

Look at the portrait of Julie Driscoll taken by Steve Hiatt. Hiatt was commissioned to photograph Driscoll for a music magazine in 1968. The image looks remarkably contemporary. Make a quick annotated sketch and describe the shot in detail. What does it tell us about the subject?

C

Look at the images of bands with their wives and girlfriends including *John Lennon and Yoko Ono* by Tom Blau, 1969, and *Paul McCartney and Linda McCartney* by John Kelly, 1969, showing the desire for a more personal profile, a look behind the scenes.

Describe the differences between two of the more personal images in 1969 with two publicity shots of the same bands from the early part of the decade. Look at techniques, form, content as well as context. Describe the wider context in 1969. What changes in politics, racial and sexual equality, and major events were happening in the world at that time? How was this reflected in the photographs and publicity of that time?

FURTHER RESEARCH

Musicians, photographers and contextual images in the National Portrait Gallery's Collection provide opportunities for further research and comparison with works in the exhibition.

Images from the permanent collection and via the gallery website www.npg.org.uk:

- Ginger Baker
- Dame Shirley Veronica Bassey
- Jeff Beck
- Dave Berry (David Holgate Grundy)
- Jane Birkin
- Cilla Black (Priscilla White)
- Marc Bolan (Mark Feld)
- David Bowie
- Jack Bruce
- Eric Burdon
- Eric Patrick Clapton
- Dave Clark
- Roger Harry Daltrey
- Ray Davies
- Donovan (Donovan Phillips Leitch)
- John Entwistle
- Marianne Faithfull
- Billy Fury (Ronald Wycherly)
- Germaine Greer
- George Harrison
- Jimi Hendrix
- Engelbert Humperdinck (Arnold George Dorsey)
- Marsha Hunt
- Sir Michael Philip ('Mick') Jagger
- Brian Jones
- Sir Tom Jones (Thomas Jones Woodward)
- Denny Laine (Brian Hines)
- John Lennon
- Lulu (Marie MacDonald McLaughlin Lawrie)
- Sir (James) Paul McCartney
- Keith Moon
- Mary Quant
- Sir Cliff Richard (Harry Webb)
- Keith Richards
- Helen Shapiro
- Sandie Shaw (née Sandra Goodrich)
- Jean Shrimpton
- Dusty Springfield
- Ringo Starr (Richard Starkey)
- Peter Dennis Blandford ('Pete') Townshend
- Charles Robert ('Charlie') Watts
- Bill Wyman

LESSON AND WORKSHOP IDEAS FOR BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

Students will cover assessment objectives for GCSE, AS and A2, Creative and Media Diploma and BTech, including experimentation and development of ideas while improving technical skills with the formal elements, and will begin to understand that the research in the Gallery has given them knowledge and ideas that they can connect to their own work.

1.

Collect as many publicity shots, including CD covers, and posters of pop stars and bands of today, as possible. Scan your chosen images and experiment through digital manipulation, to create a piece of marketing or publicity in a selected 1960s style. Analyse the outcomes.

2.

Work in groups to recreate a black and white photo shoot of a fake band, in the style of one of the early 1960s images. Direct the poses and action of the others in your group who will act as the band. Brainstorm a band image, style of music and theme first. Use costume, lighting, props, vantage point, line tone and texture to create a bold, dramatic shot. Think about subject placement - it's not necessary to put the figures in the centre of the frame. Critique your final work as a group.

3.

Experiment with Photoshop to enhance your final chosen studio image. Is this helping to reveal the identity of your band?

4.

As your colleagues are setting up their studio shots, take photos of the scene. Consider some of the more candid black and white snapshots of bands, models and artists behind the scenes that are included in the exhibition, such as the image *Jean Shrimpton, Paul Jones and director Peter Watkins on the set of Privilege*, 1967. Try to capture the mood of the space in your photographs. What does this behind-the-scenes image tell you that the other images do not?

5.

Plan a studio photo shoot of one of your friends. Analyse how you can depict their personality through one photograph. Think about setting, lighting, subject placement, and vantage point, type of lens, focal point, texture, colour or black and white. Use a range of props including things from their own bags that can be used imaginatively to help describe their own personality. Arrange two contrasting poses, one that challenges the boldness of revealing more than what we see on the surface. Can you display something from within? And another that masks the person's true identity.

Analyse intentions, approaches, successes and failures in a short essay or an artist's statement.

6.

Position your band outside and take a series of still and action shots in an urban and rural settings, looking to key works in *Beatles to Bowie* to inform your location decisions and compositions. Work in black and white and in colour. Analyse the difference between the two different approaches.

7.

Print up these images and enhance them through collage and text, giving your band a name and transforming the work into a piece of publicity, e.g. poster, magazine cover or album cover. Try to emulate one of the styles from the 1960s.

1960

Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho* released
Brazil's capital moves to brand new city
First televised presidential debates
Lasers invented
Jasper Johns created his *Painted Bronze*
British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan makes the 'Wind of Change' speech

1961

Adolf Eichmann on trial for role in Holocaust
Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba
Berlin Wall built
Peace Corps founded
Soviets launch first man in space
Audrey Hepburn stars in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.
Birth control pills become available on the National Health Service

1962

Andy Warhol Exhibits his *Campbell's Soup Can*
Cuban Missile Crisis
First person killed trying to cross the Berlin Wall
Marilyn Monroe found dead
Rachel Carson publishes *Silent Spring*
Unknown actor Sean Connery plays James Bond
Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica become independent.

1963

Lichtenstein paints *Whaam!*
Betty Friedan publishes *The Feminine Mystique*
John F. Kennedy assassinated
Martin Luther King Jr. makes his "I Have a Dream" speech
Elizabeth Taylor stars in *Cleopatra*
Profumo Affair storms the British headlines

1964

Warhol creates his *Electric Chair* and *Sixteen Jackies*
Beatles become popular in U.S. and the mockumentary *A Hard Day's Night* is premiered
Cassius Clay (a.k.a. Muhammad Ali) becomes World Heavyweight champion
Civil Rights Act passes in U.S.
Nelson Mandela sentenced to life in prison
Terence Conran opens the first Habitat store

1965

The film version of the Broadway musical *The Sound of Music* premiered
Japan's Bullet Train opens
Los Angeles Riots
Malcolm X assassinated
New York City great blackout
U.S. sends troops to Vietnam
The Race Relations Act outlaws public racial discrimination in the UK

1966

MGM distributes Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Blow Up*
Mao Zedong launches the Cultural Revolution
Mass draft protests in U.S.
Star Trek T.V. series airs
The Moors Murderers Ian Brady and Myra Hindley sentenced to life

1967

Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt disappears
Che Guevara killed
First heart transplant
Six-Day war in the Middle East
Three U.S. Astronauts killed during simulated launch
Chuck Close paints *Big Self Portrait*
Mike Nichols directs *The Graduate*
The Concorde, a supersonic aircraft, is unveiled

1968

Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated
My Lai Massacre
Prague Spring
Robert F. Kennedy assassinated
Tet Offensive
Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*
Carl Andre creates *Fall*
The musical *Hair* opens in London
The Race Relations Act is passed in UK

1969

ARPANET, the Precursor of the Internet, created
Charles Manson and "Family" arrested
Neil Armstrong becomes the first man on the moon
Rock and Roll concert at Woodstock
Yasser Arafat becomes leader of the PLO
Dennis Hopper's film *Easy Rider*
Monty Python's Flying Circus airs its first episode