

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

BEATLES GEAR: THE ULTIMATE EDITION UNCOVERS LOTS MORE FAB FOUR FACTS

IT SEEMS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE that he could have missed something. Andy Babiuk toiled for six years on the original *Beatles Gear*—which debuted in 2001—and delivered what was absolutely the most exhaustively researched and comprehensive compendium of the musical tools deployed by the Fab Four to make history.

Well, until now.

What Beatles fans didn't know back in 2001, was that Babiuk had to delete vast portions of his manuscript in order to fit a particular page count set by the publisher. In addition, some people who owned, or knew the whereabouts of certain Mop Top instruments didn't know there was even a real story to be told about these pieces until the first edition of *Beatles Gear* was

released to critical acclaim and massive sales. And then there was a "little miracle" that cropped up when Babiuk recently helped authenticate John Lennon's 1962 Gibson J-160E, which had been missing for 50 years.

"When I approached Backbeat Books about *Beatles Gear*, nobody had done anything wacky like this before," says Babiuk. "It was a cool and novel idea, but it wasn't a proven idea. They were thinking we'd probably sell 10,000 to 20,000 copies, so they were being cautious and prudent. They wanted to attract all Beatles people, and not just the Beatles guitar people, so a lot of very specific gear data such as the screws on John Lennon's guitars being flathead, rather than Phillips head was left out. But as the book sold somewhere in the vicinity of 150,000 copies, the idea has been proven, and now we can include tons more details."

As a result, the brand new *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition* has expanded to twice the size of the first edition, and it also features 625 additional photos.

Babiuk, who gave *GP* readers a major treat with a preview of his *Rolling Stones Gear* book in the February 2014 issue, is doing us all another solid by allowing us to run an exclusive sneak peek at some of the actual pages in *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition* (due for release on November 10, 2015). We were able to get self-contained, two-page spreads for most of the book pages, but please note that the spreads starting on pages 62 and 66 are excerpted and are missing some text. We felt the gear images were cool enough to be worth an absent sentence or two, and, hey, you'll want to buy the book anyway, right?

So, thanks to Babiuk and Backbeat Books, prepare to get "gear" ['60s Scouse slang] with the gear...

BY MICHAEL MOLEND A

Cover Story

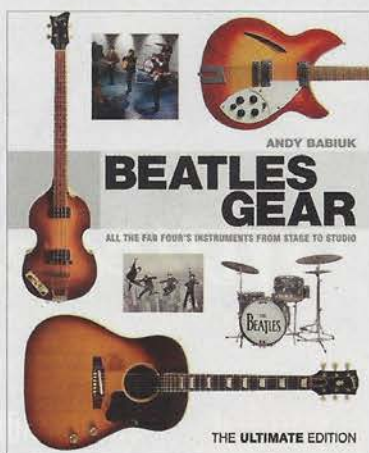
BEATLES GEAR



Andy Babiuk



5 UNEXPECTED TALES FROM BEATLES GEAR: THE ULTIMATE EDITION



YOU MIGHT THINK, AFTER spending years researching *Beatles Gear*, owning his own vintage guitar shop (Andy Babiuk's Fab Gear in New York), and performing in the retro-classic bands Chesterfield Kings and Empty Hearts, that *nothing* would surprise Andy Babiuk when he turned his attention to writing *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition*.

And yet, fate had other plans.

Here, Babiuk details a few revelations uncovered during the preparation of the new edition.

THE FAMILY CONNECTION

"After *Beatles Gear* came out in 2001, I'd get calls every week, with someone saying, 'I have John's this, or Paul's that.' Some calls were crazy, but I was always polite and would ask them to send me a photo. You never know. So a guy e-mails me pictures of a Gretsch 6120, telling me it's the guitar John used on 'Paperback Writer.' I pull up my photo database, and go, 'Whoa. This is the guitar!' It turns out the guy was John's cousin, and he also had John's little Fender amp, which we thought was a tweed

Cover Story

BEATLES GEAR



COME TOGETHER

NEW BEATLES 1 AND 1+ MARRIES VIDEO AND AUDIO

November should be a big month for Beatles fanatics. As well as *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition* from Backbeat Books, Apple is releasing *The Beatles 1* in DVD and Blu-ray formats that showcases 27 of the promo films shot for their chart-topping singles. *The Beatles 1+* bonus edition serves up 23 additional videos of alternate versions and rarely seen footage, and a *1+* Deluxe Edition includes a 124-page illustrated hardcover book and other extras. Apple assembled an 18-person restoration team to clean, color correct, and otherwise enhance the films frame-by-frame to ensure utmost quality for the digital medium. In addition, new stereo and 5.1 mixes were completed at Abbey Road Studios by Giles Martin and Sam Okell for the editions.

Long before MTV, the Beatles were experimenting with music videos, and this collection provides an awesome opportunity to treat your eyes and ears to their stunning genius. In fact, you could crack open *Beatles Gear: The Ultimate Edition* while you watch, and get the stories behind the guitars and amps you see in the promo films. Sounds like tons 'o' fun! —MM

Deluxe, but was actually a tweed Vibrolux. John let him pick out a couple of things from his music room in 1967. Wacky stuff.”

THE CASE OF THE MISSING J-160E

“The infamous story is about the guy who had John’s Gibson J-160E that went missing in 1963. Last summer, this guy contacts me and says, ‘My friend thinks he has John Lennon’s J-160E.’ I saw the photos and said, ‘Holy crap—this could be the guitar!’ The guy lives in San Diego and bought it secondhand. Who knows how that guitar went from London to San Diego, but it’s the real thing. I’ve got to tell you, I played it for a couple of hours—bone chilling. You play the beginning of ‘This Boy’ on it, and it’s *the* sound. It was haunting.”

RINGO’S GIFT

“Ringo even came up with something new. I was talking to him, and he said, ‘You know, John gave me a guitar after I quit the band for a while during the White Album sessions. I wrote some songs while I was away, and John goes, ‘Here, Ritchie, I want you to have this guitar. It’s the perfect size for you. Go home and write even more songs.’ It turns out it’s the Fireglo Rickenbacker Model 1996 John used for the Christmas shows in December 1964, as a replacement for his black Rickenbacker 325 after the headstock on that guitar broke.”

PAUL IS NO EXPERT

“When I was writing *Beatles Gear*, my friend, *Rolling Stone*’s David Fricke, told me that a December ‘68 issue of the magazine had a story on the White Album sessions, and he came across a photo of Paul playing a left-handed Fender Jazz Bass. Now, I had a great connection to McCartney through his guitar tech/liaison John Hammel. When something like this would come up, I’d call John, and he’d say, ‘Hang

on,’ and I’d usually hear him talking to Paul in the background. So I asked about the Jazz Bass, John went off to talk to Paul, and he came back and said, ‘No, no, no. Paul says it’s Wings only. He never used a Jazz Bass with the Beatles.’ So I go with what Paul said, you know? I didn’t put that in the book. Of course, *after* the book comes out, Fricke sends me these photo copies of Linda McCartney’s shots for the *Rolling Stone* piece, and, sure enough, Paul is using a Jazz Bass on the White Album. There was something else cool in those shots, too—Ringo playing a double kick-drum set. I asked him about that, and he said, ‘I thought I’d try what Ginger Baker and Keith Moon were doing [with double bass-drum kits], but we got to a drum break where I was supposed to do something fancy, and I just froze. I didn’t know what to do, so I never did it again.”

THE MYSTERY OF THE BLACK STRAT HEADSTOCK

“A photograph of a private rehearsal in 1965 showed John playing a black Stratocaster with a matching black headstock. I’m like, ‘What the freak is that? How many black Strats with black headstocks do you remember seeing in 1965?’ Fender will tell you they never made them in 1964 or ‘65. I talked to [author and *Beatles Gear* editor] Tony Bacon, and we think that Ivor Arbiter—who had the Fender franchise in the U.K.—might have done it, as he was known for repainting Fender guitars in England. This is how you got all those weird Shell Pink and Fiesta Red guitars that are quite a bit different from the American colors. Now, Arbiter knew that Lennon liked black guitars, so I wouldn’t be surprised if he thought, ‘I’ll paint this guitar and give it to John, and if he plays it, maybe I’ll get more Fender sales.’ We don’t know. Nobody knows. And nobody knows where the guitar is, either—which is crazier.” —MM