

The most compelling single piece of music in the History of Rock in terms of its musical quality, its cultural context, and its impact on the music industry is The Beatles Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Released in 1967, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band contained thirteen songs including "A Day in the Life", "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds", and "She's Leaving Home". The lyrics within each separate piece connected to each other, forming a central theme. The album exemplifies the counterculture present during the late 60's through its unique depiction of those involved in its album art. Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band greatly impacted the rock music scene through its musical quality, cultural context, and its impact on the music industry.

The Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album cover is not just a picture, but rather a display of modern art that defines the era. The album art features poet Edgar Allan Poe, musician Bob Dylan, actress Marilyn Monroe, writer Lewis Carroll, and many more. The album art was designed through a collaboration between all of the Beatles members. Each member wrote down important people and together they chose the most influential to add to the album cover. Rather than just depicting a picture of the band members, the album art was designed to make a statement and be a lasting piece of impactful art. The cross-section of cultures and the personal importance of each person present in the piece highlighted each individual Beatle's own interests.

The Beatles helped to change albums from being just a collection of songs to a work of interconnected art. In the album, the Beatles are pretending to be another band adequately named Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Through this, the Beatles

were able to make music like they never had before, including Indian influences in the song "Within You Without You" and more psychedelic sounds like in their song "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds". The ability for The Beatles to create this concept album greatly influenced the standard for a rock album. Soon, concept albums became the norm, in part to the creation of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Led Zeppelin IV, Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon, and Alice Cooper's From the Inside are just a few examples of concept albums that followed the release of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band changed the way in which albums and songs were written, by making them a collection of everlasting art.

Many of the song lyrics from the album convey ideas different from that of the typical rock love song. In a "Day in the Life", the song revolves around a person's everyday life. The beginning of this song was based on two stories John Lennon read in the newspaper: a young man dying when he smashed his car into a parked van and an article which told of how the Blackburn Roads Surveyor had counted 4000 holes in the roads of Blackburn and commented that the volume of material needed to fill them in was enough to fill the Albert Hall. "Blew his mind out in the car," juxtaposes against the typical love song as it discusses the topic of death. My favorite piece from the album is "She's Leaving Home". Rather than discussing women as homebodies and just objects of men's desire, this song describes the young woman as independent as she decides to leave her family in pursuit of her own happiness. "She is far away" as she moves on to live her own life, rather than the life her parents had always intended for her. In Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, the title song of the album, the Beatles

sing about being a band different than themselves. "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" allowed the Beatles to discuss different themes without having to be themselves.

While many other bands and albums have tried to recreate a concept album as instrumental Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, none have influenced rock 'n roll as much as this album. It pioneered the concept album and changed the future of rock music. Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band greatly impacted rock culture through its lyrics, album art, and concept.