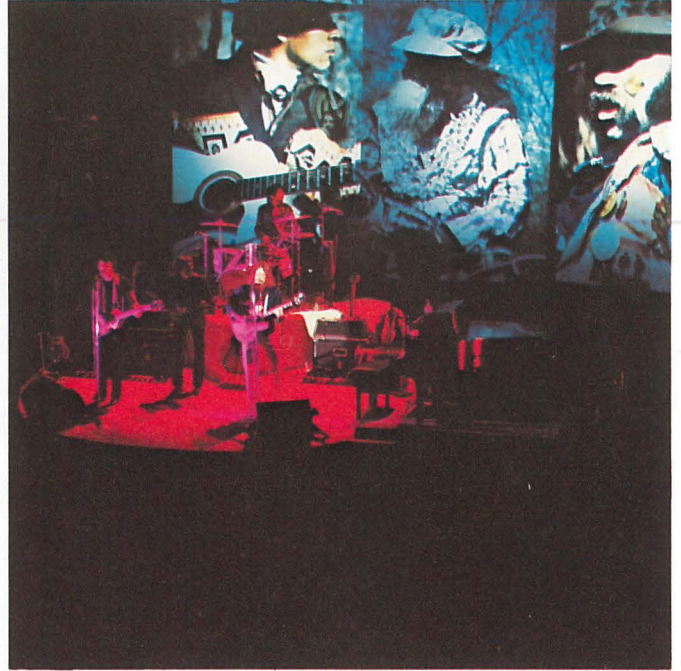


# Beatlemania

RICHARD ANDREWS



'Beatlemania — the multi-media musical experience'. 'It's *not* the Beatles . . . but you won't believe it!' So say the hoardings outside the Astoria Theatre in London. Well, believe it or not, there is certainly more media to the square inch in Beatlemania, than any show I've ever seen in the West End.

What is it then? Firstly, it is not *about* the Beatles. It takes the 'Fab Four' as one phenomenon of the 1960's, and adds to them many others, to present a recreation of the period. Four musicians, who look

and sound remarkably like the Beatles, sing twenty nine of their numbers, in roughly chronological order. There is no dialogue. Meanwhile, around them on slides, films and a newspanel, the events of the 60's unfold, both reflecting, and reflected in the music.

The show is in nine sections: *Pre Beatles* — setting the scene with the music and personalities at the opening of the decade; *Mersey Sound* — the early songs, new faces, new attitudes; *Making It* — the style of the sixties is established; *Listening*;

*Tripping* — the Sgt Pepper period; *Dropping Out*; *Flower Power* — hippies, Woodstock; *Bottoming Out* — Vietnam, student protest; and *Moving On*. Each section is introduced with a keynote film clip — a Martin Luther King speech, Jimmy Hendrix playing, an interview with Twiggy. These set the scene, and also allow changes of costumes and wigs to be made!

This is an American show, which first opened there some three years ago. The original concept was by Broadway producers Steven Leber and David Krebs, and

