

Recording the Beatles

BY KEVIN RYAN AND BRIAN KEHEW

[Curvemaker/Recording the Beatles.com]

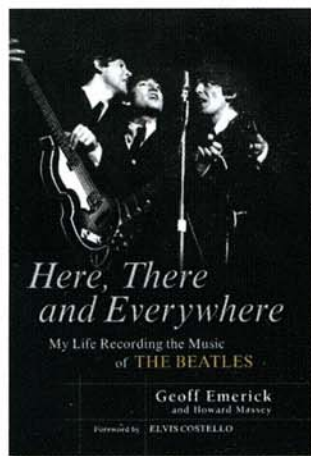
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Here, There and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles

BY GEOFF EMERICK AND HOWARD MASSEY

[Gotham Books]

Hardcover: \$26



of the mop-tops at play, a diagram that describes the physical positioning of the band members and gear, or a revelatory explanation of a key effect or technique, from hand-spooled flanging to isolation screens to reverse-tape effects.

Engineer Geoff Emerick's affectionate Beatles memoir provides both a charming and technically elucidating peek into Abbey Road, by way of anecdotes and recreated dialogue that have the effect of bringing the musty halls of the great facility to life. Emerick's straightforward, surprisingly honest recollections—including how he configured the band and used baffles to rein in the acoustics of the larger Studio One for the recording of the "Sgt. Pepper's" reprise—are fascinating and sometimes revelatory stories. There's plenty to learn—even about "mistakes" like mic leakage and extraneous noise that was often left in the original takes—and plenty to simply sit back and enjoy. For those of us who love any opportunity to visit "Beatleland," but would prefer a studio-inclined perspective, Emerick's account is the ideal insider guide. —JAMES ROTONDI



+ NAMES LIKE "Redd.37," "RS106" and "BTR3 Twin-Track" don't sound too different from the model numbers given to today's studio hardware, but the technology of these bygone units seems a lifetime away from our contemporary world of computer DAWs and sound cards. Nevertheless, everything we do in the studio today has its genesis in the explosion of recording science that took place in the Fifties and Sixties, and few books—if any—deliver such a thorough, detailed and enjoyable exegesis of vintage recording equipment as Kevin Ryan and Brian Kehew's magnificent *Recording the Beatles*. Of course, it's not simply about the best gear in the world: it's also about arguably the best engineers, the best studio, the best producer and the best band of all time—the Beatles, recording at EMI's Abbey Road Studios, with George Martin producing and Norman Smith, Geoff Emerick, Ken Scott, Chris Thomas and others in the engineer's chair. Folks, you've just hit the motherlode.

While Mark Lewisohn's excellent 2004 book *The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions* does a remarkable job of taking readers inside the day-to-day minutiae of tracking at Abbey Road, it doesn't begin to tackle the technical processes and individual components of the studio—including its layout, acoustics, equipment, personnel, philosophy, instruments—the way *RTB* does. While the book's first few sections exhaustively—but by no means drily—detail the studio's physical plant, equipment (including mixers, outboard, microphones, tape machines and speakers) and effects, it's in Section Four, Production, that the intricacies of the sessions are revealed, in a logical succession from 1962 to 1970. There is not an 11x11 page out of the 540 in this book (shipped in a gorgeous period-authentic "tape-box" slipcase) that doesn't deliver a gorgeous photograph and analysis of an actual piece of once-lost Abbey Road gear, an unseen shot

