



"The very first tune I ever learned to play was 'That'll Be The Day'. My mother Julia taught it to me on the banjo, sitting there with endless patience until I managed to work out all the chords" – JOHN LENNON

EX-BEATLE TO MAKE ACTING DEBUT!

Former Beatles drummer, **Pete Best**, is to play himself in a brand new comedy stage production called, **Lennon's Banjo**. **Written by Rob Fennah**, the show is about a quest to find the **holy grail of pop memorabilia** - the first instrument **John Lennon** learned to play which has been **missing for 60 years** and now worth millions to whoever finds it.

Set in present day Liverpool, the stage play is **based on the novel 'Julia's Banjo'** by **Rob Fennah** and **Helen A Jones**.

Pete said: *"I read the novel 'Julia's Banjo' some years ago and thought it was a great mix of fact and fiction with regards to the Beatles and the elusive banjo. It made me smile; a really enjoyable read. So, when speaking to Rob Fennah about the book becoming a stage play, I said in passing, 'I should play me!' And low and behold, here I am doing a few of the performances. I would have loved to have done all of them but prior commitments made that impossible. Anyway, either with me, or the actor playing me, this show is going to be great fun!"*

Rob Fennah, added: *"As a huge Beatles' fan, I was gobsmacked when Pete said he wanted to do it. Having a real life Beatle up there on stage is going to be a fantastic buzz, not just for those fortunate enough to get tickets for the shows Pete is performing in, but for the whole*

cast and crew. As for the play itself, I have matched the story to historical reality including dates, places and events. I want everyone to enjoy their romp through Beatledom and come out of the theatre believing, as I do, that the banjo is still out there somewhere just waiting to be found. It's The Beatles meets The Da Vinci Code!"

Pete Best's confirmed performance dates will be Wednesday 25th April 2.30pm and 7.30pm and Saturday 5th May at 7.30pm.

Lennon's Banjo – one of the most hotly-anticipated new plays of 2018 - will premiere at Liverpool's **Epstein Theatre** next spring.

Produced by **Pulse Records Ltd** in association with **Bill Elms**, Lennon's Banjo will open at Liverpool's Epstein Theatre on **Tuesday 24 April 2018 for a two-week run**, continuing through until **Saturday 5 May**.

Directed by Mark Heller, Lennon's Banjo stars **Eric Potts, Jake Abraham, Mark Moraghan, Lynn Francis** and **Roy Carruthers**, with more cast to be announced soon.

On 9 October 1957, a young **John Lennon** turned 17. It was the last birthday he would spend with his mother, Julia, who was killed the following summer in a road traffic accident. **2018 marks the 60th anniversary of Julia's death and the banjo's disappearance.**

It is well documented that Lennon was estranged from his parents and brought up by his Aunt Mimi. He said in many of his interviews: *"I lost my mother twice. Once when I was five-years-old when she left me with my Aunt Mimi, and again at 17 when she was run over by a drunken off-duty police officer."*

It was Julia Lennon who introduced John to the world of pop music, teaching him to play rock and roll on a banjo, given to her by John's grandfather. Lennon often recounted how he would sneak off to visit his mum who lived only a few miles away. There, he would learn to play songs like 'That'll Be The Day'. He has been quoted as saying: *"Mum would sit there with endless patience until I managed to work out all the chords."*

Mysteriously, the banjo went missing shortly after Julia Lennon's death and no-one has set eyes on it since. One thing is certain though, if it did resurface it is estimated to be worth in the region of five million pounds.

"The intrigue and mystery surrounding Lennon's missing banjo, and the logic that it could be sitting in somebody's attic right now, has the potential to make headlines around the world. The story crosses over beautifully from fiction to fact and back again to tease and tantalise you into believing every word is true." Trinity Mirror

So where do the facts end and the fiction begin? Everything **will** be revealed in this intriguing, colourful and fast-paced comic caper starring a talented cast of actors.

Watch the Promo Video here <https://youtu.be/ddpVnRStAmo>

For more info visit www.lennonsbanjo.com

LISTING INFORMATION

LENNON'S BANJO

Epstein Theatre

Tue 24 April – Sat 5 May 2018

Tickets from £16

Group Rates Available

HOW TO BOOK

Tickets are on sale now.

EPSTEIN THEATRE

ONLINE: www.epsteinliverpool.co.uk

CALL: 0844 888 4411

IN PERSON: Hanover Street, Liverpool, L1 3DZ | Mon-Thu 2pm-6pm, Fri & Sat 12pm-6pm

TICKETQUARTER

ONLINE: www.ticketquarter.co.uk

CALL: 0844 8000 410

IN PERSON: Echo Arena Box Office, Kings Dock, Liverpool, L3 4FP | 12noon on Echo Arena event days, and from 9am - 6pm on Fridays.

ENDS

For more information, please contact Bill Elms at Bill Elms Associates on 0151 245 0136 or email bill@billelms.com

High res images available on request.

EDITORS NOTES

Press Night Performance – Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 7.30pm

Partners and supporters



MORE ABOUT PETE BEST

Multi-Platinum Recording Artist PETE BEST - THE MAN WHO PUT THE BEAT IN BEATLES.

The Beatles became the biggest music phenomenon of the 20th century and Pete Best was the group's drummer from 1960-1962. Pete joined the Silver Beatles in August 1960 prior to the group's

first venture abroad to take up a residency playing in Hamburg – Germany on the notorious Reeperbahn. It was here they became the Beatles, dropping the silver from their name. And it was in Hamburg playing eight hours a night, seven nights a week for five months a fledgling group became a force that would eventually and literally shake the world. Pete Best played over 1,000 live performances including both night clubs and dance halls in Liverpool and Hamburg. He recorded 27 songs as a Beatle for, Polydor Records, BBC Sessions, Decca Sessions and Parlophone-EMI. Songs you no doubt know, My Bonnie, Love Me Do and PS-I Love You. Pete played their first show in Liverpool at the Casbah Coffee Club and over 200 performances at the Cavern Club. Pete was a Beatle when Beatlemania began, when they were first referred to as the Fab Four, when Brian Epstein signed them, when they transitioned from leathers to suits and quiffs to mop tops, and becoming officially recognised as Liverpool's No 1 group in the Mersey Beat Poll prior to being signed to Parlophone Records by record producer George Martin. In August 1962, in what remains a Rock 'n' Roll enigma Pete was dismissed from the group. Eight weeks later they hit the record charts in Britain. No reason for his dismissal was ever given.

Since the Beatles.

Pete has recorded and released records and CDs for Decca Records, Cameo Records, Cherry Red Records and Splash Records. He has completed three world tours. TV appearances range from Ready Steady Go to Letterman and Oprah Winfrey. A cameo in the film The Rocker. Written three books one of which, 'The Beatles, The True Beginnings' became a best seller. But, a highlight was having ten of the tracks he played on included in one of the largest selling albums of all time the multi-platinum 'Beatles Anthology.'

There have only ever been six people in the world who could call themselves a BEATLE and Pete Best is one of them.

MORE ABOUT ROB FENNAH

WRITER – PRODUCER - MUSICIAN

Born September 1958, **Rob Fennah** joined his first band, **Buster**, in 1974. Two years later the group signed to **RCA Records** and had numerous hits in Japan, Europe and Australia. By the age of 18, Rob had written his first hit and received **a gold album** and a number of best-seller awards. He has performed at some of the world's most prestigious venues including: **The Sydney Opera House**, Australia and **The Budokan**, Tokyo. In 2014, The **British Embassy** in Tokyo published a list of the most successful **top 25 UK bands in Japan** since the Beatles. Rob's band, Buster, was one of them. In 1984 Rob teamed up with his brother Alan and formed a new band, Alternative Radio. They were the first artists to sign to EMI's re-launched **Parlophone** record label (made famous by The Beatles).

A meeting with author **Helen Forrester** in 1992 resulted in Rob's adaptation of her most famous work, **Twopence To Cross The Mersey**. As a musical it grossed over 2 million at the Liverpool Empire Theatre and the recent smash-hit stage-play version has been touring the UK. Rob's new stage play, **Lennon's Banjo**, tells the story of a Beatles fan who unearths a clue to solving the greatest mystery in rock history - the whereabouts of John Lennon's first musical instrument which has been missing for 60 years. The play is adapted from the novel 'Julia's Banjo' by Rob Fennah & Co-Author Helen A Jones.

Rob is currently working on the stage sequel to Twopence To Cross The Mersey. Entitled, **By The Waters Of Liverpool** it will premiere at the Liverpool Empire Theatre in October 2018.