



A Film by Mary McCartney

RUN TIME: 88 minutes

Year of Production: 2021/2022

Year of Release: 2022

Country of Production: U.K.

Language: English

Genre: Documentary Film

TRAILER

[Available Here](#)

KEY ART POSTER

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PHOTOS

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Logline:

“If These Walls Could Sing,” from Disney Original Documentary, gives exclusive access to the most famous and longest-running studio in the world, Abbey Road Studios. In this personal film of memory and discovery, director Mary McCartney guides us through nine decades to tell the stories of some of the studio’s most iconic recordings — and the people who made them happen.

Short Synopsis:

For more than 90 years, Abbey Road Studios has been at the heart of the music industry. Fans journey every year to have their photo taken at the world-famous zebra crossing, and artists strive to follow in the footsteps of their heroes. In this personal film of memory and discovery, Mary McCartney guides us through nine decades to see and experience the creative magic that makes it the most famous and longest-running studio in the world. From classical to pop, film scores to hip-hop, Disney Original Documentary’s “If These Walls Could Sing” explores the breadth, diversity and ingenuity of Abbey Road Studios. Intimate interviews reveal how leading artists, producers, composers and the dedicated engineers and staff of Abbey Road all found their musical language and community, while vivid archive footage and session tapes give exclusive access to these famously private studios. Featuring Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, Elton John, Roger Waters, Liam Gallagher, John Williams, Celeste and Sheku Kanneh-Mason, among others.

Long Synopsis:

Abbey Road Studios is the heart of the music industry. Fans journey every year to have their photo taken at the world-famous zebra crossing to feel close to the music they love. Artists strive to follow in the footsteps of their heroes and to harness some of the studio’s magic for themselves — to leave their mark on music history too.

This is a personal film of memory and discovery: Mary McCartney's perspective through Abbey Road. The studios have been a part of Mary's life for as long as she can remember, a home from home and the place her parents made their seminal records. "If These Walls Could Sing" sees Abbey Road Studios open up their doors for the first time, as Mary guides us through nine decades to tell the stories of some of the studio's most iconic recordings and the people who made them happen.

From the first British rock 'n' roll records that inspired a generation to a band that came down to Abbey Road from Liverpool and set the world alight, Abbey Road is the birthplace of recordings that have changed the world. The Beatles learned how to be at Abbey Road; their evolution lies at the heart of the film, tracing how the band and the studios grew together, rewrote the rules of songwriting and transformed pop music forever. Pink Floyd entered the space the Beatles forged. Interviews with Roger Waters and David Gilmour piece together the band's creative process and journey to one of the world's most pioneering and successful records, "Dark Side of the Moon."

Abbey Road's classical foundations continue as a thread in the studio's story. Cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason reveals why he was drawn to Abbey Road, his connection with Jacqueline du Pré and Sir Edward Elgar, both of whom found peace and confidence at Abbey Road to create their spell-binding recordings. The studio's orchestral potential is again realized by John Williams, who reveals the secrets of what makes Abbey Road the perfect home for his masterpiece scores, including "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Star Wars."

From classical to pop, film scores to hip-hop, this film explores the breadth, diversity and ingenuity of Abbey Road Studios. Intimate interviews with leading artists, producers and composers paired with vivid archive footage and session tapes give exclusive access to these famously private studios. From Elton John to Jimmy Page, from Kate Bush to Paul McCartney to Celeste, all found their feet, their musical language, in Abbey Road Studios. Experience the creative magic that makes it a revered and sacred space that still produces many of the most recognized records today and makes Abbey Road the most famous and longest-running studio in the world.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Abbey Road Studios have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I grew up around the corner and have early memories of going to visit my parents while they were recording. The studios felt like a family. The people who worked there had also grown up there, staying years to be trained and nurtured by the generation above them. This family had also produced the music I loved; iconic, original, pioneering records that have inspired and moved me and millions of others.

A photograph of my mum leading our pony Jet across Abbey Road's zebra crossing sparked these memories again. Walking by the studios and watching people gather on the crossing to have their photos taken, people who had made the journey from all over the world, made me realize the significance of Abbey Road. There is something truly special about this place; it is much more than a building — it's a shrine to creative, original thinkers and a treasure-trove of stories.

I have always been drawn back to the studios, and when Abbey Road opened its archives — a huge collection of stills, session tapes and footage — this film began. Covering 90 years of recordings, I realized I could never include everything. I looked to find moments where artists felt comfortable to dare to push themselves and create something new. I knew Abbey Road was a trailblazing institution,

but I wanted to really unpack why and how and find emotional, personal moments of self-belief and creativity.

This process surprised and revealed so much. I was familiar with the '60s recordings, the Beatles of course, but filling in the gaps revealed immense breadth and diversity and how each period of music built upon the next, paving the way for the next generation to continue to push the envelope. From Elgar to Shirley Bassey to Ye, I found each artist embraced the space, its staff, equipment and possibilities in their own way, with an awareness of what came before and a desire to push further. I had always seen instruments lying around in the corridors, and my dad had told me stories about how the Beatles would pull in anything lying around to use on their recordings, like the comedy sound effects cupboard. But looking at Abbey Road's history in detail, the cumulative effect of the studio's building on its music history was astounding.

As a photographer, I wanted to capture the spirit of the studios visually. Being able to invite artists back to the space created intimate, emotional interviews and revealed so much for me and the subject. While gathering memories, I wanted to open the studio up to people who had never had the chance to experience it. I see this film as an opportunity to make the magic of the world's most famous studio accessible to engage with a younger audience and surprise people.

Abbey Road was a space I thought I knew, but I continue to discover new things every time I go in. For me, this process has underlined why shared creative spaces like Abbey Road Studios matter. I hope this film will carry that message.

—Mary McCartney

BIOS

Mary McCartney (Director)

Mary McCartney is an acclaimed photographer and director based in London. Mary's photographic work has focused on discovering those rare moments of unguarded, emotionally charged intimacy that offers us a new insight into the subject. Her work has concentrated on the world of portrait and is suffused with a deep personal investment that captures the creative chemistry between Mary and her subjects.

Mary's exhibitions and publishing include "Off Pointe" (2004), an in-depth photographic study of the Royal Ballet after hours, shown at The Royal Opera House and the V&A, London; "British Style Observed" (2008), shown at the National History Museum, London; "From Where I Stand" (2010), shown at the National Portrait Gallery and Michael Hoppen Gallery, London; "Mother Daughter" (2015), shown at the Gagosian Gallery, New York; and "Moments of Affection" (2022), shown at Chateau La Coste, France.

Mary executive produces and presents the Emmy® Award-nominated cooking show "Mary McCartney Serves It Up" (2020-22) for Discovery+.

Mary took a subject and place she knows well and is personal to her for her first feature-length documentary. "If These Walls Could Sing" sees Mary use her skills of portraiture to gather personal stories on film and her creative eye to visually weave them together with archive imagery and recordings into an intimate, emotional and accessible history of Abbey Road Studios.

John Battsek (Producer)

John Battsek is one of the most successful producers in feature documentary filmmaking. Starting with Academy Award®-winning “One Day In September,” which John conceived and produced, he has since been responsible for some of the most acclaimed documentaries in recent years.

John’s most notable credits include Academy Award- and BAFTA-winning “Searching for Sugar Man,” Academy Award-nominated “Restrepo” and “Winter on Fire: Ukraine’s Fight for Freedom,” and Emmy-winning “Manhunt: The Inside Story of the Hunt for Bin Laden,” “The Tillman Story” and “Forever Pure.” John served as producer on GRAMMY®-nominee “Eric Clapton: Life in 12 Bars” and the BAFTA-nominated and Peabody-winning “Listen to Me Marlon.” John also served as executive producer on the BAFTA Award-winning “The Imposter” and “Hillsborough.”

His most recent credits include the BAFTA, PGA and DGA nominee “The Rescue” (National Geographic), directed by the Academy Award-winning team behind “Free Solo,” and Critics Choice nominee “The Real Charlie Chaplin” (Showtime). He also served as producer on the double Emmy-winning “Rising Phoenix,” critically acclaimed biopics “Sir Alex Ferguson: Never Give In,” and “Lady Boss: The Jackie Collins Story,” as well as the Holocaust feature documentary “Final Account” (Focus Features), which premiered at Venice International Film Festival and was nominated for Critics Choice and Cinema Eye Awards.

In 2020, John launched his new production company, Ventureland, with long-time PrettyBird collaborators Kerstin Emhoff, Ali Brown and Paul Hunter. They are currently in production on a number of films, including Alex Gibney’s portrait of former tennis legend Boris Becker and a three-part series on David Beckham directed by Fisher Stevens.

Sarah Thomson (Producer)

Sarah Thomson is an award-winning producer based in London. “The Australian Dream,” the first feature documentary conceived and produced by Sarah, opened the 2019 Melbourne International Film Festival, where it won the Audience Award. “The Australian Dream” screened at international film festivals, including Telluride, Toronto, London, Hawaii and IDFA. The film won numerous awards, including the Australian Academy of Cinema Awards for Best Documentary, an Asian Academy Creative Award, a Screen Producers Award and a Walkley Award for excellence in journalism. It was nominated for a British Independent Film Award, and Sarah was longlisted for the 2021 BAFTA Outstanding Debut. Sarah is currently producing a number of projects, including a feature documentary by Emmy Award-winning director Maya Zinshtein (“Forever Pure,” “Til Kingdom Come”) and a feature documentary for A24.

Before joining Ventureland, Sarah spent three years working in development and production at Passion Pictures, a double Academy Award-winning production company. Prior to joining Passion, Sarah spent five years working at Universal Pictures in theatrical distribution.

Miles Coleman (Producer)

Miles Coleman is a producer based in London. As head of development for Ventureland, he oversees a slate of new documentary projects in both series and feature formats, as well as producing. Miles ran the development of “If These Walls Could Sing” from its initial idea stage into commissioning and production. He is currently producing a four-part series for Netflix on corruption in sport with BAFTA-winning director Daniel Gordon.

Prior to joining Ventureland, Miles worked for Passion Pictures and October Films, as well as producing freelance in the U.K. and Spain. "If These Walls Could Sing" is his first feature documentary as a producer.

Paul Carlin (Editor)

Paul Carlin has been editing documentaries and dramas for television and cinema for over 20 years. His most recent credits include "Bobi Wine, Ghetto President," an official selection at the Telluride Film Festival 2022 and Venice Biennale 2022, and "Serendipity," an official selection at the Berlin International Film Festival and Tribeca Film Festival 2019. Paul won an RTS Award in 2018 for Best Editing for the BBC TV series "The Detectives: Murder on the Streets."

Paul's drama credits include "I'll Sleep When I'm Dead," directed by Mike Hodges, and "In the Dark Half," directed by Alastair Siddons.

Alice Webb (Executive Producer)

As CEO and co-president of Mercury Studios, Alice Webb brings an extraordinary track record for innovation, collaboration and creativity to one of the world's greatest catalogs of music history. Working with filmmakers such as Martin Scorsese, Brett Morgan, Stanley Nelson and Mary McCartney, and artists such as The Rolling Stones, Eminem, Shania Twain and Yungblud, Mercury is a premium studio for music-based storytelling.

Alice's media career is founded on 15 years at the BBC, where she led over 35,000 hours of output across TV, Radio and online, covering Education, BBC Children's, Sport, Radio and more. Her central role in reorganizing the BBC for the modern age, including pioneering initiatives in the digital space, gives her unprecedented insight as she positions Mercury Studios as a world-class incubator for nurturing and delivering high-quality, dynamic and relevant storytelling.

Marc Robinson (Executive Producer)

Marc Robinson has worked at the intersection of film, television and music for almost 20 years in various roles within the Universal Music Group. Over that time, he has accumulated a wealth of filmmaker relationships, award-winning projects and industry expertise. Co-president of the recently launched Mercury Studios, Marc is jointly spearheading Mercury Studios' drive to create world-class music-rooted content for a global audience.

Marc is also president of Globe Productions, Universal Music U.K.'s partnerships division. Previously Globe Productions has produced feature-length documentaries for iconic global acts, from Max Richter to Queen. Globe Productions also partnered with Asif Kapadia and James Gay-Rees for the Academy Award- and BAFTA-winning "Amy." Through Globe's Soundtrack & Score Initiative, Marc has overseen investment in soundtrack creation for a host of internationally acclaimed films, including Tom Harper's "Wild Rose," Idris Elba's directorial debut "Yardie," Stephen Woolley's "On Chesil Beach," Netflix's "Watership Down" series, and George Nolfi's "The Banker." Previous credits also include soundtracking for Quentin Tarantino's Academy Award-winning "The Hateful Eight," Richard Curtis' "About Time," John Carney's Golden Globe® nominated "Sing Street," "No Time To Die" and the Renee Zellweger-led "Judy."

Kerstin Emhoff (Executive Producer)

Kerstin Emhoff is the CEO of Ventureland, a creative studio developing entertainment properties and original IP alongside the top filmmakers and studios.

Kerstin's film credits include Netflix's "XOXO," Atlas Entertainment and A24's "The Monster," HBO's Primetime Emmy Award winner "Manhunt: The Inside Story of the Hunt for Bin Laden," Emmy Award-winning "The Tillman Story," as well as Showtime's "Ready for War," which premiered at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival and made its U.S. debut at the 2019 AFI Fest.

Most recently, Kerstin produced "American Rapstar," which premiered at the 2020 SXSW Film Festival, and "AKA Jane Roe," a feature documentary revealing the truth behind Roe v. Wade plaintiff Norma McCorvey's life. Kerstin is currently in production on Werner Herzog's latest documentary.

Ali Brown (Executive Producer)

Ali Brown is a producer and president of Ventureland. As a producer, she has worked on a variety of projects, including the Daniels' award-winning Sundance New Frontier short film "Possibilia," the Quibi TV series "Kirby Jenner," and Melina Matsoukas' multiple award-winning commercial campaign "You Love Me" for Beats by Dre.

Ali served as executive producer on "AKA Jane Roe" (FX), "American Rapstar" (World Premiere at SXSW 2020), and "The Drew: No Excuse, Just Produce" (directed by NBA All-Star Baron Davis and acquired by Showtime). She helped architect the Indeed Rising Voices program partnership with Hillman Grad and the Tribeca Film Fest, and she just wrapped production on a series she is executive producing alongside Melina Matsoukas for Hulu. She is currently acting as executive producer on David Oyelowo-led dramedy "Government Cheese," created by Paul Hunter and in development with Apple.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Mercury Studios is a full-service production studio originating, producing, selling, distributing, and investing in scripted, unscripted, and live content.

Editorially independent, Mercury Studios is powered by Universal Music Group and represents the world's leading catalog of music-related content.

Current projects include "My Life as a Rolling Stone," a four-part docu series of intimate portraits of Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Ronnie Wood and Charlie Watts, *If These Walls Could Sing*, the untold story of the world-famous Abbey Road Studios, directed by celebrated British photographer and filmmaker Mary McCartney; *Contact High: A Visual History of Hip-Hop*, a feature documentary from Oscar-winning director/producer Joseph Patel (*Summer of Soul*), adapted from Vikki Tobak's best-selling book; and *Shania Twain: Not Just a Girl*, a career documentary about the superstar that is available on Netflix.

Mercury Studios' *Miles Davis: Birth of The Cool* was recently honored with two Emmys for Outstanding Arts and Culture Documentary and Outstanding Sound. *ZZ Top: That Little Ol' Band from Texas* also received a 2021 Grammy Award nomination for Best Music Film. The feature documentaries are part of the Mercury Studios library, consisting of nearly 2,000 hours of programming.

Ventureland is an independent creative studio that specializes in developing original entertainment properties that span traditional and emerging media platforms, including theatrical, streaming, podcasts, and more. Founded by Academy Award-winning producer John Battsek ("One Day in September," "Searching for Sugar Man") and PrettyBird partners Kerstin Emhoff, Ali Brown, and Paul

Hunter, Ventureland collaborates with acclaimed filmmakers and the world's top studios to deliver award-winning film and TV.

Ventureland is currently in production on a biopic on Boris Becker directed by Academy Award winner Alex Gibney ("Taxi to the Dark Side") and the upcoming documentary on Wham! directed by Chris Smith.

CREDITS

DIRECTOR

MARY MCCARTNEY

PRODUCERS

JOHN BATTSEK
SARAH THOMSON
MILES COLEMAN

EDITOR

PAUL CARLIN

STORY PRODUCER

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

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KERSTIN EMHOFF
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