

# MUSIC

## My pilgrimage to the heart of rock n' roll

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
 Johnny Cash's tour bus that was located outside of the Rock n' Roll Hall of fame.

Not many people were there when Eric Clapton played his live, unplugged set. Only a handful of people saw Bob Dylan at his typewriter, typing the lyrics to "Like a Rolling Stone." Only Jim Morrison, his teacher, and his parents were able to

see his third grade report card.

However, last summer I got an opportunity to make a pilgrimage to the place where not only can

you see such artifacts, but also you can experience them first hand.

From the I-90 exit into Cleveland, I saw the giant, glass, pyramid-like structure that encases the world of rock and roll.

Walking from my car to the front door, a thou-

sand things ran through my mind. "Will I get to see everything?" "Can I take pictures?" "Will I see David Bowie's costume from *Labyrinth*?" Although the answer to all of these questions was "No," the experience was well worth the trip.

On the front steps of the building,

I noticed there was a mysterious, 80s-looking black bus. Like any curious music fan, I walked up to it and was immediately star-struck. On display outside of the Hall was Johnny Cash's last tour bus. For only \$2 with my admission, I was able to walk on the same bus that Johnny, June, and John Jr. rode while on tour. I was immediately taken to "Walk the Line" and I envisioned them on the bus at the same time. I heard Johnny whisper in my ear, in his deep, gravelly voice, "Don't take a picture of my toilet on your cell phone. That's illegal."

After the bus I walked with my girlfriend Emily to embark on a life-changing experience. It's important to have the right company when at a place such as the Rock Hall. While she may not know as much about the annals of music like I do, she can recognize

names when I spot their artifacts. Also, her amazement made me feel like a rock professor when I told stories of Simon and Garfunkel recording the soundtrack for *The Graduate* and how Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page were all part of The Yardbirds before becoming famous guitarists.

Everything I could ever imagine and much more was encased in thin, glass cases, inches away from my fingertips. Everything from early Sun Records recordings of Elvis and Carl Perkins, all the way to a Vans Warped Tour exhibit, featuring instruments, clothing and skateboards from such punk bands as Pennywise, Bad Religion and MxPx. With all of these artifacts surrounding me, the trip turned into a crazy Magic School Bus-like journey into the core of my most prominent dreams.

Even the exhibits in which I had no prior interest were life changing. Every year, the Rock Hall has certain bands or musicians that are on display. The featured musicians are portrayed through old albums, photos, childhood memories, love letters, and everything that pertains to their lives and careers. The two bands that were focused this time were The Doors and The Clash. In my own opinion, Jim Morrison was too egotistical to find a place on my rock and roll guest list. Furthermore The Clash just didn't appeal to me. However, it was the dedication to music that was shown through the exhibit that actually made them interesting.

The last thing we watched, after buying \$3 waters and over-priced snack food, was a video tribute to every Hall of Fame inductee from the Hall's inception- everyone from Fats Domino, Elvis Presley and Hank Williams, to more modern groups such as U2, R.E.M. and The Police.

Music has been more than just a hobby to me. Ever since I became a music fan, the artists, songs and albums that are associated with the industry became my New Testament. Before music, I knew I was missing a spiritual aspect of my life.

The earliest albums I remember owning are Green Day's *Dookie* and Nirvana's *Nevermind*. The pure motivation and art behind these albums got me hooked. At that point I became a fan.

The first artist I became thoroughly involved in was Bob Dylan. My first vinyl record that I owned

was Dylan's *Bringing It All Back Home*. At that point, I became a disciple.

The first artifact that I was drawn to was the guitar owned by Robbie Robertson of The Band- the same guitar Robertson used during "The Last Waltz." It was similar to seeing one of Michelangelo's paintbrush, Lincoln's top hat or Columbus' map. I was an arm's length away from the guitar that brought us such killer guitar riffs as the ones from "Up On



Cripple Creek" and "The Weight."

It is important for everyone to have a hobby. Many people collect model cars. Others play competitive poker. Still others go on weekend bike-rides. These activities cleanse people's spirits and renew their lives daily. For me, dropping a needle down on a Dylan or Cash album is therapeutic. This is the extent of importance that is the pilgrimage to the Rock Hall. Not only can I see for myself the artifacts that have helped the music industry flourish and evolve. But I can also pay homage and respect for the artists, living and deceased that have changed my life.

Most Islamic people make an annual trip to Mecca, for their yearly Hajj, the fifth pillar. There, they validate their existence to religion by submitting themselves to God. Likewise, with my annual trips to the Rock and Roll Hall of fame, I continue to surrender my life as just an avid fan of music and engage in a life of devotion to the men and women that gave sound to my life.

### Weekly Musical Trivia for the Behrend Beacon

Who founded the Lollapalooza festivals?

- A. Perry Farrell
- B. Jonathan Poneman
- C. Dave Navarro
- D. Michael Lang

Answer to last week's question: D. Brian Eno

### Quote of the week:

*"I don't know how many songs he has right now. Two hundred and fifty? Three hundred? He just flips through 'em, and says, 'Heeey, remember this one?' No particular reason other than just he hadn't done it very often, or hadn't done it for a long time. The wonderful... freedom... that our audience allows us is something that's fairly unique. We're able to do almost anything at any time and people seem to dig it."*

-Steve Van Zandt on Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band touring

## National Music News in Brief

By Ryan P. Gallagher  
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*Apple attempts to make music even cheaper, Queen is back with a new, but familiar voice, and Coldplay's fourth album is almost here..*

According to the Financial Times, Apple has recently been considering selling iPods and iPhones that include unlimited access to the iTunes music store. A one time fee would be required to pay at the time of purchasing the afore mentioned Apple products and listeners would then be able to download unlimited music until their product's life expires.

Nokia worked out a similar partnership with Universal Music Group last year where consumers could pay an \$80 fee for unlimited Universal tunes. Apple is presently attempting to keep the cost closer to \$20, while the record labels obviously are pushing for something closer to that of the Nokia/Universal deal.

Steve Jobs, president of Apple, agreed that the subscription method has failed so far (i.e. Napster, Rhapsody), but doesn't see how consumers could not show an interest if the cost be a mere \$20.

Queen is preparing to release their first album of new material since the late Freddie Mercury branded his memorable vocals to the creative melodies the band produced in the 70s/80s. Their last studio album, recorded in 1995, was entitled *Made in Heaven* and featured the last vocal recording of Mercury before his death in 1991.

However, the band is re-living the past now with former front man of the band Bad Company, Paul Rodgers, who will be performing vocals for the latest album expected to release Sep. 1. Two weeks later the group plans to hit the road with their first tour in years. "Say It's Not True" was already released as a free download on World Aids Day and the rest of the album was recorded late last year and early this year.

"I heard a Bono quote once that said, 'Bands shouldn't break up over money, they should break up over the track listing,'" says frontman for Coldplay Chris Martin. "Nothing could be more pertinent at this point." The band is focusing on the mixing and producing of their upcoming album *Viva la Vida*, after much time spent writing and recording, while producer Brian Eno skips back and forth between Coldplay and U2, who is also in creation of a new record.

The band was quoted referencing their first three albums as a trilogy and can't wait to reveal their fourth album in which they say possesses a brand new

sound. About six songs have been agreed upon by the band as definite features on the album while the other tracks are yet to be affirmative. The band has sold 11 million copies, however, Martin sees this as the last chance to "make it". "This could be our last shot at the big time," he says. "It's something in my head, as in artistic relevance. There's a voice that comes at three in the morning with songs. There might come an age when you say, 'Ah, \*\*\*\* it, I'm going to go back to sleep.' But I'm still at the point where I'll get up and work it out." The album is expected early summer.

Source: Rollingstone.com

### Top 5 albums released before their time by Chris LaFuria

5. *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea* by Neutral Milk Hotel- Intense acid/psych-folk

4. *Highway 61 Revisited* by Bob Dylan- the first white boy blues album

3. *Rock Around the Clock* by Bill Haley and his Comets- first successful rock album

2. *What's Going On?* by Marvin Gaye- beginning of meaningful smooth R&B with a message

1. *Kick Out the Jams* by MC5- introduced the world to hard rock