

**Obituaries**

# Geoff Emerick, recording engineer who shaped the sound of the Beatles, dies at 72

By Staff Reports and News Services

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Geoff Emerick, who worked as a recording engineer for the Beatles and played an important role in the creation of landmark albums such as “Revolver” and “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” died Oct. 2. He was 72.

His death was [confirmed by Abbey Road Studios](#) in London, where Mr. Emerick had begun his career at 15, the same week the Beatles began working in the studio. His manager, William Zabaleta, [told Variety](#) that Mr. Emerick suffered from heart problems, and he said the engineer collapsed and died while they were talking on the telephone.

Mr. Emerick served as the Beatles’ principal audio engineer beginning with their 1966 album “Revolver.”

“He brought a new kind of mind to the recordings,” Beatles producer [George Martin](#) once told *Mojo* magazine, “always suggesting sonic ideas, different kinds of reverb, what we could do with the voices. He was quite prepared to break rules. ‘You call that top? This is top!’ he’d say, turning [the dial] all the way round.”

For the “Revolver” song “[Tomorrow Never Knows](#),” Mr. Emerick often recalled, he came up with an unusual solution to a request from singer John Lennon, who told him he wanted his voice to sound like “the Dalai Lama singing from a mountaintop 25 miles away from the studio.”

Mr. Emerick found a way to process Lennon’s voice through a revolving speaker to produce a masterpiece of psychedelic music. “That sort of won John over,” the engineer said in 2016.

Mr. Emerick later worked on the Beatles’ self-titled 1968 record, commonly known as “The White Album,” and received Grammys for both “Sgt. Pepper’s” (1967) and “Abbey Road” (1969).

He received a third Grammy for “Band on the Run” (1973), by Beatles singer-songwriter Paul McCartney’s group Wings, and was also credited on albums by artists such as Elvis Costello, Supertramp and Cheap Trick.

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