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Gagosian London to Exhibit Photographs by Paul McCartney Taken During the Early Rise of Beatlemania, Before The Beatles Became Global Icons

Opening on August 28, Exhibition Offers Opportunity to Acquire Rare, Signed Photographs from His Personal Archive



Paul McCartney, At London Airport (with Brian Epstein, Mal Evans, and Neil Aspinall) for Pan Am flight 101 to New York City, 7 February 1964, 2025 © Paul McCartney

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LONDON, August 11, 2025—Gagosian is pleased to present *Rearview Mirror: Liverpool–London–Paris*, an exhibition of photographs by Paul McCartney opening on August 28 at the Davies Street gallery in London. The works chronicle McCartney and his fellow Beatles as their reputation spread beyond Liverpool and Hamburg between December 1963 and early February 1964. Each picture was taken with McCartney’s 35mm Pentax camera, acquired in late 1963 around the time that the term “Beatlemania” was coined to describe the unprecedented mass hysteria that followed the band’s every move.

Seen from McCartney’s perspective as both protagonist and observer, his photographs—a mix of single frames and multi-image works—comprise a singular contribution to the visual record of the 1960s, a culturally and socially transformative decade. Shot with unassuming candor, the works at Davies Street offer an intimate account of the band as they toured across the UK and in Paris in the formative weeks before their debut visit to America. They show the in-between moments tied to key events in The Beatles’ trajectory: their autumn 1963 UK tour, their first as headliners; their appearance on the BBC’s *Juke Box Jury*, which garnered a record 23 million viewers; *The Beatles Christmas Show*, which greatly broadened their appeal; and their three-week residency at the Olympia Theatre in Paris, an early proving ground.

An enigmatic self-portrait shows McCartney reflected in the mirror of his attic room—where he dreamed the melody for “Yesterday”—in the London family home of his then-girlfriend, Jane Asher. The group’s camaraderie and cool is captured in atmospheric scenes backstage at the Lewisham Odeon, London Palladium, and Finsbury Park Astoria. Enlarged contact sheets recount in rich detail vignettes marked by an unguardedness that could only have been recorded by one of their own, including the charged moments before the band’s transatlantic flight took off for New York.

Remastered from original negatives and contact sheets thought to have been lost for over half a century, each of the works has been prominently signed by McCartney, issued in a small edition, and framed in a bespoke profile of his design. *Rearview Mirror: Liverpool–London–Paris* follows McCartney’s debut presentation at the gallery earlier this year at Gagosian Beverly Hills, and coincides with the touring exhibition *Paul McCartney Photographs 1963–64: Eyes of the Storm*, which opened at the National Portrait Gallery in London in 2023 and which is currently on view at the de Young, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, through October 5.

Paul McCartney was born in Liverpool, England, in 1942. Passionate about art from a young age, he became attuned to the medium of photography as a teenager upon seeing the pictures published in the sports section of the *Observer*, as well as those taken by his younger brother, Michael. This was reinforced when The Beatles, during their time in Hamburg, Germany, befriended the photographers Astrid Kirchherr and Jürgen Vollmer, who were influential in helping the group form a distinct visual identity. In the mid-1960s McCartney encountered the British avant-garde through John Dunbar, a cofounder of Indica Books and Gallery, and gallerist Robert Fraser, who introduced McCartney to Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, Peter Blake, and Richard Hamilton—the latter two artists invited by McCartney to design Beatles album covers that became instantly iconic. In the early 1980s, inspired by a discussion with Willem de Kooning, McCartney took up painting, exhibiting his work at the Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, in 2000, and at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, in 2002. *Paul McCartney Photographs 1963–64: Eyes of the Storm* was organized by the National Portrait Gallery, London, opening there in 2023 before traveling to the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia (2023–24); Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York (2024); Tokyo City View (2024); Knowledge Capital Event Lab, Osaka, Japan (2024–25); Portland Art Museum (2024–25); de Young, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (2025); and Frist Art Museum, Nashville (2025–26).

#PaulMcCartney

PAUL MCCARTNEY

Rearview Mirror: Liverpool–London–Paris

August 28–October 4, 2025

17–19 Davies Street, London

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