



And now, thrown together at the last minute, here's something...

Completely Different

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A Farewell to George

by Steve Brezler

As we all know hopefully by now, George Harrison, the third Beatle, passed away in late November. He was the one who introduced Eastern spirituality to the Fab Four. When they broke up, he, like the other three, made a brief solo comeback some time later. He has a one hit wonderful return with the 1987 "I've Got My Mind Set on You". It was later followed by "When We Was Fab."

At some point, he said that after he and John, Paul, and Ringo broke up, Monty Python carried the torch of the celebration of fun that they had started. So this would be very appropriate to mention: George Harrison is no more. He has ceased to be. He's expired and gone to meet his maker. He's a stiff. He's bereft of life. He rests in peace. He's pushing up the daisies. He's off the twig. He's kicked the bucket. He's drawn down the curtain and joined the bleeding choir invisible. He is an ex-Beatle.

Wherever he is, he's with John and Linda and Graham. But maybe he'll come back as the next person who walks into the room. You never know.

Editor's note: Harrison also co-founded the British production company Handmade Films in order to make Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, in which he has a very small cameo role. "He died as he lived," said friend Eric Idle, "with dignity, with bravery and with comedy...I loved him from the first moment I met him and I shall miss his eyes, his laughter, his honesty and his wonderful guitar playing. The world has lost a very fine man but we are all the richer for his life." In Harrison's memory, then (but also because we're in desperate need of filler) *Completely Different* is pleased to present this article stolen from the Sunday, December 2, edition of *The London Observer*:

George Harrison and Film

by Michael Palin

Back in 1978, EMI had picked up *Life of Brian* and we had a deal organised. We had our shooting schedules and carpenters had even been sent out to Tunisia. The sets were being built. Then someone at EMI looked at the project at the last minute and said: 'We can't do that.'

It was going to be a big problem getting another company interested at that late stage. Eric Idle had formed quite a close friendship with George, because he was a fan of our TV shows and he had appeared in *The Rutles*. So Eric said: 'We're in a pickle, can you help?' He went straight to his manager and they came up with a deal. I've heard it said George mortgaged his house to get the money, but that may be apocryphal. At any rate, he must have raised money against his royalties, because it was hard for anyone to come up with £6 million, just like that.

At the time George said he just wanted to see the film, which must make it the highest price paid for a cinema ticket ever. He saved that movie, anyway. It is quite odd that as George faded away last month it has just been named as one of the best films of all time in last weekend's Channel 4 list.

People tend to forget how much protest there was about *Brian*, but George loved its subversive quality. He and the Beatles had been through this kind of controversy before when Lennon said they were as famous as Jesus. He rather relished it, I think. He was wicked and he had a dry Liverpudlian wit, the kind that quickly pins down what is absurd about something. Amazingly, he kept that even though he had had to get used to living like a member of the royal family, or like a god. After John was shot he didn't go out so much. There was some fear after that, I think, and he had never really enjoyed the star thing - the price he had to pay for fame.

He is actually in *Brian*, wearing a false beard. It is the moment when *Brian's* mother turns round from talking to the crowds out of her window and finds the room full of people wanting her son. It was a very discreet performance.

Having created Handmade Films, he went on with it. After Brian, he saved The Long Good Friday - they couldn't find anybody to distribute it. He was never very hands-on as a producer. He visited the set, but didn't like people bowing down or saying thank you.

His love of comedy got him involved, but after that I think he enjoyed the risk. When Terry Gilliam came to him with a plan for the Time Bandits, he just said 'Oh yeah, Terry, That's fine. Horses going through walls, I love what you do.' George helped me with The Missionary too and then he funded Private Function, the only film Alan Bennett has ever done, though he was always rather embarrassed to admit he only got to about page three in the script.

When you look at that Handmade slate, they are really very good films. There was Withnail too. Only with the last few did things begin to slide. Once there were fewer people he knew involved, he got less interested and just did it because he was told there were tax advantages.

He kept up with all of the Pythons and we got over the hero worship, but I never really got over the shock of the fact that a Beatle was a fan of my work. We visited him in Switzerland in August when he was ill. It was difficult to know what to do when someone is having treatment like that, but I think when they are just seeing doctors, they often want to see mates and talk about other things. And he did talk. I always find the idea that he was the quiet Beatle quite funny. He never lost that spark and I will miss him very badly.

What the Penn State Monty Python Society Means to Me as told to Victor Colonna

"A society? About pythons? At Penn State? I didn't know we had one of those." - An Average Penn State Student

"I wish those idiots would stop sending me CDs where they make fun of me. And those flyers too!" - Graham Spanier

"Their flagrant disregard for my flagrant disregard for the First Amendment just makes me sick!" - Representative John Lawless

"No! Mother Theresa was NOT fired out of a cannon, nor did she love 'sea men!' We just decided to make her a saint, is all." - Pope John Paul II

"I'd like to attend a meeting, but we've got all these things, and we need to put them in other things, and the Campus Box Sale is over, and now we're screwed." - President of the Society for Putting Things Into Other Things

"What, they think they're funny? Yeah, well, then, why don't they have a magazine? Huh? Or a loan? Huh? Or a—ACK! (gurgle)" - The President of Phroth being killed

"For the last time, I am NOT the new biohazard symbol! They gave that to the Texaco star." - Mr. Peanut

"First off, my children don't smell. Next, I've seen God personally, and he doesn't sound like Fred. Also I don't even like Catholic schoolgirls." - Gary, the Willard Preacher

"Personally I don't have a problem with the Scottish. We have several Scottish members. It's the damn Irish you have to watch out for." - The President of YAF

