



The music was undergoing a profound change. The Beatles' 'Sgt. Pepper' may have been the recognizable turning point but in effect it only highlighted an unspoken trend. The lines were firmly drawn between 'rock' and 'pop'. Rock was somehow more serious than pop; less manifestly commercial. Suddenly, the music became intellectual, largely because outsiders (particularly critics in journals that hitherto had sneered at teenage music) found enough in it to fuel their pens and attract their attentions. The music became an art form.

The transformation was important because it created a class structure. There was a certain arrogance about 'serious' rock that condemned pop as trivial. It also, perhaps dangerously, started to affect the audiences who elevated their rock heroes to the stature of saints or supermen. At the very least it helped make supergroups. Such is the major theme of the issue. The formation of supergroups is discussed; the questions are posed. Why should a band of good musicians suddenly be placed on a pedestal so large that it can only tumble into disappointment? Why did some last a reasonable course while others disappeared like a bubble? Among the more enduring are Led Zeppelin who manage somehow to live through the hype and emerge in the face of honest criticism as a good, perhaps great, but certainly not near-Godlike group. This band is analyzed, as is the trend towards 'clever' rock, another facet of the intellectualization of a popular entertainment medium. The hey-day of such pretensions was short but the effects linger in a more serious but less over-acclaimed attitude to music.

In addition, the superior songwriting talents of Pete Townshend are discussed and show that his intelligence, while obvious, has never allowed itself to be over-puffed by extravagant praise. We also look at another 'serious' trend, that of black music to a wider consciousness and social awareness.

Correction: The article on Otis Redding in Issue 14 was written by Neil Spencer, not Roger St. Pierre as printed.

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Cover: Joe Stevens.

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 (BPC Publishing Ltd./BBC Publications Ltd. Made and printed in Great Britain by Petty & Sons Ltd., Leeds.
 All charts positions and release dates refer to the UK unless otherwise stated.

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