

Double Fantasy: John and Yoko

Museum of Liverpool

18th May 2018 – 3rd November 2019

As a longstanding Beatles' fan, I took myself to Liverpool over the Easter holidays. I had visited the excellent Museum of Liverpool before, but, having seen a poster advertising the John and Yoko exhibition, I had to give it another go! And I'm so glad I did.

Approaching the iconic building, I saw the words 'Imagine Peace' facing out across the Mersey. Entry to this temporary exhibition is free. It's laid out chronologically, primarily telling the story of John and Yoko's peace movements. OK, I knew a lot of the history, but it was nice to see it exhibited so carefully. "From Liverpool to Tokyo...", from the song 'You Are Here' on the album *Mind Games*, are words that have always resonated with me about how any two people meet and spend their lives together. Their meeting in London for Yoko's art exhibition at the Indica Gallery was covered, including a replica of the ladder John climbed to see the word 'YES' written on the ceiling. I remember him talking about that so passionately at the time. I picked up a little card that said 'breathe'. Yes, live in the moment. The controversial *Two Virgins* – how innocent it appears now.

There are interviews with UK and US talk show hosts in which John and Yoko explained what they were doing for peace and justice - Vietnam and Ireland (they were never ones to shirk difficult issues of the times). I found myself absorbed as they spoke about being interviewed in a bag. A lot of people at the time thought they were silly. John and Yoko talked about prejudice and how if people were inside a bag, then they couldn't be judged on their race or gender. Years ahead of their time, John and Yoko embraced so many causes and it was wonderful to see their youth and enthusiasm being celebrated once more.



John's green military shirt was there; I had the poster of him wearing it in my bedroom as a teenager. His NYC T-shirt, his NHS glasses from 1967, the bed-ins, the guitar with John's drawings on it, Yoko's book *Grapefruit*. The lost weekend. John's Green Card. You know the story. Yes, there was Beatles' stuff, too: Sgt Pepper and the lyrics for 'Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite'. I was drawn, like many visitors, to Yoko's art. Her remarkable white chess set was there with people taking photos of each other with it. There was a striking photo of John, surrounded by post-its with messages of peace and love. I was overcome by emotion. Two young men were nervously deciding whether to write something and they did. Then, I was on my own. So, I wrote something too.



The exhibition was busy, but there was a lot of space for people of all ages and cultures who were visiting. Actually, it's a real coup for The Museum of Liverpool. It's world class! There's a dedicated shop and more to see and watch and photograph than one visit would allow. I'll be going back. I recommend you do, too.

Tim Wyncoll, BBFC Member

