

NOW WE'RE TALKIN

By Helen Marketti

A chat with Peter Asher

Peter Asher and Albert Lee to perform at Night Town in Cleveland on July 17 and 18

Grammy Award winner, Peter Asher has a career spanning over fifty years. One of his most recognizable roles was being one-half of 60s music duo, Peter & Gordon. Their hits included, "I Go To Pieces" (written by Del Shannon) and "World Without Love" (written by Paul McCartney). He then went on to become A & R for The Beatles record company, Apple. Over the years, Peter has managed James Taylor, Linda Ronstadt, Joni Mitchell and Carole King. His career is lengthy and diverse.

Peter started acting at an early age and worked in a variety of roles in film, radio, TV and stage productions. He studied Philosophy in college. "I never really knew what I wanted to do as a career. The reason I chose Philosophy was because it was the vaguest subject I could think of and had the greatest flexibility," he recalls. "You weren't preparing for anything in particular. It generally surprised me when I eventually launched into all of these areas of my career."

Peter reflects on knowing Gordon Waller. "Gordon and I went to school together. He liked to play guitar and sing. We liked a lot of the same music. He was a bit more of a rocker than I was. He liked Elvis and Eddie Cochran whereas I was more of a folkie. We liked to sing together. We liked the style of the Everly Brothers."

After nearly 40 years, Peter and Gordon reunited for a benefit in 2005 that was for Mike Smith of the Dave Clark Five. Mike became paralyzed after suffering a fall at his home. Paul Shaffer (former bandleader for David Letterman) had organized the event. Peter and Gordon continued to perform for an occasional show until Gordon's passing in 2009.

Peter's energy continues, as he is involved with many projects. "I love music. I love working in the studio with great musicians and singers. I like to stay busy. I am one of those people who have a great deal of energy. I don't sleep through the night but still wake up in the morning raring to go. I am fortunate even now

at my great age. I don't feel old or that I should retire in the slightest. I don't need much to keep me inspired."

One of Peter's endeavors is doing a weekly show called, From Me To You on The Beatles Sirius XM radio station. "Someone called and asked if I wanted to do a show on the station. Before I accepted, however, I wanted to make sure it was endorsed by The Beatles themselves which it was and then I happily said, "Yes!"

Peter will be doing a show with Albert Lee at Night Town in Cleveland on July 17 and 18. Their show will be a combination of music and sharing memories. "Albert and I have known each other a long time. I have always been a fan of his guitar playing. He is such an amazing guitar player that some people overlook that he is an amazing singer," said Peter. "We played together before for benefits and other events. We had fun and people liked it. Actually, someone had suggested the idea of Albert and I doing an acoustic show together. Whenever each of us is free, we will get together and do a few show dates. We do not have a band or a slideshow playing in the background. Albert and I aim for an intimate living room feel. We sing and reminisce. We welcome questions from the audience and even heckling is fine. (laughs) We are playing in these really cool, smaller places which enable more interaction with the audience."

Lastly, Peter offers his thoughts on the influence of the 60s. "There are 2 different aspects of the 60s. On one hand, it was great fun. Everyone wore flowered shirts, beads, smoked dope and had sex. On the other hand, it also coincided with serious political awareness and protest. I think youth at that time wanted to escape the 1950s. During the 50s, kids were dressing like their parents. We wanted our own identity. We were taught that grown ups were never wrong and they always know what they are doing. I am a grown up now and I guess I have to admit it. (laughs) Unfortunately there are grown ups that are still in charge and do not seem to be doing very well. The spirit of the 60s is needed now more than ever."

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