

CINEMA MCCARTNEY

BY JOAN GOODMAN

Part One: Beatles Whipped with Spoons

It's hard, it's always hard the first time," says Paul McCartney. "I remember when we were starting out, I mean the Beatles, we didn't get it right the first time either. This ballroom dancing scene in the film reminded me of that and took me back a bit. We used to play ballrooms a lot you know.

"They were never as grand as this," McCartney gazes up at the sound stage at Ellstree Studios, outside London. It is an elaborate recreation of London's historic Lyceum Ballroom — great swags of pink velvet and ornate splashes of gold paint. On the dance floor, formation dancers in pink tulle dresses remove their pumps and relax their feet, while a technical problem with the camera which is on a crane is sorted out. McCartney, in a fifties-style bright blue drape suit and black and white winkle-picker shoes recalls, "I remember we once nearly won a competition at one of them; but it was always 'nearly' and 'almost.' We always got beaten by this woman who played the spoons. An old lady who used to

come to all the concerts and enter all the contests and play old favorites with a bunch of spoons. She always used to beat us," Paul laughs.

"Even the blonde girl in this scene reminds me of a bird me and Ringo once tried to pull." Ringo, in blue drapes and dark glasses, is perched up behind his drums on the bandstand. He gives the drums a riff. Paul looks up and smiles and excuses himself and makes his way to the piano. John Paul Jones, Led Zeppelin's bass guitarist and the legendary Dave Edmunds and Chris Spedding originally of Rockpile (all in the film) pick up their instruments and start jamming. The sound filters through and technicians on a break come round to listen. Steven Spielberg, filming on a neighboring set, stops work to take in this creme de la creme British rock session.

Part Two: Twist and Shoot

Twenty years after *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!* Paul McCartney is back before the movie cameras, writing, starring in and generally supervising his own \$8 million musical *Give My Regards to Broad Street* (a Beatle-style pun on *Give My Regards to Broadway* substituting the name of a shabby London commuter station). It's the latest twist in the career of the world's most successful pop composer — as certified by the Guinness Book of Records — and one of the world's richest entertainers. The "cutest Beatle" is now 42, his baby-faced good-looks vitally intact, fit and healthy from the simple rural life he and his wife Linda enjoy, though with a few flecks of grey in his fashionably cut hair. Says McCartney, "I took turning 40 as a cue to do different things. There are millions of things I've been interested in in my life and never done, one of which happened to be to write a screenplay. I'd enjoyed making The Beatles' films all those years ago and I had it in the back of my mind that I'd like to get back into the film world."

While making the *Tug of War* album with producer George Martin, McCartney found himself being driven from his Sussex farm to London and back every day. Since the trip took a couple of hours each way and the album was a year in the making, McCartney de-



Maybe he's amazed: Paul McCartney (above), of Beatles and Wings fame, says filmmaking gives him new impetus. Hi Hi Hi: John Salthouse, Linda and Paul McCartney and Tracey Ullman (right).

