

Your Total Radio week

1 - 7 June



Love songs and more: Michael Ball

That's amore

Sunday Love Songs With Michael Ball

BBC Radio 2 • Sunday Love in all its forms is the order of the day as Michael Ball takes on his new Sunday morning show. He'll be helming two hours of handpicked songs and listener requests, which he promises will contain positive vibes only.

'Steve Wright [who passed away earlier this year] made Love Songs "appointment to listen" radio,' says Michael. 'I'm beyond excited and more than a little nervous to be tasked with the chance to continue his extraordinary legacy.'

Timeless love songs will be intermixed with stories honouring listeners' nearest and dearest, and Michael says everyone will have a special place on his

show. 'It will be filled with beautiful, moving, relaxing and uplifting music to lift the soul on a Sunday morning, coupled with the stories, suggestions, requests and precious memories from you, the listener, which will ensure that this won't be just my show, but our show. I hope you will join us as we continue to share the love.'

Elsewhere, Paddy McGuinness joins the Sunday line-up stepping into Michael's old slot to ease us into lunchtime, where the presenter, comedian and *Top Gear* star promises us lots of laughs and great tunes.

Says Paddy, 'To be given my very own regular show on the legendary Radio 2 is a dream come true!'



Music and laughter: Paddy McGuinness

I Am The EggPod Podcast

Podcast

There's something which connects the following people – *Doctor Who* writer Chris Chibnall, The Lightning Seeds' Ian Broudie, Radio 5 Live's Nicky Campbell, comedians Mitch Benn and Greg Proops, broadcasters Shaun Keaveny and Iain Lee and *Unforgotten* star Sanjeev Bhaskar.

In truth, it connects many more still – they're all Beatles fans. Plus, they've all guested on *I Am The EggPod*, Chris Shaw's warm and informed podcast in which he takes – to use his own words – 'a jaunty stroll through Pepperland, discussing The Beatles and solo Beate albums with a potpourri of delicious guests.'

Fifty-four-year-old Chris – by day, editor of a UK trade publication – recalls it was near the end of 2017 when he began formulating *EggPod*, simply because 'it was something I wanted to hear, but I couldn't find any other podcasts doing it.'

In truth, it's difficult to capture quite what Chris' show does that sets it apart from other Beatles podcasts. 'I've no idea,' says the man himself. It's certainly detailed and well-researched, but there's also something of a gentle confessional about it. As an interviewer, Chris is adept at leaving a space that his guest then wants to fill.

'I think it's my background. I live in a village and we had a pub where everybody chats to everybody. I also go to church, and you could be laughing your head off one minute and in tears the next. It's just talking to people, really.'

His opening podcast featured journalist Rob Manuel. The second included director Ben Wheatley.

'The first two or three episodes, I'm really embarrassed about. I hadn't done any research, and



Host Chris Shaw on why he's bringing his lauded podcast to a close



Altogether now: Chris with Samira Ahmed and other enthusiasts at Holland Park last year



I sounded really miserable, because I'd never been in front of a microphone. I gradually learnt and made a few more in 2018.'

This included an edition with Radio 4 *Front Row* host Samira Ahmed talking about *A Hard Day's Night*, which Chris considers pivotal in his evolution. 'She defined some of the structure, such as it is, of *EggPod*, and that's the one that really took it a bit deeper.'

'And then I left it for six months, and was getting loads of emails to do more. I guess, come lockdown, it really took off because people were just looking for comfort...'

At that point, he upped the show's frequency to one-a-week. 'Everyone was

'I want to be able to enjoy The Beatles again, without picking them apart'

available, so it was quite easy to get contributors.'

It then went daily for a 22-episode run, coinciding with all the days detailed in Disney+'s epic *Get Back* series, which followed The Beatles in studio from January 1969, recording the *Let It Be* album. 'And it completely took over my life. I had no Christmas.'

Last year, he took the show live, with an episode recorded at Opera Holland Park Theatre in London.

'James Clutton [the venue's CEO] approached me as he's been a listener for a while. I was like, "I really don't know whether to do this." Rob Manuel offered to pay the deposit for me, saying I could reimburse him when I'd made the money in tickets. So he believed in me more than I did – he's my Maharishi.'

'I just went ahead and paid myself. And it was amazing. All those people who'd been locked up at

home for the past few years telling me online how much they love The Beatles, and now here we all were in a beautiful venue.'

Chris is staging another live edition this July.

'Everybody I approached said yes straight away,' he reports. 'Stuart Maconie's cancelled his radio show for that day so he can be a guest.'

The line-up also includes foremost Beatles researcher Mark Lewisohn, *Ghosts* star Laurence Rickard, writer David Quantick and Samira Ahmed. More than that, it's going to mark the final-ever episode of *I Am The EggPod*.

'I've been thinking about it for a while,' says Chris. 'It's kind of hit a plateau, and done what it set out to do. I've given up a lot of time to it over the last six and a half years. I want to go out a bit more, rather than having to sit in and revise a Beatles album.'

'Plus, I want to be able to listen to The Beatles again

and enjoy them without picking them apart.'

There's also a nice synergy with the band's own career. 'The Beatles really kicked off at the beginning of 1963, and then come September 1969, that was it. So six and a half years is a good lifespan.'

'I was thinking, "Do I want to sit in this little office on my own, recording the last episode? I've booked the venue, so what better way to end it than with friends?"'

He knows he'll miss *EggPod* 'instantly', and seeing people's response to his news has been like 'reading my obituary.'

'It's very touching and I will struggle at that live show. But this is a new beginning for me – which I'm quite looking forward to.'

Graham Kibble-White
● *EggPod LIVE 2024 – The Last EggPod Of All* is being recorded on 6 July at Opera Holland Park, London. For more info and tickets, go to iamtheeggpod.com

7-day Radio listings

This week in

The Archers

bbc.co.uk/radio4/archers

Fallon springs a birthday surprise on Harrison, but with emotions still raw, is it too soon – and will her good intentions backfire? Lynda, meanwhile, is hoping her cast put personal differences aside for the greater good, though she may need to step in to ensure the desired outcome.

Tensions are running high over at Grange Farm, with Emma and Ed concerned about George. But will they guess the real reason he's determined to stay under the radar? With the continuing crisis at the Stables taking another nosedive, Oliver's now caught up in the chaos – but who will cop the blame, and is a resolution in sight?

Also, Vince is on the warpath, Freddie's in a fix, Ben takes centre stage, and Joy and Mick air their feelings.

Frequencies

	ALL AVAILABLE ON DIGITAL
Absolute Radio	Digital only
BBC Radio 1	97-99 FM
BBC Radio 2	88-91 FM
BBC Radio 3	90-93 FM
BBC Radio 4	92-95 FM / 103-105 FM / 198 LW
BBC Radio 4 Extra	Digital only
BBC Radio 5 Live	693 & 909 MW
BBC Radio 5 Live Sports Extra	Digital only
BBC 6 Music	Digital only
BBC World Service	Digital only
Capital	95-106 FM
Classic FM	100-102 FM
Greatest Hits Radio	96-108 FM
Heat Radio	Digital only
Heart	88-107 FM
Kerrang! Radio	Digital only
Kiss	97-107 FM
LBC	97.3 FM
Magic	105.4 FM
Planet Rock	Digital only
Scala Radio	Digital only
Smooth	97-108 FM
talkSPORT	1053 & 1089 MW