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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

WHEN I'M SIXTY-FOUR

Paul McCartney then and now.

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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS about Paul McCartney. Paul McCartney's music-publishing business, M.P.L. Communications, occupies three stories in an 18th-century building on Soho Square, in London. Besides being the surviving member of The Beatles, McCartney is a music impresario whose company owns rights to over three thousand songs and Broadway shows—all part of a show-business empire that, along with the royalty he earns on every Beatles record sold, has made him one of the richest men in England. In May, McCartney was overseeing various creative projects, including a DVD compilation of his videos; a DVD of *Ecce Cor Meum*; and his latest pop album, *Memory Almost Full*, a suite of deeply personal songs that reflect his awareness of aging and loss as he approaches his sixty-fourth birthday, on June 18th. In his office were his project manager, Paddy Spinks; a female assistant; and five young men—employees of a Web-design company that is helping to promote his new album. Last year, McCartney decided not to renew his contract with E.M.I. Records, which had been his label since 1962, when the Beatles were signed. His new album will be the debut release from Hear Music, a record label co-founded by Starbucks, and will be sold at the company's coffee shops, as well as record stores and on iTunes. McCartney has recently suffered a series of tragedies,

beginning with the death, from breast cancer, of his wife Linda, in 1998. George Harrison died of cancer in 2001, and, last year, McCartney separated from his second wife, Heather Mills, in an ugly split. There's an unmistakable sadness in McCartney's gaze and muted manner, and even the up-tempo songs on his new album are tinged with melancholy. Describes McCartney's encounters with fans seeking photos and autographs. Tells about his recording studio session in Sussex with guitarist Carlos Bonell and recording engineer Keith Smith. McCartney's father, Jim, was a cotton salesman and jazz trumpeter; his mother, Mary, was a midwife, who died of breast cancer when he was fourteen. In 1957, he met John Lennon and began playing with Lennon's band, the Quarry Men. Describes how the Beatles came about. The writer visited McCartney at his Edwardian house, on a secluded street in St. John's Wood, in London. When McCartney was sixteen, he wrote the song "When I'm Sixty-Four" on his father's piano. He said that Lennon would often ask him about songs he played on the piano. As the Beatles matured, Lennon and McCartney collaborated less directly on songs, but continued to trade ideas. Mentions the songs "Michelle," "Paperback Writer," and "Yesterday." Between 1963 and 1965, the Beatles recorded six albums and starred in two movies. Mentions George Harrison and Ringo Starr. McCartney expressed amazement at the life he's led, but he also noted that the Beatles' legacy could be a burden. The writer's last meeting with McCartney took place at a café in Regent's Park, where they discussed the Beatles' breakup. Mentions manager Allen Klein and Yoko Ono. The movie *Let It Be* documents the group's dissolution. In late 1969, the band broke up, and McCartney suffered a depression and breakdown. He eventually had to sue his bandmates in order to disempower Klein. In the mid-1970s, McCartney and Lennon got together in New York. By the time of Lennon's murder, in 1980, they were friends again. Which is something that I'm eternally grateful for, McCartney said. That would have been really difficult if we hadn't.