

It's Beatle-mania!

Phoenix Concert Theatre hosts 12 hours of back-to-back Beatles albums as performed by Classic Albums Live musicians on Dec. 17

Talk about a hard day's night.

The Toronto-based Classic Albums Live concert series will perform its most ambitious concert to date: Every Beatles studio album back-to-back at the Phoenix Concert Theatre, on Sunday, Dec. 17.

"We expect the event to run a solid 12 hours," says Craig Martin, founder and producer of the Classic Albums Live series, now in its fourth year. "Fans are welcome to come and go."

Tickets, \$25, go on sale next Thursday at Ticketmaster.

Doors open at 11 a.m. with

the first song of the first album, *Please Please Me*, beginning at noon sharp.

Classic Albums Live musicians will play the 13 North American Beatles studio albums in chronological order. All the Beatles' seminal hit singles that weren't included on studio albums — such as *I Feel Fine*, *Yesterday*, *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *Penny Lane* and *Hey Jude* — will be wedged in at the appropriate chronological times.

The monthly Classic Albums Live concerts began at the Phoenix in April 2003. These are not tribute shows, with musicians trying to look

like their heroes. Rather, as the title suggests, it's all about the music. The idea is to perform seminal classic-rock albums, song for song, note for note, instrument for instrument — albums from the likes of Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, The Who, the Stones, Rush, Supertramp, the Eagles and Fleetwood Mac.

Martin hires as many specialty musicians as required for each show — those with the "DNA of that band in their blood," he says. More than 20 were needed to perform the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper album alone.

"Just because there are so

many songs for this Beatles marathon does not mean we are going to cut any corners," Martin says. "There will be at least three rotating sets of musicians, including all strings and horns and harps and sitars and kazoos. We are not straying from our note-for-note, cut-for-cut principle."

"We'll have nurses standing by to feed the musicians oranges and Guinness."

Sounds like a logistical nightmare if ever there was one.

"Luckily, I have a degree in logistical nightmares," Martin says.

Over the past two years, Martin has taken Classic Albums Live to community theatres across Ontario and on tours across Canada and down the U.S. eastern seaboard. He now books regular monthly gigs both at the Mohegan Sun casino in Connecticut and at the Hard Rock Cafe in Orlando. Next month, a weekly series launches in Las Vegas.

"This Beatles marathon will be the jewel in the proverbial crown," Martin says.

Proceeds from the show will be donated to a charity to be determined.

— Staff

ALBUM LIST

The 13 Beatles albums being performed back-to-back by Classic Albums Live musicians on Dec. 17 at the Phoenix Concert Theatre:

- Please Please Me
- With The Beatles
- A Hard Day's Night
- Beatles For Sale
- Help!
- Rubber Soul
- Revolver
- Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
- Magical Mystery Tour
- White Album
- Yellow Submarine
- Abbey Road
- Let It Be