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right track

THE LONDON AMERICAN LABEL 1961
CDCHD 1249

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST! VOLUME 2
CDCHD 1250

BERT BERNS STORY
Mr Success Volume 2 1964-1967
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COMPLETE GOLDWAX SINGLES
Volume 3 1967-1970
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GEORGIE FAME
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THE LONDON AMERICAN LABEL

Year by Year – 1961

CDCHD 1249

1961 as documented by the releases of the UK's most famous source for US rock'n'roll, pop and R&B.

By Tony Rounce

To no one's surprise, the "London American Year By Year" series has proven to be an instant success for Ace. The combination of nostalgia for both the era that the series will cover and for the label itself, not to mention the prospect of owning hundreds more vintage gems on Ace CD for the first time, has ensured that – as the late Fergus Cashin of the Daily Sketch might have put it – "this one will run and run".

Indeed, such is the demand for future volumes that we've already stepped up the scheduling from two to three volumes a year. (Well, your compilers will both be well into their seventies by the time of the intended final volume, and like you we'd prefer



to live to see the series through to its grand finale – thus it seemed a sensible thing to do.) Fans can expect this 1961 volume to be followed by 1962 in October, with our first backtrack to 1959 as the tasty filler for this musical sandwich in June. We'd like to step

that schedule up even more if we could – but as you can imagine, each volume is a mammoth undertaking for Ace's licensing department, not to mention the amount of work that goes into sourcing the original London tapes and the matching the audio to the sound of the original 45s by the guys at Sound Mastering. These things just do not happen overnight, and we do need to put some other CDs out in between and around these releases to stay in business, y'know...

All this notwithstanding, we kick off 2010 with "The London American Label Year by Year – 1961", which we feel more than upholds the standard set by its acclaimed predecessor. One of the main promises we made to the collector was that each volume would feature at least 20 tracks that were new to Ace CD. On this occasion, only one of the featured tracks has ever been heard on Ace before (Timi Yuro's 'Hurt'). This is quite astounding when one considers that debutantes here include Eddie Cochran's 'Weekend', Del Shannon's 'So Long Baby' and Jerry Lee Lewis' 'What'd I Say', to name but three. It really does demonstrate how much rock'n'roll gold there still is in 'them thar hills' to mine, doesn't it?



As ever, there's extensive track-by-track commentary, with a shot of every featured London 45 to complement the annotation. An intro by long-time London collector Roger

Cope perfectly sums up the feelings of everyone who ever put their pocket money or part of a meagre pay packet towards the purchase of one or more of these goodies, your compilers included. And the best news of all is that all of the songs run for less than two and a half minutes, so if there's something here you don't like (and we truthfully don't expect everyone to enjoy everything that's on offer across the series) you're seldom more than 150 seconds away from something that you will!

Singles courtesy Tony Rounce

WHAT'D I SAY – JERRY LEE LEWIS • SPANISH HARLEM – BEN E KING • RIDERS IN THE SKY – THE RAMRODS • LOVEY DOVEY – BUDDY KNOX • JUST OUT OF REACH (OF MY TWO OPEN ARMS) – SOLOMON BURKE • WAIT A MINUTE – THE COASTERS • THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN – AL CAIOLA & HIS ORCHESTRA • MORE THAN I CAN SAY – BOBBY VEE • YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY – BOBBY DARIN • SO LONG BABY – DEL SHANNON • HURT – TIMI YURO • RING OF FIRE – DUANE EDDY • MOODY RIVER – PAT BOONE • WEEKEND – EDDIE COCHRAN • NAOMI – AL TOUSAN & HIS PIANO • SPANISH TWIST – BILL HALEY & HIS COMETS • RAM-BUNK-SHUSH – THE VENTURES • GIRLS – JOHNNY BURNETTE • AIN'T GONNA WASH FOR A WEEK – EDDIE HODGES • CRYING – ROY ORBISON • TWIST-HER – BILL BLACK'S COMBO • SWEETS FOR MY SWEET – THE DRIFTERS • LONESOME ROAD – MIRRIAM JOHNSON • THE PEPPERMINT TWIST – DANNY PEPPERMINT & THE JUMPIN' JACKS • GET WITH IT – SANDY NELSON • BOO HOO – MARVIN RAINWATER • WHAT A PARTY FATS DOMINO • MORNING AFTER – THE MAR-KEYS

right track

Editorial: Neil Scafehorn
Design: Jools at ED&P

Ace Records (Sales & Distribution) Ltd,
42-50 Steele Road, London NW10 7AS
Tel: 020 8453 1311
press@acerecords.co.uk
www.acerecords.com

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shot, courtesy Alec Palao

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST! Volume 2 CDCHD 1250

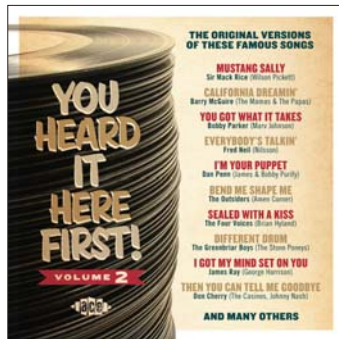
A further visit to the realms of obscure singles and album tracks that went on to become hugely successful for others.

By Rob Finnis

As a concept it's a revelation – the original versions of (mostly) familiar songs that went on to become big hits by other artists. Familiarity is turned on its head as mental receptors attuned to the better-known hit versions – the received wisdom, if you like – are challenged for attention by the performers who made the original recordings to little or no acclaim. It's a parallel universe where the reassuringly familiar landscape is a beautiful illusion.

Volume 1 of "You Heard It Here First" was among our best sellers of last year and we believe that this sequel is an even stronger package. Here again are pop hits as the soundtrack to our lives – but not as we know them.

Many of these original versions are exceedingly rare in vinyl form, notably Dan Penn's self-penned original version of 'I'm Your Puppet' (on which Penn



actually sings the line 'I'm The Puppet', in contrast to all the versions which followed) and the Corporation's barnstorming 'Candida', subsequently a US #3 for Tony Orlando's Dawn, though one wonders why the Corporation's torrid original failed to make the same impact.

Tony Joe White's 'Polk Salad Annie', a top 10 hit on the Monument label in 1969, laid down the template for the so-called swamp rock sound and was later popularised by Elvis who had a UK hit

HUSH – **BILLY JOE ROYAL** • LOVE OF THE COMMON PEOPLE – **THE FOUR PREPS** • SHAKIN' ALL OVER – **JOHNNY KIDD & THE PIRATES** • CALIFORNIA DREAMIN' – **BARRY MCGUIRE** • IO CHE NON VIVO (SENZA TE) – **PINO DONAGGIO** • HIGHER AND HIGHER – **THE DELLS** • I DON'T CARE – **JAMES BROWN** • YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES – **BOBBY PARKER** • OLD MAN WILLIS – **TONY JOE WHITE** • I'M YOUR PUPPET – **DAN PENN** • MUSTANG SALLY – **SIR MACK RICE** • MBUBE – **SOLOMON LINDA'S ORIGINAL EVENING BIRDS** • I GOT MY MIND SET ON YOU PARTS 1 & 2 – **JAMES RAY** • SORROW – **THE MCCOYS** • CANDIDA – **THE CORPORATION** • SEALED WITH A KISS – **THE FOUR VOICES** • EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' – **FRED NEIL** • BEND ME SHAPE ME – **THE OUTSIDERS** • SING IN THE SUNSHINE – **HOYT AXTON** • SOMEONE TO LOVE – **THE GREAT SOCIETY** • THEN YOU CAN TELL ME GOODBYE – **DON CHERRY** • DIFFERENT DRUM – **THE GREENBRIAR BOYS** • LEAVIN' IT ALL IT UP TO YOU – **DON AND DEWEY** • COME ON – **CHUCK BERRY**

with the song in 1973. But for all his seeming self-assurance, White had struggled to make the song work, having cut it for Monument as 'Old Man Willis' a year earlier before re-recording it with a fresh set of lyrics as 'Polk Salad Annie'. Here's how it sounded before the re-write – a truly intriguing juxtaposition.

Most of Brian Hyland's hits were written for him so it comes as a surprise to learn that his signature tune, 'Sealed With A Kiss', had first been recorded some two years earlier by the Four Voices, a clean-cut vocal group. That is the version which displays the apparent debt the song owed to 'The Green Leaves of Summer', a big hit of the day.

Transmogrified by successive generations of folk and pop artists into 'Wimoweh', 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight', Solomon Linda's African tribal chant, 'Mbube', must be one of the most misappropriated tunes in post-war pop music, though in recent years Linda began to receive the acknowledgement for his memorable if inadvertent

contribution to the pop canon and we are proud to present it here.

Sixties wheeler-dealer Simon Napier-Bell and TV maven Vicki Wickham took it upon themselves to pen English lyrics

to a contemporary Italian hit, 'Io Che Non Vivo (Senza Te)', in the back of a cab on their way to an evening meal at a restaurant in London's West End in early 1966 – or so the redoubtable Napier-Bell has claimed in various autobiographies. Those twenty or so usefully occupied minutes produced 'You Don't Have To Say You Love Me', under which title the song has provided something of a lifelong annuity for the pair. Pino Donaggio's gorgeous Italian original of this classic power ballad is among the highlights of the set.

'Sorrow' was knocked out without much conscious effort as a filler for the McCoys' first album in the wake of their 1965 mega-hit 'Hang On Sloopy'. Maybe the producers (who also happened to write the song) missed a trick by consigning 'Sorrow' to makeweight status, but no matter as Brit duo the Sorrows took the song into the UK Top 10 a few months later. That was the version that inspired David Bowie's recording but it's the McCoys' stripped-down original which probably packs the mightiest charm of all.

The songs, compellingly sequenced, are all hits, the technicolour packaging incorporating all the prerequisite fax'n'info, gives off a warm comforting glow, and the entire concept constitutes a little bit of pop history in the making. What's not to like?



Single courtesy Tony Rounce

MR SUCCESS: THE BERT BERNS STORY Volume 2 1964-1967

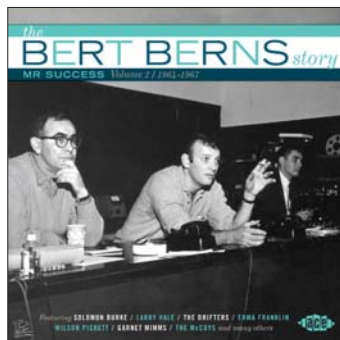
CDCHD 1251

Bert Berns was one of the most gifted, charismatic and successful behind-the-scenes record men of the 1960s, yet his name is unfamiliar to many. Our two-volume compendium of his productions and songs should remedy that injustice. Volume 2 features eight tremendous new-to-CD rarities.

By Dennis Garvey

Finally! A reason to remove Ace's 2008 "Twist & Shout: The Bert Berns Story, Volume 1, 1960-1964" from my CD changer!

That formidable set covered Berns' ascendancy to the forefront of Tin Pan Alley. "Mr Success: The Bert Berns Story, Volume 2, 1964-1967", showcases the years when he bestrode New York's studio scene like a colossus, running his own successful labels,



punching the clock as a producer and penning classic tunes with a who's-who of collaborators.

Nestled among 26 sterling tracks (eight debuting to CD) are classics by Berns stalwarts Garnet Mimms, Freddie

I'M GONNA RUN AWAY FROM YOU – **TAMI LYNN** • EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEBODY TO LOVE – **SOLOMON BURKE** • COME HOME BABY – **WILSON PICKETT** • IT WAS EASIER TO HURT HER – **GARNET MIMMS** • HANG ON SLOOPY (Unedited Version) – **THE McCOYS** • IF I WOULD MARRY YOU – **TAMMY MONTGOMERY** • COME ON GIRL – **THE KNIGHT BROTHERS** • IN FRONT OF HER HOUSE – **LARRY HALE** • I DON'T WANT TO GO ON WITHOUT YOU – **THE DRIFTERS** • SHOW ME YOUR MONKEY – **KENNY HAMBER** • CRY NO MORE – **BEN E KING** • RUN MASCARA – **THE EXCITERS** • YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE HER – **PAT EMBERS** • YOU MAY BE HOLDING MY BABY – **THE PUSSYCATS** • I WENT OUT WITH MY BABY TONIGHT – **MOSES K & THE PROPHETS** • YOU FORGOT HOW TO LOVE – **PATTI LABELLE & THE BLUE BELLES** • I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU – **GARNET MIMMS** • BETTER NOT BELIEVE HIM aka SORROW – **BARBARA LEWIS** • MR SUCCESS – **BOBBY HARRIS** • GONE GONE – **ROY C** • NO ONE COULD EVER LOVE YOU – **FREDDIE SCOTT** • MOJO MAMA – **DON VARNER** • BROWN EYED GIRL (Radio Edit) – **VAN MORRISON** • PIECE OF MY HEART – **ERMA FRANKLIN** • I GOT TO GO BACK (AND WATCH THAT LITTLE GIRL DANCE) aka LOOK AT THAT GIRL – **OTIS REDDING** • HEART BE STILL – **LORRAINE ELLISON**

Scott and Solomon Burke and rarities from icons Ben E King, Barbara Lewis, Patti LaBelle & the Bluebelles and Otis Redding.

Want hits? Try the McCoy's 'Hang On Sloopy', complete with the seldom-heard third verse, or Van Morrison's signature, 'Brown Eyed Girl', in its original 45 radio edit, which protected our original 1967 sensibilities from that salacious "making love in the green grass" lyric. Few would disagree that Erma Franklin's original 'Piece Of My Heart' should have been the hit. Tami Lynn's classic eventual-hit 'I'm Gonna Run Away From You' sets the bar high as lead-off track.

Want stars? Well, here's Tammy Montgomery's final recording before she decamped to Motown as Tammi Terrell. A subdued Wilson Pickett offers a rarity from his pre-Wicked reign of terror and the Drifters break hearts with the aching 'I Don't Want To Go On Without You'. Little-known R&B journeyman Bobby Harris channels Sam Cooke on the title track.

Wanna dance? Opportunities abound



as Kenny Hamber (abetted by the ubiquitous Sweet Inspirations) acts the funky

drill sergeant on the sensational 'Show Me Your Monkey'. And try not doing the Sloopy to Roy C's should-have-been-huge 'Gone Gone'.

Berns' penchant for Latin rhythms is woven throughout the proceedings like a rose between the teeth, nowhere more irresistibly than on Larry Hale's 'In Front Of Her House'. The over-the-top 'Run Mascara' by Bert's beloved Exciters feels like the soundtrack to a bullfight and, on one of several UK excursions, Berns managed to make Irish band Moses K and the Prophets sound like they were born on the baion.

Berns' son, Brett, and daughter, Cassie, diligent keepers of his flame, are currently readying a stage musical based on his songs, as well as a book. A recently completed documentary should surface this year and, if justice serves, nominee Berns will be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

So enjoy "Mr. Success", the perfect kick-off to what we expect to be the Year of Bert Berns.

Single courtesy Mick Patrick



THE COMPLETE GOLDWAX SINGLES Volume 3

1967-1970

CDCH2 1248

The third and final volume of this legendary Memphis label's complete 45s collected together for the first time.

By Dean Rudland

The third volume of the Goldwax singles is the story of music industry decline. If not exactly riches to rags – Goldwax sales were never that good – it is the tale of an independent label slowly losing its way in an increasingly difficult environment. This was not just about a failure to sign talent, but about changes within the business, and that meant that it became more difficult for regional independents to survive and thrive.

The company's peak year was probably 1967. Musically, James Carr and Spencer Wiggins were at the top of their game, whilst the Ovations continued to



make great records. New talent such as Willie Walker entered the fray and label owners Quinton Claunch and Doc Russell were confident enough to start the country music imprint Timmy to showcase

talent as good as Carmol Taylor and Jeanne Newman. However, distributor Bell had no real clout in the country market and the new label's output fell on deaf ears, or more likely wasn't even played to them. Other signs of how tough it was was the licensing out of various singles by Ivory Joe Hunter and Willie Walker to Veep and Chess respectively – which Quinton now admits was to tide the label over cash flow shortages.

In 1968 things were not improving. Although James Carr continued to make records of amazing quality, sales began to decline and, even more worryingly, James became increasingly difficult to entice into the studio and onto the road



to promote his records. Inexplicably, strong 45s by Wiggins failed to make the charts and it began to look as if the struggle was never going to get easier. All of this wasn't helped by the way that the industry was developing,

with a more centralised, major-oriented distribution network taking hold, and the church-based southern soul sounds that had formed the core of Goldwax's sales beginning to seem old-fashioned, even in the local market. Memphis' big soul sellers into the 1970s would be the orchestrated masterpieces of Isaac Hayes and the smoother sound of Hi's Al Green.

The label was effectively over by 1969 and completely over by 1970. The artists had moved on, been sold on or simply left without a label. The final side on Goldwax was James Carr's 'Everybody Needs Somebody', a country soul ballad of exceptional quality, and is typical of how high the quality remains throughout volume three of "The Complete Goldwax Singles". There are errors and side-steps, but until the day the doors swung shut for the final time the sounds of the label were almost always a joy to the ears. This is southern music at its very best.

DISC TWO: I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT (BUT IT'S GOT ME) / SHE'S ABOUT A MOVER – **PERCY MILEM** • STAY AWAY FROM BRENDA / I DON'T FEEL GUILTY – **THE TERRY'S** • DID SHE ASK ABOUT ME / FROM THE FIRST TIME WE MET – **IVORY JOE HUNTER** • IT'S MY LIFE / WHOLE LOTTA SHAKING GOING ON – **TIMMY THOMAS** • I'M A FOOL FOR YOU / GONNA SEND YOU BACK TO GEORGIA – **JAMES CARR** • TICKET TO RIDE / THERE GOES MY USED TO BE – **WEE WILLIE WALKER** • THE POWER OF A WOMAN / LONELY MAN – **SPENCER WIGGINS** • HE CALLED ME BABY / WHEN WILL THE GOOD APPLES FALL – **JEANNE NEWMAN** • A MAN NEEDS A WOMAN / STRONGER THAN LOVE – **JAMES CARR** • O' KETCHEE ME DOGGIE CREEK / HARD LUCK GUY – **B.B. JASPER** • THAT'S HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU / I'M A POOR MAN'S SON – **SPENCER WIGGINS** • LOVE IS A TRICKY THING / IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A MAN – **THE FIVE Cs** • YOU NAME IT, I'VE HAD IT / YOU'RE RUNNING TOO FAST – **WILLIE WALKER** • LIFE TURNED HER THAT WAY / A MESSAGE TO YOUNG LOVERS – **JAMES CARR**

DISC TWO: LOVE IS A BEAUTIFUL THING / LOVE IS A BEAUTIFUL THING (inst) – **BEN ATKINS & THE NOMADS** • ONCE IN A WHILE (IS BETTER THAN NEVER AT ALL) / HE'S TOO OLD – **SPENCER WIGGINS** • TEACH ME HOW TO LET YOU GO / A GIRL IN LOVE – **KATHY DAVIS** • LOVE ME TONIGHT / SUGAR CREEK BOTTOM – **CARMOL TAYLOR** • FREEDOM TRAIN / THAT'S THE WAY LOVE TURNED OUT FOR ME – **JAMES CARR** • THE TRAIN NEVER STOPS AT OUR TOWN / ANOTHER MAN'S SHOES – **CARMOL TAYLOR** • FROM WARM TO COOL TO COLD / A LUCKY LOSER – **WILLIE WALKER** • I NEVER LOVED A WOMAN (THE WAY I LOVE YOU) / SOUL CITY USA – **SPENCER WIGGINS** • TO LOVE SOMEBODY / THESE AIN'T RAINDROPS – **JAMES CARR** • HAPPINESS / ROCKIN' CHAIR – **THE OVATIONS** • MEDICINE MAN / YOU'VE GOTTA BE DIFFERENT – **WILLIAM MORGAN & THE Cs** • YOU HAD YOUR CHOICE / I'M LIVING GOOD (With spoken intro) – **THE OVATIONS** • ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT / EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEBODY – **JAMES CARR** • I SLIPPED A LITTLE / I'M CRYING OVER YOU – **PERCY MILEM**

Single courtesy Tony Rounce

GEORGIE FAME – MOD CLASSICS: 1964-1966

CDBGPD 206

For London's original sharp dressed mods there was only one true live act: Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames. This is the only compilation of Fame's mod club classics. Here they are beautifully mastered and packaged with rare photos and memorabilia with a 24 page booklet.



By Dean Rudland

Georgie Fame, the Flamingo All-nighter, mods and GIs. These are the things that dreams are made of. A mid sixties Rod Stewart might have claimed that it was his ambition to sing with Count Basie, it was Georgie who actually did it. The Who and the Small Faces had a legion of moddy boy fans

IT'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD SHAKIN' • PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG • EL BANDIDO • DAWN YAWN • GET ON THE RIGHT TRACK BABY • LOVEY DOVEY • SEE SAW • SOUL STOMP • THE WORLD IS ROUND • MONKEYING AROUND • SWEET THING • SOMETHING • POINT OF NO RETURN • LI'L DARLIN' • FUNNY HOW TIME SLIPS AWAY • PREACH AND TEACH • PARCHMAN FARM • MOVE IT ON OVER • LAST NIGHT • MUSIC TALK • SICK AND TIRED • OUTRAGE • THE MONKEY TIME • WORK SONG

in the middle of the decade, but it was Georgie who was championed by the Soho ace faces a couple of years earlier. Although the Fame monicker was the invention of Larry Parnes, it was the erstwhile Clive Powell who made it his own by taking a Jon Hendricks jazz song to the top of the UK charts in 1964. Georgie had the hippest musical credentials and the ability to take jazz, soul and R&B in to the pop charts without compromising or selling out. Polydor Records has a wonderful "Beat Classics" CD available that covers Georgie's biggest hits so we have devised our "Mod Classics" as an alternative view with only a little crossover with that release. We take in the period between early 1964 and late 1966 when Georgie's records appeared on Columbia Records and he was backed on record by either the Blue Flames or the cream of the UK's jazz musicians in the Harry South Big Band.

We have decided to pass by Georgie's ska recordings as they are for another time and place. So we have filled the grooves with his takes on soul, jazz and R&B hits. From his first LP "Live At The Flamingo" we have the band swinging their way through Oscar Brown's 'Work Song' and 'Parchman Farm', whose composer, Mose Allison,



was one of Georgie's heroes and influences. By the time of his second album "Fame At Last" Georgie was tackling obscure records from the then unknown Stax label – William Bell's 'Monkeying Around' – taking on Louis Jordan's arrangement of 'Point Of No Return' and also numbers by Major Lance and Ray Charles. In each case he made each song his own, stamping his own vocal mark on them all. His next album was 1966's "Sweet Thing" which featured less jazz and more soul, as Don Covay's 'See Saw', the Spinners' title track, cuts by Stevie Wonder, the Mar-Keys and Sam Cooke were all taken on. We've also included a version of Earl Van Dyke's 'Soul Stomp' from around the same period that has only previously been released on a Japanese CD.

1966 saw a second album, "Sound Venture", which is perhaps Georgie's finest moment. Recorded with the Harry

South Big Band, Georgie's voice more than holds its own. On 'Dawn Yawn' he writes a wonderfully evocative tale of Soho's nightlife and the inevitable come-down the day after, whilst his version of Willie Nelson's 'Funny How Time Slips Away' is a masterpiece of vocal delivery, and the best version of this much-covered song bar none.

We have also rounded up EP cuts from his Fats Domino tribute EP, some excellent cuts that were only on 45 such as 'Yeah Yeah's B-side 'Preach And Teach', the B-side of Georgie's second Columbia number one 'Getaway', a thunderous latin-tinged instrumental called 'El Bandido', which is a sure-fire dancefloor winner, and the self-penned single 'Something'. We feel that a compilation like this was a must for many years and we are very glad that we are the ones to have done it.



LP courtesy Dean Rudland, EP courtesy Alec Palao

Little Richard

HERE'S LITTLE RICHARD

CDCHM 128

TUTTI FRUTTI • TRUE FINE MAMA • CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WANNA LEAVE • READY TEDDY • BABY • SLIPPIN' AND SLIDIN' • LONG TALL SALLY • MISS ANN • OH WHY? • RIP IT UP • JENNY JENNY • SHE'S GOT IT

LITTLE RICHARD VOL 2

CDCHM 131

KEEP A KNOCKIN' • BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON • SEND ME SOME LOVIN' • BOO HOO HOO HOO (I'LL NEVER LET YOU GO) • HEEBY JEEBIES • ALL AROUND THE WORLD • GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY • BABY FACE • HEY-HEY-HEY-HEY • OOH! MY SOUL • THE GIRL CAN'T HELP IT • LUCILLE

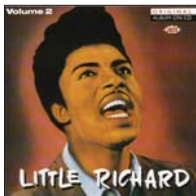
FABULOUS LITTLE RICHARD

CDCHM 133

SHAKE A HAND • CHICKEN LITTLE BABY • ALL NIGHT LONG • THE MOST I CAN OFFER • LONESOME AND BLUE • WONDERIN' • SHE KNOWS HOW TO ROCK • KANSAS CITY • DIRECTLY FROM MY HEART • MAYBE I'M RIGHT • EARLY ONE MORNING • I'M JUST A LONELY GUY • WHOLE LOTTA SHAKING GOING ON

By Simon White

It's impossible to over-emphasise the impact Little Richard and the music on his first two albums for Specialty Records from March 1957 and July 1958 had on the future sound of R&B, rock and soul. "Here's Little Richard" and "Little Richard Volume 2" have just about every classic Little Richard side on them. This is the music that influenced and paved the way for the hundreds of beat groups of the 60's, and coupled with the larger-than-life anarchic, excessive and erratic personality of Little Richard himself, is the bedrock spirit of everything that followed in rock'n'roll, its sound, its image and its energy. Just count the tracks from these albums that got cover versions: The Beatles, Elvis, Otis, Stones, Springsteen and innumerable others recorded and performed these songs for years and years to come. Otis Redding and James Brown, arguably the two biggest male soul stars the world ever saw, both wore their Richard influence as a medal of honour and Michael Jackson and Prince have long been acknowledged as the carriers of Richard's flaming, otherworldly and showmanistic torch.



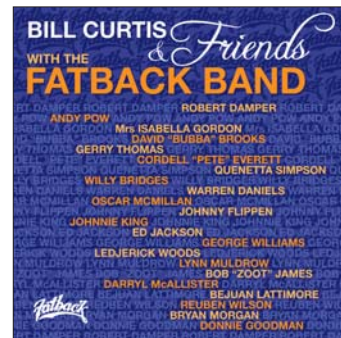
This is rock'n'roll in it's purest form. The raw musical power contained here has quite simply never been surpassed. They still compel you to shout and dance and put into their original context of the 1950s they are nothing less than astonishing. As much as Elvis shook up the world, ultimately he was able to be white, safe and accessible. Not so with Little Richard who remained and remains a free spirit, an enigma and a unique being.

Those first two albums are a hard, verging on impossible, act to follow. "Little Richard Volume 2" and the third album, "The Fabulous Little Richard" were both released after Richard had left Specialty in late 1957 and temporarily retired from recording rock'n'roll for the first time. Whereas all but one of the tracks on Volume 2 ('By The Light Of The Silvery Moon') had been issued on US 45 before, "The Fabulous", released in 1959, was put together from early recordings that didn't make the first two albums, some of which were recorded before "Tutti Frutti", and recordings that up until that point had been unheard by the world at large, taken from Richard's last 1950s Specialty session. Some of the earlier recordings were overdubbed with vocals from the Stewart Sisters, perhaps in an attempt to update them in the wake of ex-Specialty artist Sam Cooke's pop success, and these overdub versions have come in for some criticism in the past. To be fair, the girl voices are not always entirely welcome. But if you can retune your ears after the full on assault from the first two LP's, "The Fabulous" will reap rewards.

This, really is where it all began.

BILL CURTIS AND FRIENDS WITH THE FATBACK BAND

CDFGEN 004



ALL ABOUT U BABY • MY FRIEND (TO THE END) • GOOSHY SUSHI • TRUCK'N'W/ BUBBA (INST) • DEM WORDS • OPEN HOUSE (PARTAY) • DO IT TO ME NOW • HE'S A PLAYER • ALL ABOUT U BABY (INST)

As we are proud to announce another addition to the occasional series of releases curated by Fatback's Bill Curtis. "Bill Curtis & Friends with The Fatback Band" reworks tapes from the Fatback vaults with the assistance of some choice friends including Robert Damper, Warren Daniels, Willie Bridges, David "Bubba" Brooks and Gerry Thomas.

BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE – Soldier Blue – The Best Of The Vanguard Years

VMD 74004

A snapshot of the best of Buffy's large catalogue of Vanguard recordings, including her biggest UK hit, 'Soldier Blue', that rose to #7 in 1971.



By Ken Hunt

By anybody's standards or criteria, Buffy Sainte-Marie's tenure with Vanguard created a banquet of unparalleled work. Certain of the period's songs became common currency and thanks to covers by Neil Diamond, Donovan, Elvis Presley, Barbra Streisand and artists of their commercial ilk and status. Several are

so well established in the wider public imagination they count as almost authorless or at least once or twice removed from Buffy's name. Take 'Universal Soldier' – "Soldier Blue's" opening salvo – and the way it became fused with Donovan. Or 'Co'dine' – long associated with San Francisco's Quicksilver Messenger Service and still apt to pop up on the right night in the repertoires of Courtney Love or Jefferson Starship. Her voice set her apart as a one-off, whether voice is considered from a writerly or vocal perspective. Such vibrato slivers and shivers only ever belonged to Buffy.

Her Vanguard years bore witness an astoundingly high batting average. Her influence is incalculable. The two main reasons for this are that she has one of modern music's most signature voices – those trills and trembles could only be hers – and her songs were painted with the full palette of colours and shaded light and dark. This meant they did not shy away from awkward or unpalatable subjects.

Alongside love calls to the living, she was penning memorialising love songs to the dead, like the Native American-Native Canadian-themed

'Now That The Buffalo's Gone'. In lighter mood, she was cunningly re-contextualising in 'He's An Indian Cowboy In The Rodeo', shifting its heart-flutter scenario into a First Nations setting. Other songs here touch on karma and Canada, magic and the supernatural. She was sending missives such as 'Universal Soldier' that anyone can recognise. Songs like 'Soldier Blue' and 'My Country 'Tis of Thy People You're Dying' inform and illuminate or send up distress flares.

Buffy introduced her fellow Canadian songwriters, notably Joni Mitchell (here represented by 'Circle Game' and 'For Free'), setting Leonard Cohen to music ('God Is Alive...') and extending a helping hand to Neil Young by covering his song about a town in North Ontario. Young guests on her version, a rare



session appearance back then. Buffy Sainte-Marie's post-Vanguard career never followed the buckskin Pocahontas path. It never petered out. She went on to international recognition with her television appearances on the globally syndicated television series Sesame Street and with blockbuster hits like 'Until It's Time For You To Go' and 'Up Where We Belong' and her pioneering embrace of computer science in music and pictorial art. Neatly, George Mander of British Columbia named a hybrid rose in her honour that the Vancouver Rose Society called "a fitting tribute to Canada's folk singer".

"Soldier Blue – The Best Of The Vanguard Years" could be called "The Beginner's Guide to Buffy Sainte-Marie." We hand you the keys to her treasure house, to those nine Vanguard albums from "It's My Way" to "Quiet Places" that revealed the fullest measure of her originality, creativity and talent. But like these things should, it is in the business of tantalising and leading you on to make further discoveries.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER • THE CIRCLE GAME • NOW THAT THE BUFFALO'S GONE • LITTLE WHEEL SPIN AND SPIN • SOLDIER BLUE • I'M GONNA BE A COUNTRY GIRL AGAIN • MISTER CAN'T YOU SEE • COD'INE • GOD IS ALIVE, MAGIC IS AFOOT • HE'S AN INDIAN COWBOY IN THE RODEO • HELPLESS • NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN CHILD • MY COUNTRY; 'TIS OF THY PEOPLE YOU'RE DYING • (HE PLAYED REAL GOOD) FOR FREE • THE VAMPIRE