

The Tomorrow People

The past, the present and the future – it's all here, and now it sounds even better.

By Daryl Easlea

The Beatles 1962-1966

★★★★★

Apple Corps Ltd./Capitol/UMe 5592053

(3LP, 2CD)

1967-1970

★★★★★

Apple Corps Ltd./Capitol/UMe 5592080 (3LP, 2CD)

1962-1966/1967-1970

★★★★★

Apple Corps Ltd./Capitol/UMe 5592100 (6LP, 4CD)

It really is time to reiterate the bleeding obvious. The Beatles are fabulous. The magazine you are reading would not exist without them. Their path from Love Me Do to Tomorrow Never Knows in just 46 months, while also conquering most of the western world and inexorably altering popular culture forever, is still one hell of an achievement. And then to repeat it as they went from Strawberry Fields Forever to I Me Mine in a further 39 months is doubly astounding.

Assembled by Allen Klein as a reaction to the US TV advertised Beatles bootleg collection *Alpha Omega*, the 'red' (1962-1966) and the 'blue' (1967-1970) albums became widely loved.

Released in pop's fantastically febrile 1973, the eight sides represented one for every year of the Beatles' recording existence. Although initially mired in the *au courant* legal wrangling and emerging despite Paul McCartney allegedly attempting to injunct them (he was competing directly against himself with the simultaneous release of *Red Rose Speedway*), the two albums – alongside their films being shown every Boxing Day back then – became the next generation's introduction to The Beatles.

These two compilations are forever magical, acknowledging an end and a beginning. The dream was over. But suddenly the dream could be there for everyone. Listening to the golden run from



Please Please Me to I Want To Hold Your Hand, the very sod-cutting of their global success, it seemed impossible to think it only a decade previously. A decade. That's Get Lucky by Daft Punk at the time of writing.

The big news, of course, is the addition of Now And Then, nestling after The Long And Winding Road on the 'blue' album. The third of the three tracks attempted (yet not released) in 1995 for the *Anthology*, the world now knows what it sounds like, but when RC heard it, it was an exclusive play three weeks before announcement. The excitement was palpable. It is a perfect motif of the group: an idea and melody brought in by John Lennon,

which the others worked on, adding George Harrison's rhythm guitar, Ringo Starr's drums, and various trickery to bring in backing vocals from Here, There And Everywhere, Because and Eleanor Rigby. Had it been finished in 1995,

it would have been slathered in Jeff Lynne's drum sound, and McCartney would have shared the vocal. Now, with the perspective of legends that The Beatles have become, the Dakota-recorded track has been handled like a white-gloved artefact, reconstructed with the latest technology, complete with McCartney and Giles Martin's strings. It certainly offers more of a suitable ending to the group than Real Love did in 1996. If Real Love was the cardboard tombstone, Now And Then is the full marbled mausoleum.

Of the new demixed/remixed tracks, the detail is boundless and endless. Whereas one expects such colouring and complexity on the later tracks, it is

The detail is boundless and endless



The Beatles: still absolutely fabulous

the 'red album' that contains the most surprises. Records made to be played on Dansettes and transistors, regardless of previous remastering, the sound here leaps out: the drum crack at the start of A Hard Day's Night – who knew? Starr's bongo playing on that and And I Love Her. What's that guitar noise on Magical Mystery Tour? Did the effects sound quite so loud at the end of I Am The Walrus?

Twelve new tracks have been added to 1962-1966 and nine to 1967-1970 and are, broadly, astonishing. To add I Saw Her Standing There, and some key covers, is a masterstroke that truly ramps up the excitement of the first era: Twist & Shout, Roll Over Beethoven (Harrison rolling his Rs), You've Really Got A Hold On Me – just perfect. Harrison gets numbers on the red album at last – If I Needed Someone and Taxman are perfectly placed. Some of the tracks are a tad arcane – are I'm Only Sleeping and Glass Onion really in the time capsule?

It really is time to reiterate the bleeding obvious. The Beatles are fabulous. Did I say that the magazine you are reading would not exist without them? Without the vagaries of economics, exploitation, what might be thought (it could indeed make a million for you overnight), these tracks, complete with Now And Then, the brand-new full stop to the sentence's end, will hopefully bring in another generation to fall for their magic. And later, another. *Hackney Diamonds*, sure – this is Woolton Tanzanite. I'm hoping you will know what I mean.

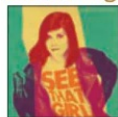
Kirsty MacColl

See That Girl 1979-2000

★★★★★

UMC 4556043 (8-CD)

Glorious overview of a gone but not forgotten chanteuse



Taken from us far too early, MacColl nonetheless lives and

breathes through the gorgeous music on these eight discs, from the post-adolescent angst of her first recordings to the knowing Mother Hen attitude of her final work. It's a voyage that stops off at vintage girl group tropes, ironic country, indie guitar anthems, trip-hop and salsa, all underpinned by an impossibly attractive and very English conversational vocal style. It's

also a showcase for her often-overlooked talent as a lyricist with a confessional kitchen sink bent, brimming with big sister wisdom. Elsewhere, though, the previously unreleased 1983 album, *Real*, is awkwardly cold and synthetic, but a disc collecting her guest spots with the likes of The Pogues, The Wonder Stuff, Billy Bragg and Happy Mondays illustrates the love she inspired in others. Terry Staunton

Bob Marley & The Wailers

Catch A Fire – 50th Anniversary Edition

★★★★★

Island/Tuff Gong/UMR 5565971

(3LP+12"/3CD)

Landmark album hits 50



Though first released in 1973 solely under The Wailers' name, this revolutionary album thrust Bob Marley onto the world stage and brought reggae to an international audience. Co-producer Chris Blackwell's savvy decision to bring in US session guitarist Wayne Perkins to add bluesy licks to three tracks, including the iconic opener Concrete Jungle, was a catalytic masterstroke that helped Marley's music attract white rock and pop listeners. *Catch A Fire*'s half-century milestone is celebrated with a sensational three-disc deluxe reissue bolstered with a live BBC concert from 1973 and the album's original Jamaican

mixes. The 3LP iteration includes a bonus 12" single containing the first official release of three tunes recorded at the band's much-bootlegged gig in Edmonton. Fifty years later, the fire Marley started is still burning brightly. Charles Waring

Johnny Marr

Spirit Power: The Best of Johnny Marr

★★★★

BMG (CD/2CD, 2LP)

Recent years of the prolific ex-Smiths guitarist



Ten years after the release of *The Messenger*, Johnny Marr's debut record

exclusively under his own name, he's managed to piece together

a decent 'Best of' collection drawn from his four recent solo records and other titbits. Yet these are the lower leagues of Marr's career, after recordings of The Smiths' best and a hypothetical comp of his classics as a member of The The, Electronic, Modest Mouse, the Cribs and so on. Across two discs filled out with some demos and his average cover of Depeche Mode's I Feel You, however, there's much of beauty to (re)discover here, not least his skill with smooth, well-voiced stadium anthems like Armatopia and Somewhere (the better of two new songs here) and acres of that sublimely jangling guitar on New Town Velocity and the statement-making European Me. David Pollock