

BEATLESongs!



THE BEST OF THE BEATLES NOVELTY RECORDS

RHINO RECORDS

RNLP 803

SIDE ONE

1. BUCHANAN AND GREENFIELD The Invasion
2. THE RUTLES Hold My Hand*
3. THE CAREFREES We Love You Beatles
4. DONNA LYNN My Boyfriend Got A Beatle Haircut†
5. CASEY KASEM Letter From Elaina*
6. JACK NITZSCHE Beatlemania*

SIDE TWO

1. THE QWORYMEN Beatle Rap
2. PETER COOK & DUDLEY MOORE L.S. Bumble Bee††
3. WILD MAN FISCHER I'm the Meany
4. ALLAN SHERMAN Pop Hates the Beatles*
5. THE FOUR PREPS Letter to the Beatles†
6. GARY USHER The Beetle

COMPILATION: KEN BARNES, RICHARD FOOS, HAROLD BRONSON
COVER DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION: WILLIAM STOUT

ART DIRECTION: ART D. REKSHUN

LINER PHOTO: LESTER COHEN

MASTERING: STEPHEN MARCUSSEN, PRECISION LACQUER
BEATLES ARTIFACTS COURTESY OF THE RICHARD STEVENS
COLLECTION

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† Courtesy of Capitol Records Inc.

†† Courtesy of Westminster Music Ltd.



Beatle Songs

The topical novelty record has played its low comedy role throughout rock history, from "Dear Elvis" by Audrey to "Bomb Iran" by Vince Vance & the Valiants. Covering world events and rock phenomena, novelty approaches encompass a wide range—idol worship or idle wordplay, sycophancy or sicker fancies. At best, the satirical side of novelty records has helped undermine rock & roll's tendency to take itself too seriously, and at least most novelties are capable of raising a smile.

The Beatles, as befits rock's number one group, generated more novelty records than anyone—at least 200 during their 1964-65 takeover and many more later (during Paul's "death" hoax, their break-up, etc.). As foreign invaders, the Beatles inspired responses of total capitulation ("We Love You Beatles") as well as outright hostility.

Male singers tended to be hostile, displaying either envy ("I Wanna Be A Beatle") or pugnacity (the Buggs' "Buggs vs. Beatles" declares "We'll have to rumble/Beatles vs. Buggs" and later threatens to resort to bacteriological warfare in the form of Raid—a solution later echoed by an L.A. punk group's campaign against 1980's British stars Adam & the Ants: "Black Flag Kills Ants"). Female vocalists tended to swoon ("Ringo I Love You"), accounting for the male envy or irritation described above.

Other categories of Beatles novelties included "break-in" records (interviews in which the respondents answered via snippets of current hits), instrumentals given a trendy Beatles-related title ("The Beatle Bounce"), and the swarms of records by groups calling themselves the Baby Buggs, the Insects, the Beetles, the American Beatles, the Canadian Beattles, and so forth.

Several famous show business personalities involved themselves during the boom, among them Cher (as Bonnie Jo Mason, produced by Phil Spector, singing "Ringo I Love You") and Sissy Spacek (as Rainbo, lamenting "John You Went Too Far This Time" on the occasion of Lennon and Ono's nude "Two Virgins" LP cover). Gene Cornish (later of the Rascals) and Harry Nilsson also made contributions.

This Rhino collection, the first anthology of Beatles novelties, provides an interesting cross-sectional look at the phenomenon, and should be approached not for timeless musical value but for its amusement potential.

BILL BUCHANAN (co-creator of the first "break-in" hit, "The Flying Saucer"), and HOWARD GREENFIELD (lyricist for most of Neil Sedaka's early hits) collaborated on "The Invasion," in which America is "being invaded by four mops." Commentary is provided by excerpts from songs by the Shirelles, Chubby Checker, the Impressions, the Marvelettes, Bobby Darin, the Drifters, Dionne Warwick, the Serendipity Singers, Dusty Springfield, James Darren, the Miracles, Jan & Dean, and the Beatles themselves (eloquently declaring, "Yeah yeah yeah").

PETER COOK and DUDLEY MOORE, a successful British comedy team for years who went on to individual glory (Cook in the TV series "The Two Of Us" and Moore in "Arthur" and "10"), created a furor in 1967 when their "L.S. Bumble Bee", a send-up of the psychedelic scene, was released just before "Sgt. Pepper" and was identified by a few sensationalist disc jockeys as an advance track from the Beatles album.

THE FOUR PREPS, who'd satirized Dion and other early 60's hitmakers in the past, took on the Beatles by exposing their crass commercialism. When the Prep's girlfriend writes a love letter to the Fab Four, she's instructed to send "25¢ for an autographed picture/One dollar bill for a fan club card/And if you send in right away/You get a lock of hair...from our St. Bernard."

CASEY KASEM, now one of America's best-known commercial voices and host of "American Top 40" and "America's Top 10," was a DJ at KRLA/Pasadena when he narrated this heart-tugging tale of a young fan skulking around behind a concert hall to steal a hug from her favorite Beatle, George, who when found and embraced by Elaina, ad-libbed memorably, "Hi bird" ("It was so romantic," gushes Elaina).

DONNA LYNN faced losing her boyfriend to mobs of screaming girls after he got a "Beatle haircut." So "to keep him true/I got a Beatle haircut too." She doesn't go on to say whether she was then chased by mobs of screaming girls as well.

JACK NITZSCHE, the famous producer, arranger/composer, interweaves three Beatles riffs (from "Please Please Me," "From Me To You," and "I Want To Hold Your Hand") with his own composition "Needles & Pins" (a big hit for the Beatles' Liverpool compatriots the Searchers) in this sterling example of the instrumental Beatles novelty.

THE RUTLES (headed by Monty Python's Eric Idle and former Bonzo Dog Neil Innes), devisers of an amusing televised version of the Beatles myth, created a soundtrack LP which echoed and poked indirect fun at the Beatles' evolving music without overtly satirizing it, as this pleasant if slightly oversophisticated evocation of the 1963-64 Mersey sound shows.

Comedian ALLAN SHERMAN ("Hello Mudduh, Hello Fadduh"), ever the faddist, trained his own brand of camp humor (Camp Granada humor) on the inviting target of John Paul George & Ringo.

GARY USHER, who co-wrote a number of Beach Boys hits, invented a dance called the "The Beetle," partial instructions to which ran: "Use a little English/And comb your hair down in your face," cleverly enough. For some inexplicable reason, he then counseled dancers to "Do a little Slauson now/But keep your hands on your waist." The Slauson was a popular Los Angeles dance named after a main thoroughfare in East L.A., and its connection with the Beatles was tenuous at best—as is this record's, despite its appealing Merseybeat/surf rock beat.

Frank Zappa discovery WILD MAN FISCHER was so affected by the Beatles (his favorite group at the time) film "Yellow Submarine," that he was moved to write "I'm the Meany" after one of the cartoon characters. Wild Man says his new favorite group is the Go-Go's.

Not too much is known about the 1964-flavored CAREFREES (except that the "girl group" is from England) or about the "Beatle Rap" by the QWORYMEN.

As the records above show us, Beatle novelties, whatever their approach, were good for a laugh. And when you think of it, looking back at the Beatles with laughter is one of the best ways to remember them.

December 15, 1981

Harold Bronson
Managing Director
11609 West Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90064

Dudley Moore
c/o Rogers B. Cowan

Dear Mr. Bronson,

Many thanks for your letter of the 25th of November. Regarding "The L.S. Bumblebee", Peter Cook and I recorded that song about the time when there was so much fuss about L.S.D., and when everybody thought that "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds" was a reference to drugs. The exciting alternative we offered to the world was L.S.B.I., and I wrote the music to, in some ways, satirize the Beach Boys rather than the Beatles. But I'm grateful if some small part of the music to, in some ways, have been them, rather than us! The only thing I can remember about the recording session was that Peter Cook had practically lost his voice when we were doing it, and found it very hard to put any tone into it. As you can hear, there is a slight reference to the Supremes' sighing that they used to do on their records. The instrumental lineup, was honky tonk piano, bass guitar, drums, and cymbal, and voices. I did all of the singing voices, including the soprano backup voices. I hope this will be of some use to you.

Best Wishes.
Sincerely,

Dudley Moore
Dudley Moore
DM/sv

BEATLESONGS



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SIDE ONE

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S-9058

1. BUCHANAN AND GREENFIELD –
The Invasion 2:53
2. THE RUTLES – Hold My Hand* 2:31
3. THE CAREFREES –
We Love You Beatles 2:18
4. DONNA LYNN –
My Boyfriend Got A Beatle Haircut† 2:12
5. CASEY KASEM – Letter From Elaina* 3:16
6. JACK NITZSCHE – Beatlemania* 2:10

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SIDE TWO

RNLP 803

S-9059

1. THE QWORYMEN – Beatle Rap** 3:55
2. PETER COOK & DUDLEY MOORE –
L.S. Bumble Bee†† 2:42
3. WILD MAN FISCHER –
I'm The Meany*** 1:20
4. ALLAN SHERMAN –
Pop Hates The Beatles* 3:04
5. THE FOUR PREPS –
Letter To The Beatles†.. 2:48
6. GARY USHER – The Beetle† 1:54

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