

RELEASE

NEW ALBUM 'MEASURE FOR MEASURE' OUT NOW
INCLUDES NO PROMISES AND BABY YOU'RE SO STRANGE



Records

The Temptations Touch Me Gordy

It's remarkable! And I don't just mean that the Tempts are still going more than 20 years since those first classic hits. No, what's really impressive is that, having suffered more than a decade in the creative wilderness, they've returned in such extraordinary strength and style.

Last year's *Truly For You* was a very fine album and, in 'Treat Her Like a Lady', provided one of 1985's best singles. However the album didn't sell well locally, a fact possibly related to the somewhat '70s feel of the arrangements and overall production.

This time out the sound is markedly more modern, not in any crass or gimmicky sense, but in a way that should make the group more immediately accessible to a new audience. All of which is quite understandable when you have the likes of Marcus Miller producing two tracks. But of greater significance is that the Temptations themselves produced over half the album.

They've also written over half the songs. Well, two members have: Otis Williams, who's the longest serving, and the recently-recruited Ali-Ollie Woodson. These two penned 'Treat Her Like a Lady' last time and here they supply a sequel called 'Give Her Some Attention'. The overall standard of songwriting is again consistently high throughout, whether it's sloppy ballads (the opening track on each side) or variously tempoed funk (the rest of each side).

The singing, of course, is absolutely sublime.

There was a character in the movie *The Big Chill* who, after dancing around to an early Temptations' hit, was asked why he only played 60s music. His reply was that there hadn't been any music since the 60s. *Touch Me* is the

perfect album to bring such a reactionary up to date. His favourite vocal group has not only preserved its original greatness but become a major talent in the 80s.

Peter Thomson

Prince Parade Warner Bros

Okay, okay, I give up — what the hell is going on here? *Parade* opens with the psychedelic non-event of the year ('Christopher Tracy's Parade') yet doesn't stop for breath before the fabulous 'New Position' and equally weird 'Wonder U'. Drippy dross such as 'Venus de Milo' stand proudly alongside the beauty of 'Girls and Boys' and 'Life Can Be So Nice'. On side two, the Skipworth-and-Turner-style 'Mountains' lays a thick bass path for the funny snippet 'Do U Lie' (in which, I swear, Prince imitates a Cockney accent) and the 'Sexuality'-style 'Kiss' — yet 'Another Lover Holey Head' and 'Sometimes it Snows in April' are just plain forgettable.

Parade is confused, and the man don't care. He can still write singles with the self-be-dazzlement of a drunk fumbling a diamond. Prince, I am convinced, is all talent and no brains, a pop-priest who believes his own publicity. He wants to write tumultuous rock ballads ('Purple Rain', 'Under the Cherry Moon'), he wants to push things like 'Rock' and 'Soul' into new and exciting realms (*Around the World*) but, dammit, the cheery grin is forever eclipsing the Cherry Moon. Songs like '1999', 'Little Red Corvette', 'I Wanna Be Your Lover', 'Raspberry Beret' and 'Kiss' just keep tripping the artist up with their four-minute slices of sex, beat and cliché. Their inconsequence is their indestructibility, their triteness their attraction.

On vinyl, the gaps between good and bad are too long. When the good does arrive, it's incredibly good, particularly the whimsy of 'Girls and Boys' and the bouncy double-bed of 'Mountains'. The best of *Parade* is in the style of

'Sexuality'; simple despite a torrent of session musicians and shamelessly hedonistic. The worst is more like a funeral procession. Those dark satanic piano riffs... yech, they make you pine for the wonderful Wendy's guitar and the old dance-singles about fucking. It may sometimes 'Snow in April', but whenever the Erotic City's cherry babe is brave enough to show his face, a storm is always raised. The heavy weather is here if you're prepared to wait for it.

Chad Taylor

Rolling Stones Dirty Work Rolling Stones Records

You can imagine how thrilled I was when the editor chose me out of all the *Rip It Up* writers to review this latest release by the World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band. Mind you, to be quite frank, there are some people around this office — and professional integrity prevents me mentioning names — who don't worship the Stones the way we all should.

Why, I've even heard cynical mutterings about the wonderful 'Harlem Shuffle', *Dirty Work*'s first single. Now this song was first a hit way back in the 1960s for some guys called Bob and Earl. So you and I know that when Keith recently spoke about putting new Stones fans in touch with the band's roots he was showing a star's true concern for his following. Yet certain smartypants around here have had the gall to suggest that the release of 'Harlem Shuffle' indicates that Mick and Keith couldn't write anything good enough themselves. (But then these same "critics" can't even recognise that the slow, measured pace of the Stones' version is by way of lengthening their tribute. It has nothing whatsoever to do with band members' ages.)

Rest assured dear reader, there are lots of super new Mick and Keith songs on this record. And yes, they're still writing them in exactly the same terrific styles we've been loving for so many years. Not that being a loyal fan makes me blind however. I'll readily admit that

Dirty Work isn't the best Stones album ever. 'Sleep Tonight', for instance, isn't quite in the classic ballad league of, say, 'Angie', but it does feature someone called Bobby Womack helping out Keith's singing rather nicely.

And when all is said and done, we know that even an "ordinary" Stones platter is usually better than anyone else's. I mean if it wasn't, why would such superstars as Jimmy Page want to play on it?

Peter Thomson

George Jones Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes Epic

A couple of years ago I heard of a survey which revealed that booze consumption increased by 50 percent in US bars when country music was being played. Swallowing lost love, lust, infidelity, drinking, paying and praying, understandably takes some washing down. In country, credibility is everything and George Jones, a man who embodies these themes, is nothing if not credible. When he sings, you believe him, which is why myself and many others consider him the finest country singer alive. Hell! One glimpse of his leathery old dial on the cover has me lurching for the drinks cabinet!

This record opens with the title track, a brisk walk through the (male) country hall of fame, worthy sentiments but hardly what legends are made of. Things hit stride however with a swinging 'The One I Loved Back Then' and the duet (George likes a duet) with Lynn Anderson; 'If You Can Touch Her At All' is great.

Side two also has some fine moments, 'If Only You'd Love Me Again' and 'Call the Wrecker for My Heart' are standouts, the former an aching honky tonk lament sung the way only George can. 'Whole Lotta Trouble for You' is pure corn, but damn! that voice could save nearly any songwriting sins. Maybe this isn't vintage George, but like the man says, "it's better to have one than none".

Mark Kennedy

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