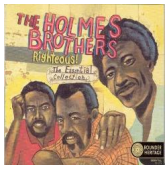
The Holmes Brothers – Righteous: The Essential Collection (2002)



01. Got Myself Together 02. Promised Land 03. When Something Is Wrong With My Baby 04. Fannie Mae 05. The New and Improved Me 06. I Surrender All 07. Train Song 08. None But the Righteous 09. Dashboard Bar 10. Don't Spare Your Sword 11. I've Been a Loser 12. Please Don't Hurt Me 13. The Final Round 14. There Goes My Everything 15. There's a Train 16. And I Love Her 17. Walk in the Light Sherman Holmes - Bass, Piano, Vocals, Wurlitzer Wendell Holmes - Guitar, Organ, Piano, Vocals Scott Billington - Percussion Phil Chandler - Organ (Hammond) Jon Cleary - Organ (Hammond) Popsy Dixon - Drums, Vocals Laurence Etkin - Trumpet Anders Gaardmand - Horn Arrangements, Sax (Baritone), Sax (Tenor) Alison Krauss - Fiddle Dan Levin - Trombone Ron Levy - Organ (Hammond) Bob Malach - Sax (Tenor) Tim Quimette - Trumpet James Singleton - Bass (Acoustic) Gib Wharton - Dobro, Lap Steel Guitar, Pedal Steel Lee Allen Zeno - Bass

Andy Breslau described the Holmes Brothers' music as "gospel-infused doo wop funk," which pretty much captures the spirit and synthesis of their style. Combining old R&B, soul, and gospel, brothers Sherman and Wendell Holmes along with Popsy Dixon create a rich sound filled with lovely harmony. The intensity of the group's studio performances evokes a live feel, offering an inkling of what their performances at Lynch's in Manhattan must have sounded like during the '80s. Righteous! collects almost 75 minutes of material from the group's four Rounder albums, beginning with In the Spirit in 1990 and ending with Promised Land in 1997. The album kicks off with a bit of electric blues topped with a healthy dose of soul on "Got Myself Together," a song that jumps out of the gate at a gallop and holds to a steady gait for five minutes. Gospel-drenched pieces like "Promised Land," complete with electric guitar, will have non-believers singing along, while classics like "There Goes My Everything" combine classic soul with a touch of country. One also wouldn't want to miss the Holmes Brothers' takes on Tom Waits' "Train Song" and the Beatles' "And I Love Her." Breslau's liner notes, which travel back to the Holmes Brothers' residency at Lynch's, are both edifying and fun to read. While all of the albums the Holmes Brothers recorded for Rounder are worthy efforts, Righteous! offers a solid introduction to anyone who has missed out on their wonderful music. --- Ronnie D. Lankford, Jr., allmusic.com

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