

The Very Best Of Bert Kaempfert (1995)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Wonderland By Night* (3:17) 02. *Tenderly* (3:16) 03. *Now And Forever* (2:51) 04. *Afrikaan Beat* (2:28) 05. *That Happy Feeling* (2:55) 06. *A Swingin' Safari* (3:09) 07. *Magic Trumpet (Happy Trumpeter)* (2:40) 08. *Danke Schoen* (3:16) 09. *L-O-V-E (Love)* (2:07) 10. *Red Roses For A Blue Lady* (2:24) 11. *Three O'Clock In The Morning* (2:36) 12. *Spanish Eyes (Moon Over Naples)* (2:40) 13. *Bye Bye Blues* (2:57) 14. *Strangers In The Night* (3:23) 15. *Lady* (3:13) 16. *The World We Knew (Over And Over)* (3:30)

Bert Kaempfert may have signed and lost the Beatles, but this CD is a reminder that he never lacked for hit records of his own, and had his own influence on popular culture around the world. The Very Best of Bert Kaempfert isn't quite a comprehensive collection of Kaempfert's hits, but it will have special resonances to listeners of a certain age group, and it covers a few bases that would be missed by a strict adherence to chart placements. In addition to the expected hits such as "Wonderland by Night," "Three O'Clock in the Morning," "Spanish Eye (Moon Over Naples)," "Danke Schon," and "Red Roses for a Blue Lady," the producers have included several non-charting singles of high quality, such as "L-O-V-E (Love)" and a handful of key representative LP tracks, among them "Magic Trumpet (Happy Trumpeter)," to illustrate the breadth of Kaempfert's work. Also notable is trio of tracks whose main recognition came from their use as incidental music -- "Afrikaan Beat" was a hit in its own right but beyond that, for decades, it turned up as a piece of bridge music used by New York-area children's television host Sandy Becker as a lead-in for segments, and was used for years after as transition music to news items on New York radio; "That Happy Feeling," similarly, was used by Becker as background music for many of his crazier and more memorable dance sequences on his show, and turned up for years afterward on WNEW-TV as incidental background music; and "A Swingin' Safari," in a cover by Billy Vaughn, was adapted as the theme to NBC's The Match Game show. Also featured are Kaempfert's own versions of his two contributions to Frank Sinatra's repertory, "Strangers in the Night" and "The World We Knew (Over and Over)." The sound is excellent -- everything is crisp and clean, the trumpet sounds like it's about three feet from the listener -- and the annotation and discography information are also very thorough.

---Bruce Eder, Rovi

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