

The Shadows - Greatest Hits (1963)

Written by bluelover

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1 Apache (2:48) 2 Man of Mystery (2:03) 3 The Stranger (2:44) 4 FBI (2:22) 5 Midnight (2:33) 6 The Frightened City (2:25) 7 Kon Tiki (1:55) 8 36-24-36 (1:44) 9 The Savage (2:25) 10 Peace Pipe (2:14) 11 Wonderful Land (2:06) 12 Stars Fell on Stockton (2:19) 13 Guitar Tango (3:02) 14 The Boys (2:34) 15 Dance On (2:24) 16 Quatermaster's Store (2:22)
Hank Marvin – lead guitar Bruce Welch – rhythm guitar Brian Bennett – drums Jet Harris – bass Tony Meehan – drums Brian Locking – bass

A straightforward summary of the Shadows' first three years of habitual hit-making, opening with the pounding flurry of "Apache," then tracing through the next eight smash singles, with a handful of attendant B-sides (and one EP cut, the title track from The Boys) to round the package out. There is no denying the sheer brilliance of this early sequence. Hits like "Wonderful Land," "FBI," and "Man of Mystery" utterly rewrote the guitar's role in rock, not only musically, but culturally as well. Unquestionably, the Shadows' importance and impact diminished as the years passed, but at the outset of their career -- the period documented here -- they were untouchable. It is for that reason that The Shadows' Greatest Hits is still regarded in some quarters as the finest Shadows album of them all, an accolade which no other compilation (and goodness knows, there's been enough of them) has ever been able to dismiss. Even the sleeve screams "masterpiece." ---Dave Thompson, AllMusic Review

I have owned this greatest hits collection for almost 40 years on vinyl and have done my very best to wear it out! This cd has the original tracks plus the "B" side of "Apache", "Quatermasster`s stores", and yes, i`ve spelt it correctly! The title was a spoof on the then popular sci-fi tv series "Quatermass". There are mono and stereo versions of all the tracks for the purists. There is a perception these days, fostered by historical revisionists, that British pop

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music started with the Beatles and serious guitar playing started with Eric Clapton. However, if you were to ask Messrs. Clapton, Townshend, Green, May, Page, Neil Young etc., all guitar heroes in their own right, who influenced them, then Hank Marvin is usually near the top of their list. It surprises people when they find out that The Shadows and Cliff are, together and separately, one of the most successful acts the UK has ever produced. The Shadows started life as The Drifters, Cliff Richard's backing group in the late 1950's and changed their name in 1959. Few people realise how genuinely innovative they were in that era, Hank Marvin was the first guitarist in the UK to play a Fender Stratocaster (purchased and imported by Cliff), Jet Harris was one of the first in the UK to play a Fender precision Bass Guitar (most groups then used upright double basses), and together with Tony Meehan on drums and Bruce Welch on Rhythm Guitar they carved out a unique sound. Hank fashioned an almost-Hawaiian guitar sound with innovative use of the Stat's tremelo arm and various echo units (he, in fact, popularised both of these), the band got the guitar amplifier manufacturer Vox to make a bigger amp, the legendary AC30, so that they could be heard over screaming fans. All of these things laid down the template for nearly all pop/rock groups that followed them in the 1960's, including the Beatles. The first big hit "Apache" written by Jerry Lordan, was a tour-de-force of Hank's guitar technique and technical innovation, it stayed at no. 1 for six weeks and quickly became a rite-of-passage for every early '60s would-be guitar player. Hit after hit followed, "Man of Mystery" "Kon-Tiki", "Wonderful Land", which set a record for most weeks at no. 1 during the '60s, 8-10 weeks (depending on record chart). Listen to "Wonderful Land" and marvel at Norrie Paramor's arrangement, Hanks delicate, yet masterful touch lending gravitas to every note shaped and played, the tightness of the group sound, the sheer other-worldliness of it and i defy anyone not to be uplifted after the last notes die away. The group personnel changed, out went Tony Meehan, to be replaced by Brian Bennet and Jet Harris left, being replaced by Brian Locking, the sound mellowed a little and "Dance On" was the last no. 1 hit on this particular album. Buy This CD, play it loud and marvel at the finest instrumental pop music ever made. ---salopian, amazon.com

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