

Led Zeppelin - The Complete British Broadcasting Corporation Radio Sessions (4CD) [2006]

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CD1: Radio One Session - John Peel'S Top Gear, 1969.03.03, Playhouse Theatre, London (Original Broadcast 1969.03.23): 01. *You Shook Me* (1969.03.03) (Willie Dixon, J.B. Lenoir) - 5:23 02. *Communication Breakdown* (1969.03.03) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 3:02 03. *I Can't Quit You Baby* (1969.03.03) (Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters) - 4:25 04. *Dazed And Confused* (1969.03.03) (Jimmy Page) - 6:38

World

Service Radio Session - Rhythm & Blues, 1969.03.19, Maida Vale Studio, London (Original Broadcast 1969.04.14):

05. *Alexis Korner Introduction* (1969.03.19) - 0:23 06. *What Is And What Should Never Be* (1969.03.19) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 4:06 07. *More Chat* (1969.03.19) - 0:18 08. *I Can't Quit You Baby* (1969.03.19) (Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters) - 5:27 09. *More Chat* (1969.03.19) - 0:29 10. *You Shook Me* (1969.03.19) (Willie Dixon, J.B. Lenoir) - 4:08 11. *Sunshine Woman* (1969.03.19) - 3:09

Radio One Session - Chris Grant's Tasty Pop Sundae, 1969.06.16, Aeolian Hall, Studio2, London

(Original Broadcast 1969.06.22): 12. *The Girl I Love Has Long Black Wavy Hair* (1969.06.16) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones,

□ Robert Plant, John Estes) - 3:28 13. *Communication Breakdown* (1969.06.16) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 3:18 14. *Something Else* (1969.06.16) (Bob Cochran, Sharon Sheeley) - 2:05 15. *What Is And What Should Never Be* (1969.06.16) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 4:15 16. *Group Interview With Chris Grant* (1969.06.16) - 6:01

Radio One Session - John Peel's Top Gear, 1969.06.24 Maida Vale, Studio 4, London (Original Broadcast 1969.06.29):

17.

Whole Lotta Love (1969.06.24) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones, Robert Plant, Willie Dixon) - 6:08 18. *Communication Breakdown* (1969.06.24) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 2:41 19. *What Is And What Should Never Be* (1969.06.24) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 4:26 20. *Travelling Riverside Blues* (1969.06.24) (Jimmy Page, Robert Johnson, Robert Plant) - 5:09

CD2: Radio One Sessions - BBC Rock Hour, 1969.06.27, Playhouse Theater, London (Original Broadcast 1969.08.10):

01. *Alan Black Introduction* (1969.06.27) - 0:37 02. *Communication Breakdown* (1969.06.27) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 3:15 03. *I Can't Quit You* (1969.06.27) (Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters) - 6:27 04. *Interview With Alan Black* (1969.06.27) - 4:37 05. *Dazed And Confused* (1969.06.27) (Jimmy Page) - 11:27 06. *Interlude With Adrian Henry, Mike Evans and*

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Andy Roberts (1969.06.27) - 2:59 07. White Summer/Black Mountain Side (1969.06.27) (Jimmy Page) - 8:24 08. You Shook Me (1969.06.27) (Willie Dixon, J.B. Lenoir) - 10:27 09. How Many More Times (1969.06.27) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 13:36
BBC1 TV Recording - Julie Felix Show, 1970.04.23, BBC TV Studios, London (Original Broadcast 1970.04.26):

10. White Summer (1970.04.23) (Jimmy Page) - 2:08 11. Black Mountain Side (1970.04.23) (Jimmy Page) - 3:12

CD3: Radio One Live Session - John Peel Sunday In Concert, 1971.04.01, Paris Cinema, London (Original Broadcast 1971.04.04)

01. John Peel Introduction (1971.04.01) - 1:30 02. Immigrant Song (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 3:15 03. Heartbreaker (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 5:54 04. Since I've Been Loving You (1971.04.01) (John Paul Jones, Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 7:39 05. Black Dog (1971.04.01) (John Paul Jones, Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 6:20 06. Dazed And Confused (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page) - 21:29 07. Stairway To Heaven (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 10:44

CD4: Radio One Live Session - John Peel Sunday In Concert, 1971.04.01, Paris Cinema, London (Original Broadcast 1971.04.04)

01. Going To California (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 5:01 02. That's The Way (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 7:49 03. What Is And What Should Never Be (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 4:48 04. Whole Lotta Love (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones, Robert Plant) - 22:49 05. Thank You (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, Robert Plant) - 6:47 06. Communication Breakdown (1971.04.01) (Jimmy Page, John Bonham, John Paul Jones) - 6:07

Personnel: - Robert Plant – vocals, harmonica - Jimmy Page – acoustic & electric guitar, backing vocals - John Paul Jones – bass guitar, bass pedals, piano, organ, mandolin, backing vocals - John Bonham – drums, percussion, backing vocals

Empress Valley's The Complete British Broadcasting Corporation Radio Sessions is the latest in a long line of releases, both official and unofficial, covering Zeppelin's early radio career. Given their origins with the BBC the sound quality of these tapes has almost always been at least very good if not excellent covering the embryonic Zeppelin. Since the release of the BBC Sessions on Atlantic Records in 1998 there have not been many unofficial releases covering this material and this is the first all inclusive set.

The sound quality and presentation of the Empress Valley collection is across the board excellent and a worthy upgrade to all previous issues including the official release with some reservations discussed below. Empress Valley make the claim they use the pre-FM master recordings except for the March 19th Alexis Korner session, which comes from an "aircheck master" (i.e., it was taped off of a short wave broadcast).

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This could be true since it does not sound as if they used the official or any other source. Compared to Jimmy Page's own work on these tapes, Empress Valley sounds much more heavy and lively lending more vitality to these tapes like never before. Since the set runs in chronological order the first disc contains the four earliest and shortest sessions.

Disc 1, Radio One Session, John Peel's Top Gear, Playhouse, London – March 3rd, 1969: You Shook Me, Communication Breakdown, I Can't Quit You, Dazed and Confused. World Service Radio Session, Rhythm And Blues, Maida Vale Studio, London – March 19th, 1969: Alexis Korner introduction, What Is And What Should Never Be, more chat, I Can't Quit You, more chat, You Shook Me, Sunshine Woman. Radio One, Chris Grant's Tasty Pop Sundae, Aeolian Hall Studio 2, London – June 16th, 1969: The Girl I Love, Communication Breakdown, Something Else, What Is And What Should Never Be, group interview with Chris Grant. Radio One, John Peel's Top Gear, Maida Vale, Studio 4, London – June 24th, 1969: Whole Lotta Love, Communication Breakdown, What Is And What Should Never Be, Traveling Riverside Blues

Tracks one through four cover their first appearance on John Peel's Top Gear, recorded on March 3rd and broadcasted on March 23rd, 1969. Only "You Shook Me", "I Can't Quit You" and "Dazed & Confused" were included on the official release with "Communication Breakdown" omitted.

Early unofficial releases on compact disc include Riverside Blues on The Swingin' Pig Records in 1989 ("Communication Breakdown" and "You Shook Me"), Dazed & Confused (JOK-008-C) on Joker, Put Led In Your Pencil (TR-37) on Turtle, Radio Appearances (WPOCM 0789 D 030-2) on World Productions, Radio Sessions (CO 250207) on Chapter One (whose liner notes claim theirs is the first time all the sessions were collected together on cd), A Secret History Of Led Zeppelin on Scorpio, and Classics Off The Air (NZCD 880) on Neutral Zone.

"Dazed & Confused" appears on Fillmore East (Mud Dogs 007) and more recent releases include BBC on Last Stand Disc (LSD-5/6/7/8), Complete'69 BBC Classics on Immigrant (IM-004~5), and Lost BBC Sessions (LCD-1506) on the Led Note label.

The next seven tracks cover the Alexis Korner session which has been wiped from the BBC archives and was not included on the official release. "Sunshine Woman" existed in poor quality

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and was available on a rare but cheesy flexi disc and this version was used on Motor City Daze on Antrabata along with the July 12th, 1973 Detroit tape and on disc one of BBC Sessions (LSD-61/62/63/64) on Last Stand Disc.

A more complete and better sounding version of the broadcast surfaced in the mid-nineties and was used for Ottawa Sunshine on House Of Elrond ("I Can't Quit You", "You Shook Me", and "Sunshine Woman"), Sunshine Woman on the early EV label Flagge (along with the Montreux 1970 soundboard fragment), and "Anybody Got A Les Paul?" (EX-00-020) on Equinox along with other 1969 fragments.

The sound is a very good and crisp mono and includes Korner's introduction and praise of the band while gently strumming his guitar. "What Is And What Should Never Be" from the June 16th session is included in the broadcast although doesn't originate from this actual session and EV chose to maintain the broadcast order.

The June 16th session of Chris Grant's Tasty Pop Sundae has been very popular since it contains the two rarities "The Girl I Love" and "Something Else". Older releases include Something Else on Archive ("The Girl I Love", "Communication Breakdown", "Something Else", and "What Is And What Should Never Be") and BBC (LSD-05/06/07/08) on Last Stand Disc with the entire session. "The Girl I Love", "Something Else" and "What Is And What Should Never Be" appear on Complete Tapes on Tintagel, "The Girl I Love" and "Something Else" are on More Than Something Else (125) on Aulica and Shenandoah. Empress Valley includes the unaired interview with host Chris Grant which shows him clearly over his head in dealing with the young band.

This is followed by the June 24th Top Gear sessions, representing their second appearance on the show, which have been released on the previously mentioned Dazed & Confused (Joker), Put Led In Your Pencil (Turtle), Winterland (Living Legend), BBC (Last Stand Disc), The Complete BBC Classics (Immigrant), Best Live In Concert 1969 (Double Time), Radio Sessions (Chapter One), Radio Appearances (World Productions), Riverside Blues (Swingin' Pig), Classics Off The Air Vol. One (Neutral Zone), The Lost BBC Sessions (Led Note), Secret History Of Led Zeppelin (Scorpio), Traveling Riverside Blues (LZ), Complete Tapes (Titagel), and Unauthorised Live Vol 3 (Joker).

All four songs are on the official BBC Sessions and "Traveling Riverside Blues" appears on the Remasters and on Coda in the complete box set. The first disc ends with the television

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broadcast of "Black Mountain Side" from the Julie Felix show. This is played by Page on the acoustic guitar and is perhaps one of the most impressive performances of the piece.

Disc 2, Radio One BBC Rock Hour, Playhouse Theater, London – June 27, 1969: Alan Black introduction, Communication Breakdown (incl. It's Your Thing), I Can't Quit You, interview with Alan Black, Dazed and Confused, Liverpool Scene sketch, White Summer / Black Mountain Side, You Shook Me, How Many More Times. BBC TV Julie Felix Show – April 23rd, 1970: White Summer / Black Mountain Side

Disc two contains the complete hour long broadcast from the June 27th, 1969 Playhouse In Concert appearance. This set has been released previously on CD on titles such as Another White Summer (Big Music), Rock Hour (Antrabata) copied onto BBC 69 (BBC Transcription Series), Classics Off The Air Vol. 2 (Neutral Zone), How Many More Times (Quality), Live In London (Black Panther), London 2-69 (Koine), London 69 (Exile), London Broadcast (World Production), Mess Of Blues (Living Legend), Minnesota Blues (Oil Well), White Summer (Oil Well), White Summer (Swingin' Pig), XII Anniversary (Aulica).

Empress Valley contains the entire show including the interview with Alan Black, the Liverpool Scene sketch of very cold war humor and the host's very thorough introduction of Jimmy Page before "White Summer" / "Black Mountain Side".

Disc 3, Radio One live session John Peel's Sunday In Concert, Paris Cinema, London – April 1st, 1971: Immigrant Song, Heartbreaker, Since I've Been Loving You, Black Dog, Dazed And Confused, Stairway To Heaven

Disc 4: Going To California, That's The Way, What Is And What Should Never Be, Whole Lotta Love (incl. Boogie Chillun', Cumberland Gap, Fixin' To Die, That's Alright, For What It's Worth, Mess O' Blues, Honey Bee, The Lemon Song), Thank You, Communication Breakdown

The second two discs contain the complete April 1st, 1971 Paris Theater In Concert broadcast. Among the many releases on CD it can be found on At The Beeb 1971 (Cuttlefish), BBC (ARM), BBC In Concert (Forever Standard Series), BBC Zep (Antrabata, Genuine Masters and Tarantura), Classics Off The Air Vol. 3 (Neutral Zone), Communication Breakdown (Great Dane), Going To California (Alegra), Heartbreaker (Triangle), Identification Required (Men At

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Work), In Concert (Liverpool), Live At Paris Theater (Black Panther), Live In London (Sidewalk), Live Performances (Best Underground), Return To Paris Theater (Scorpio), Return To The Clubs, Satisfaction (NDM), Stairway To Heaven (Cobra), Stairway To Heaven (Living Legend), Thank You It's Complete (Discurios), That's The Way (Alegra), and Ultimate BBC Collection (Home).

Empress Valley uses the pre-FM master that has been used before where the stereo separation places the guitars in the right channel and the vocals in the left. Other releases like the FSS version have a more centered concentration of sound. Compared to the others Empress Valley may have used too much EQ on the tape.

There are five quick dropouts between Plant's introduction and the beginning of "Immigrant Song" and noticeable residue during the first two minutes of "Since I've Been Loving You" which sound like waves floating above the sound which isn't present on other releases. To make matters worse there are occasional strange clicks and pops that are faint but audible under the music and some distortion in loud passages like Plant's tambourine during "That's The Way".

However the softer passages sound very nice and some sounds that are buried on earlier releases and more clear like Plant's accompanying scat under Page's violin bow solo in "Dazed & Confused". After the enjoyment of the first two discs in this collection the 1971 concert was a let down and hampers what is otherwise a very solid release. (Maybe I'm being too picky but the recently released Scorpio version of this show sounds much nicer). There is a total of three hundred copies printed with half in a white box with the William Stout flying pig on the cover from the classic vinyl releases and the other half in a black box with the famous Maxell advertisement on the cover.

Overall this is a good but extremely flawed collection which should be approached with caution.
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