

Quicksilver Messenger Service - What About Me (1970)

Written by bluesever

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1. "What About Me" (Jesse Oris Farrow) – 6:43 2. "Local Color" (John Cipollina) – 3:00
3. "Baby Baby" (Farrow) – 4:44 4. "Won't Kill Me" (David Freiberg) – 2:32 5. "Long
Haired Lady" (Farrow) – 5:55 6. "Subway" (Gary Duncan-Farrow) – 4:29 7. "Spindrifter"
(Nicky Hopkins) – 4:38 8. "Good Old Rock and Roll" (Farrow) – 2:30 9. "All in My Mind"
(Duncan-Farrow) – 3:48 10. "Call on Me" (Farrow) – 7:36

Personnel Dino Valenti –
vocals, guitar, flute, percussion Gary Duncan – vocals, guitar, bass, percussion, organ
John Cipollina – guitar, percussion David Freiberg – vocals, bass, guitar Greg Elmore –
drums, percussion Nicky Hopkins – piano, keyboards + Martin Fierro - flute, alto sax,
tenor sax, winds Frank Morin - saxophone, tenor sax Mark Naftalin - piano Pat O'Hara
- trombone Jose Reyes - percussion, conga, vocals Ron Taormina - saxophone, baritone
sax, soprano sax

Musically, there is little to delineate the fifth long-player from Quicksilver Messenger Service, *What About Me*, from their previous effort, *Just for Love*. Not surprisingly, material for both was initiated during a prolific two-month retreat to the Opaelua Lodge in Haleiwa, HI, during May and June of 1970. The quartet version of Quicksilver Messenger Service -- which had yielded the band's first two LPs -- expanded once again to include Dino Valenti (aka Chester A. Powers, Chet Powers, and most notably on this album, Jesse Oris Farrow) as well as British session keyboardist Nicky Hopkins. The additional talents of Mark Naftalin (keyboards) were incorporated when Hopkins was unavailable. This began his short stint with Quicksilver Messenger Service, which lasted through their sixth LP, *Quicksilver* (1972). The most apparent change in Quicksilver Messenger Service's sound can be directly attributed to the return of Valenti. The group has departed the long, free-flowing improvisations that prevailed on both their self-titled debut and follow-up, *Happy Trails*. The songs are now shorter and more notably structured, with an added emphasis on Valenti's compositions. The title track, "What About Me," became an ethical and sociological anthem with challenging and direct lyrical references to the political and social instability of the early '70s. Valenti, whose songwriting credits on this disc are both numerous and attributed to his Farrow persona, also comes up with some passable introspective love songs, such as "Baby Baby" and "Long Haired Lady," as well as a couple of interesting collaborations with Gary Duncan (bass/vocals). The psychedelic samba "All in My

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Mind" also highlights the often overlooked percussive contributions from Jose Reyes. Two of the more distinguished entries on What About Me are John Cipollina's raunchy blues instrumental "Local Color" -- replete with a driving backbeat reminiscent of their take on the Robert Johnson standard "Walkin' Blues" -- as well as Nicky Hopkins' emotive "Spindrifter." ---Lindsay Planer, allmusic.com

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