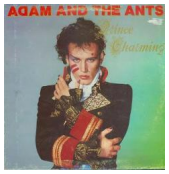
Adam and the Ants - Prince Charming (1981)



Side One *01 - Scorpios. 02 - Picasso Visita El Planeta De Los Simios. 03 - Prince Charming. 04 - 5 Guns West. 05 - That Woodoo.* Side Two *01 - Stand And Deliver. 02 - Mile High Club. 03 - Ant Rap. 04 - Mowhok. 05 - S.E.X..*
Adam Ant – Vocals, harmonica Marco Pirroni - Guitar Merrick - Drums Terry Lee Miall - Drums Gary Tibbs – Bass

Kings of the Wild Frontier brought Adam and the Ants massive popularity in England, and it brought enormous pressure for Adam and guitarist Marco Pirroni to stand and deliver another slice of dynamite. The first single, the punchy horn-laden "Stand and Deliver," suggested that they were up to the task, but when Prince Charming appeared in late 1981, it was pretty much universally panned and it still stands as the weakest record from Ant's classic period. With its ridiculous song titles and cover photos, which suggest that the Ants were moving away from Native Americans and toward pirates, it's hard not to view it as a descent into camp, yet Adam claims in the liner notes for Antbox that he believes that Prince Charming is "a very serious record based on very classical, historical themes." That may be true on certain tracks, but it's hard to see where "Mile High Club," "S.E.X.," "Mowhok," and "Ant Rap" fit into that scheme, but he's right about the intent -- this is a markedly different record than Kings, intentionally so. The group have not only moved on in image, they've also left behind their signature Burundi beats while upping the cinematic qualities inherent in their music. So, "Five Guns West" and "Mowhok" are given neo-spaghetti western backdrops, while eerie guitars, mariachi horns, and trilling vocals underpin "That Voodoo." There are a lot of little details like that to dwell on in the production -- "Picasso Visita el Planeta de los Simios" sounds absolutely terrific -- but apart from "Scorpios," "Stand and Deliver," and the cheerfully ludicrous "Ant Rap," the songs just aren't there. Kings had style, sound, and songs, while Prince Charming simply has style and sound -- which, in retrospect, isn't all that bad, but it's also not hard to see how it sparked a backlash at the time. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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