The Doors - Full Circle (1972)



1 Get Up And Dance 2 4 Billion Souls 3 The Piano Bird 4 The Mosquito 5 It Slipped My Mind 6 Verdilac 7 Good Rockin' 8 Hardwood Floor 9 The Peking King And The New York Queen Bass - Chris Ethridge, Jack Conrad, Charles Larkey, Leland Sklar Drums – John Densmore Flute – Charles Lloyd Guitar, Vocals – Robby Krieger Keyboards, Vocals – Ray Manzarek Saxophone [Tenor] – Charles Lloyd Percussion – Chico Batera Vocals [The Other Voices] – Clydie King, Melissa Mackay, Venetta Fields

Full Circle (1972) is definitely an appropriate name for this last project of original material to be issued under the Doors moniker. After the loss of Jim Morrison the previous year, the remaining trio culled their respective ideas -- some of which had been gathering dust in anticipation of Morrison's reappearance. Once that wasn't an option, John Densmore (drums/vocals), Ray Manzarek (keyboards/bass pedals/vocals), and Robbie Krieger (guitar/vocals) completed Other Voices (1971). Ultimately, the album made it into the Top 40 rock survey less than six months after L.A. Woman (1971) -- the Doors' final studio release with Morrison. While there are a handful of undeniably remarkable cuts scattered throughout, Full Circle is increasingly sporadic and less focused than its predecessor. Case in point is the somewhat dated Age of Aquarius anthem "Get Up and Dance" that kicks off the platter. Krieger's "4 Billion Souls" is a happy little ditty about global survival and ecology, proclaiming "Don't cha see that we could be the first in history/leaving all that we don't need behind." Among the highlights is the slinky blues "Verdilac" with Manzarek conjuring up voodoo and Charles Lloyd (flute/tenor sax) making his first of two guest appearances on Full Circle during the tasty jazz-fusion informed instrumental section between the verses. The whimsical "Hardwood Floor" is sonically stamped by Manzarek's jangle piano. Instead of being a psychedelic anachronism as heard on "Love Her Madly" and "You Make Me Real," it comes off as comparatively lightweight. A similar fate befalls the cover of Roy Brown's R&B jump classic "Good Rocking Tonight" -- titled simply "Good Rocking." While there is nothing ostensibly wrong with the performance, it fails to catch fire and the lack of inspiration gives the track a sense of being little more than filler. "The Mosquito" is an undeniably peculiar recording and it is difficult to conceive what Jim Morrison could or would have been able to bring to lyrics such as "No me moleste mosquito/just let me eat my burrito." The centerpiece of the number is the nearly four-minute jam tacked on at the end. Manzarek's

impassioned electric organ, Densmore's tricky timekeeping, and Krieger's transcendent string work are all worth mentioning as the intensity of their interplay hearkens back to former glories. "The Piano Bird" was co-penned by Manzarek and Jack Conrad (bass) and is the second selection to include contributions by Charles Lloyd (flute). The laid-back and Zen "It Slipped My Mind" is fairly lackluster with the exception of the quirky melody and very tasty and trippy runs from Krieger. Manzarek's musical multi-cultural fairytale of "The Peking King and the New York Queen" concludes the disc with an ode to the Aquarian Age of racial harmony and a touch of "We are the World" thrown in for good measure. ---Lindsay Planer, AllMusic Review

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