

THE SHADOWS



<i>Recording years</i>	<i>Main genre</i>	<i>Music sample</i>
<i>1960-2004</i>	<i>Early rock'n'roll</i>	<i>Shadoogie (1961)</i>

Only Solitaire

Artist: *The Shadows*

Years: *1960-1965*

George Starostin's Reviews

Page contents:

- [The Shadows](#) (1961)
- [Out Of The Shadows](#) (1962)
- [Dance With The Shadows](#) (1964)
- [The Sound Of The Shadows](#) (1965)



THE SHADOWS

Album released:

Sept. 1961

V A L U E
3 4 3 2 2

More info:



Tracks: 1) *Shadoggie*; 2) *Blue Star*; 3) *Nivram*; 4) *Baby My Heart*; 5) *See You In My Drums*; 6) *All My Sorrows*; 7) *Stand Up And Say That*; 8) *Gonzales*; 9) *Find Me A Golden Street*; 10) *Theme From A Filleted Place*; 11) *That's My Desire*; 12) *My Resistance Is Low*; 13) *Sleepwalk*; 14) *Big Boy*; 15*) *Apache*; 16*) *Quartermaster's Store*; 17*) *Man Of Mystery*; 18*) *The Stranger*; 19*) *F.B.I.*; 20*) *Midnight*; 21*) *The Frightened City*; 22*) *Back Home*; 23*) *Kon-Tiki*; 24*) 36-24-36.

REVIEW

Unlike their mascot Cliff Richard, the Shadows very strictly distinguished between singles and LPs: of their first several charting singles, starting with 'Apache', not one is included on their self-titled debut LP, which makes it a bit confusing for collectors — compilations of the band's materials are usually oriented at singles, so there is relatively little overlap between them and the LPs. Ultimately, I simply generated for myself a special homemade deluxe edition of **The Shadows**, with its 14 LP-only tracks, plus 10 more tracks covering the A- and B-sides from 'Apache' all the way to early 1961.



And this is where we start, since the legend of the Shadows as something more than just a backing band for Cliff Richard lies with the major success of 'Apache'. Their previous three singles made no impact whatsoever on the British market, but with 'Apache' they somehow caught the vibe — even though Jerry Lordan's composition has little to do with any sort of rock'n'roll, sounding more like a mix of Ennio Morricone and Dick Dale. These days, it would be quite hard to understand what all the hype was about, and in the US, there was no need for this even back in the day — although the Shadows broke big all over Europe, they never conquered the overseas, what with the American market already being saturated with surf-

and-Western instrumental music. But perhaps for those British and other European kids, as well as some of their parents, stuff like 'Apache' did provide an easy approximation of the magic of That Other World. The mystical tribal drum sound, the haunting, echoey guitar sound of battle signals and horses galloping over the prairie, the general tense atmosphere of wariness and subtle danger — and mixed, perhaps, with a slight touch of patriotic pride, what with the local boys now being able to materialize their own version of the Old West without the need to import it straight from the source.

But as nice and dreamy as 'Apache' is, it also gives us a glimpse into the main problem of the Shadows — the problem which prevented them from becoming not just the instrumental Beatles or Stones, but even placed them well beyond their main American competition, the Ventures. Hank Marvin and the rest of the boys did quickly establish themselves as Britain's tightest, best-oiled, most decidedly professional instrumental pop band, the one that could easily play everybody else under the table with their ferocious discipline and technique. Yet each and every second of their recorded output feels as if this is precisely what they were always about — discipline and technique prevailing over passion, excitement, spontaneity. Across the ocean, the Ventures were able to find a solid middle ground between professionalism and sheer fun, but the Shadows took a strictly academic approach to it all.

This is perhaps even better observable on the B-side to 'Apache', a rock'n'roll arrangement of the traditional British song 'The Quartermaster's Store', probably intended as the homeland counterbalance to the American worship of the A-side. It is fast, it is tight, it is perfectly produced, with the gruff chugging rhythm guitar and the ringing lead guitar ideally complementing each other, yet somehow it all sounds *too* perfect, like a performance from a bunch of A-grade musical college students passing their final exam. This is not a crime, but in the end it transforms the song into a perfect soundtrack for your local dance party, or into decent background music for chores — hardly into some sort of self-sufficient groove which might make you drop everything else and just get carried away to a different place.

Every now and then, they offer *tiny* hints of being able to break out of the self-imposed robotic shells: 'Man Of Mystery', the successful follow-up to 'Apache' whose main theme sounds like a cross between a future James Bond movie and a sentimental French melodrama, suddenly erupts in a (relatively) wild, speedy, choking instrumental break where — oh the horror! — not *every* note seems to be perfect, only to return to the cool, calm, and collected delivery of the main theme twenty seconds later. But even when the opportunity presents itself, there is still something which always holds the band back — say, for instance, on '36-24-36', the B-side to the romantic travelog of 'Kon-Tiki' which is probably the closest they get to «dirty blues-rock» on these early singles; and even then, when it comes to Hank breaking out the rock'n'roll lead

guitar, he does this in a quiet, reserved manner, with tasty little licks played at humble volume levels so as not to offend the neighbors or anything.

So if you want to move past this skeptical mindset — the exact same one that the Beatles probably shared about the Shadows — the one thing you will probably want to concentrate on is the sheer melodic aspect. There are quite a few fun, catchy themes strewn across both the early singles and the self-titled LP itself, and they do not necessarily have to be all about rock'n'roll: 'Nivram', for instance, is a charming little jazz-pop shuffle whose chords and atmosphere keep reminding me of Simon & Garfunkel's 'Feelin' Groovy' — since the tune does not even pretend to rock, all you have to do is sit back and relax to the silky tone of its lead guitar, as well as Jet Harris' surprising little bass break. The cover material is typically flawless, be it the lazy-sunny-day-at-the-pool serenity of 'Blue Star' or the moonlit romanticism of 'Sleepwalk', or even a totally out-of-the-blue stab at a Hoagy Carmichael song ('My Resistance Is Low', which receives a smidgeon of «guitar fireworks» for the intro and the outro).

On a few of the numbers, the Shadows even dare to sing. Hank takes lead on Sonny Curtis' 'Baby My Heart', showing a pleasantly warm vocal tone, but with arguably less confidence than Cliff would have; Jet Harris leads the band in quite a touching version of 'All My Sorrows' (certainly not any worse than the Searchers), and Bruce Welch does the same for 'That's My Desire'. That said, even if Hank later expressed his sorrow at not following George Harrison's advice about moving away from the status of an instrumental band, it also seems clear enough that, had they taken it, the best they could have achieved would be to put the Searchers out of business, and even that one is questionable. On this album at least, the vocal numbers feel like harmless, useless filler next to the lead guitar-driven ones.

But enough with the sour notes, and let us end this review with just a bit of admiration anyway. Spontaneity be damned, after all, when your daily boogie dose is administered with the kind of aesthetic precision you find in the first guitar break of 'Shadoogie', the band's temporary anthem of self-presentation which opens the album. Just put yourself in that one specific frame of mind, and all of a sudden the Shadows, with their perfectly produced sound, their perfectly matched tempos and tonalities, and their ideally planned stage choreography, begin to look like an early guitar version of Kraftwerk — a set of ideally groomed rock'n'roll robots, friendly on the outside, but a bit spooky and sinister on the inside. Honestly, there is a kind of weird mystique about this band which would totally be lacking in the Beatles — then again, I guess they weren't called 'The Shadows' for nothing. That type of reserved distance they put between them and the audience, while not necessarily a thing to be loved, has a certain artistic significance, and it might even be argued that the attitude itself was

Only Solitaire

Artist: *The Shadows*

Album: *The Shadows (1961)*

George Starostin's Reviews

quite influential on generations of British artists to come — hell, as much of a stretch as it would be, I'd argue that echoes of it may be seen in bands as artistically remote from the Shadows as, say, King Crimson. And to people like myself, this «don't you dare to join together with the band» stylistics actually has quite a bit of charm.





OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Album released:

Oct. 1962

V A L U E
3 3 3 2 2

More info:



Tracks: 1) The Rumble; 2) The Bandit; 3) Cosy; 4) 1861; 5) Perfidia; 6) Little 'B'; 7) Bo Diddley; 8) South Of The Border; 9) Spring Is Nearly Here; 10) Are They All Like You?; 11) Tales Of A Raggy Tramline; 12) Some Are Lonely; 13) Kinda Cool.

REVIEW

The Shadows' second album followed more or less the same formula as their first, so there is no need for any further generalizations — let us just dive straight into the material, which is fairly simple and generally likeable. One thing that is already alarming is the lower ratio of original numbers by the band members: altogether just 5 out of 13 tracks, plus one number credited to Cliff Richard. Perhaps, at this point, it was simply a coincidence, but it *could* also reflect a touch of boredom. Of course, as of late 1962, there was still nobody around to dethrone the Shadows from their rule of the British charts (the album dutifully reached #1, just like its predecessor), but it was still a rule enforced by a strictly unchanging formula, and who lives by the formula, dies by the formula.

Still, '1861' is as nice as a British pop-rock reinvention of American mid-19th century marching band music can be, with Hank Marvin at the top of his melodic sensitivity as he recreates that trusty old patriotic vibe with a clean, sharp tone (I do wish there would be at least the slightest bit of variation between the two «verses», though). 'Spring Is Nearly Here' (maybe not the most perfect title for an October release) is a nice little waltz, which Hank largely rides through on his highest notes to override Norrie Paramor's generic orchestration. The funnily-titled 'Tales Of A Raggy Tramline' is a fast and friendly pop ditty with great synergy from Brian Bennett's drums, Jet Harris' bass, and Hank's lead parts — genuinely outstanding



musicianship for a pop record in 1962. (I assume that is Jet Harris, though it might as well have been Brian "Lickorice" Locking, who ended up replacing Harris midway through the sessions). And 'Kinda Cool' is a good showcase for Marvin's piano skills, even if he tends to play the piano in much the same way as he plays his guitar — sharply staccato, each note a part of a carefully premeditated geometric structure and each melodic phrase and verse repeated several times in the exact same way so you might actually get it all memorized upon your very first listen. Some of these lines may very well have been learned from the likes of Ray Charles, but good old Ray, of course, would never have treated any of his recording sessions as training exercises.

Top of the crop is 'Little B', the most outstanding thing about which is its length — a jaw-droppin' five minutes, most of which are occupied by an extended drum solo from Bennett. I do not know if this was the first ever lengthy drum solo on a UK pop record, but definitely the first one known to me, and definitely a sign that the Shadows were pining for some jazz credentials. This may not exactly be Buddy Rich quality stuff, but Bennett's performance is both fluent and varied, and I would definitely take it over dozens and dozens of rock-era drum solos by second-rate artists (I mean, people like John Bonham could get away with it due to sheer monstrous power, but the majority of rock drummers who could not match that power just plain sucked at this business). The main guitar theme, with its Carl-Perkins-meets-James-Bond riff, is no slouch either, though way too short relative to the drum solo.

Of the non-original tracks, three are vocal numbers, and they are predictably the least impressive of the bunch: Bruce Welch is most certainly no 'Bo Diddley' (predictably, they play it with all the energy of an electric guitar unplugged from its amp), the collective Shadows are no Searchers when it comes to singing folk-pop harmony (on Tim Gale's 'Are They All Like You?'), and yet another attempt to go Mexican on our ears ('The Bandit', from Michael Carr's songbook) is just as bland and limp for a mariachi anthem. But as soon as they shut their mouths and just play, life begins anew: Michael Carr's famous 'South Of The Border' gets a crystal clear, upbeat, uplifting arrangement with yet another of Marvin's perfect geometric constructions — the band is tight as a clock, and Hank's lilting, drip-dropping notes mark each second with algorithmic accuracy that manages to delight rather than annoy.

Indeed, it is quite amusing how this perfectly gelling bunch of instrumentalists becomes a boring band of nobodys as soon as even a small amount of their brainpower refocuses on the vocals — and while it is understandable that they did not want to bring in Cliff to help them out (if this was going to be a «The Shadows» album, it was going to be one through and through), the idea that The Shadows, as a band, could be capable of anything was just wrong. The instrumentals are so

Only Solitaire

Artist: *The Shadows*

Album: *Out Of The Shadows (1962)*

George Starostin's Reviews

tight, and the melodies so perfectly shaped that it is rather easy not to notice their shortcomings, such as the lack of spontaneity, the lack of primal power, the limited musical vocabulary, the unwillingness to take risks and experiments, etc. But when the vocal numbers start coming in, these Gods of instrumental performance suddenly expose themselves as mere mortals, with very disappointing limitations — and, of course, it becomes crystal clear why the Beatles would soon sweep them away despite possessing only a small fraction of their instrumental skills.





DANCE WITH THE SHADOWS

Album released:

May 1964

V A L U E
3 3 3 2 2

More info:



Tracks: 1) Chattanooga Choo-Choo; 2) Blue Shadows; 3) Fandango; 4) Tonight; 5) That's The Way It Goes; 6) **Big 'B'**; 7) In The Mood; 8) The Lonely Bull; 9) Dakota; 10) French Dressing; 11) The High And The Mighty; 12) Don't It Make You Feel Good; 13) Zambesi; 14) Temptation.

REVIEW

In the brief period separating the Shadows' second and third LPs, Prometheus stole fire from the Olympian gods, Moses separated the waters, Newton created the laws of motion, and the Beatles conquered the musical world — which means that even within an artistic camp as stoically conservative as that of the Shadows, it would be ridiculous to expect no changes whatsoever. Of course, the most easily detectable changes were in their declining commercial fortunes: 'Foot Tapper' from early 1963, a catchy little twist number with melodic nods to the Rivingtons' 'Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow', would be their last #1 single on the UK charts (although 'Atlantis', a moody instrumental with clever use of orchestration and futuristic guitar tones, done in their more conventional Western style, would come very close to replicating that success a few months later, still stalling at #2, though).



Even so, 1964 still saw them remaining quite steady in the public's eye: a major legend does not just die overnight, and **Dance With The Shadows** managed to climb all the way to #2, though it still failed to displace the Rolling Stones' debut (predictably, it took the Beatles to do that). And as both that album and its follow-ups clearly show to anybody willing to listen, the Shadows were anything *but* completely out of touch with the times. Where they truly refused to evolve, possibly

more out of personal taste and feeling than due to a misguided judgement of changes in fashion, is in their public image: their live shows and TV appearances remained steadily rigid and ritualistic affairs, with the band absolutely refusing to loosen up and go wild on their audiences. The music, however, did evolve and reflect both technical and substantial progress in popular entertainment — not always for the better, perhaps, but neither could anybody in their right mind claim, upon listening to **Dance With The Shadows**, that the band was completely clueless to what was going on.

Granted, this line of defense may seem a bit thin when you intentionally begin your latest record with ‘Chattanooga Choo-Choo’, a track whose origins go all the way back to Glenn Miller and the year 1941. (Imagine the Beatles starting off any of their 1964 albums with a cover of ‘The Sheik Of Araby!’). But the Shadows’ arrangement of it is fully in step with the musical standards of the time, as they get louder, more bombastic, noisier on the hi-hat *à la* Ringo, and thicker, juicier, slightly more distorted on the lead guitar. Besides, already the second track, ‘Blue Shadows’, takes us into the completely modern playground of electric 12-bar blues, a direction which the Shadows did not tackle all that often in the past — here, though, they are finally ready to acknowledge the significance of the genre for contemporary audiences, with Hank delivering a fully competent blues solo and the entire band punching out a steady metronomic groove as if they wanted to adapt blues music to military needs. (That is actually a problem — it does sound more like they are rehearsing a new unfamiliar genre than having genuine fun with it).

Of particular interest are the two Marvin/Welch-written vocal numbers, ‘That’s The Way It Goes’ and ‘Don’t It Make You Feel Good’, both of them cast very strictly in the Merseybeat mold — tight, uplifting, slightly echoey group harmonies over the noisy, but super-rhythmic punch of acoustic strumming and hi-hat-heavy percussion. Both songs are catchy, both songs contain quirky individual moments of not-quite-predictable chord and harmony changes, both songs show that, had they truly wanted to, the Shadows could easily have blown out of the water all the likes of, say, Gerry and the Pacemakers — but, of course, neither of the two songs has that vital special something that would elevate them out of the common pop chorus and place them on a special individualistic pedestal. They *do* make you feel good, and that’s certainly the way it goes, but they lack the secret ingredient of the Beatles’ *recipé*, one that has to do with raising and lowering dynamic tension. Then again, that sort of seems to be the problem with the Shadows’ entire career, not just those few moments when they tried to forge for themselves a bunch of fake Liverpool passports.

Far more exciting, rather than simply curious, is ‘Big B’, an instrumental that almost reaches the 4-minute mark due to an extended drum solo by Brian Bennett (he is actually listed as the composer) — not only is this a first for the Shadows, but

the solo itself is quite unusual for a pop album, with major emphasis on kicking the shit out of that bass drum, which gives the whole thing a strong «jungle» feel. Given that only guys like Gene Krupa could have been a primary influence for this approach, I could not call it particularly «fashionable» for the time, but as far as drum solos in pop music go, I'd say this is definitely one of the loudest and wildest ones in pre-John Bonham days.

Curiously, Bennett is also listed as sole composer for the fast-paced country-rock instrumental 'French Dressing', which has little to do with anything French and sounds more like Johnny Cash arranged for surf guitar, but that's alright, it is still a lot of fun. However, this is largely where any attempts at original songwriting stop and problems begin — because, for all the attempts to modernize, at least half of the album is still given over to covers from *West Side Story* ('Tonight'), Bing Crosby ('Temptation'), and *The High And The Mighty* (title track, composed by Hollywood maestro Dimitri Tiomkin). This is all just standard professional Shadows fodder, listenable while it's on, instantly forgettable when it's off. The mix of urban, country, and spaghetti-western elements, to which they also add some Tijuana Brass ('The Lonely Bull') and South Africa (Nico Carstens' 'Zambesi'), is respectable, but nothing new for the band, whose interest in various popular styles from all over the world dated back to their very inception.

Ultimately, it all comes down to the title of the LP: the Shadows' goal is very humble — they just ask you to dance with them, much like George Harrison in **A Hard Day's Night**. While they are certainly ready to acknowledge the evolution of popular entertainment, they seem to have no clue about the *substantial* direction of that evolution. But in 1964, they could still hardly be blamed for that, as the world of «progressive pop music» would not really become philosophically self-conscious until at least a year or two later. Even **A Hard Day's Night**, given a slightly less lucky turn of events, could have easily been slapped with a title like **Dance With The Beatles** (though it is also quite telling that it was not).





THE SOUND OF THE SHADOWS

Album released:

July 1965

V A L U E
3 3 3 2 2

More info:



Tracks: 1) Brazil; 2) **The Lost City**; 3) A Little Bitty Tear; 4) Blue Sky, Blue Sea, Blue Me; 5) Bossa Roo; 6) Five Hundred Miles; 7) Cotton Pickin'; 8) Deep Purple; 9) Santa Ana; 10) **The Windjammer**; 11) Dean's Theme; 12) Breakthru; 13) Let It Be Me; 14) National Provincial Samba.

REVIEW

Probably the only general thing worth noting about **The Sound Of The Shadows** in mid-'65 is that it hasn't changed all that much compared to the sound of The Shadows in mid-'64: predictable, perhaps, but still a bit accusatory given how quickly and significantly the overall musical landscape was shifting all around them. For sure, the general guitar band sound had not yet grown all that extra musculature — Hendrix was more than a year away, Jeff Beck had only just joined the Yardbirds, and the influence of everybody from J. S. Bach to Ravi Shankar had not yet permeated the art of cutting-edge artists — but more and more of that instrumental guitar music coming from rhythm & blues artists was perceived as trying to do something a bit more serious and ambitious than just getting a bunch of teens to hop around, and certainly The Shadows, as the UK's oldest and most revered instrumentalists, could be expected to develop some artistic ambitiousness of their own. Which, ultimately, they never did.

Not that they were totally oblivious to what was going on. Around the same time that **Dance With The Shadows** repledged their allegiance to all those looking for light entertainment, they also got together in the studio to record 'The Rise And Fall Of Flingel Bunt', a blues-rock instrumental «dedicated» to the life of an imaginary character that sounded sharper



and harsher than any previously released Shadows track. Opening with an aggressive, bass drum-heavy beat and a grim stop-and-start guitar riff, this new composition erased any signs of twangy surf-rock, being rhythmically far more close to Booker T & The MG's than Duane Eddy or The Surfari's. In the bridge section, the composition also borrows a bit from the Merseybeat (there's a chuggin' rhythm pattern that is completely identical with the Beatles' 'Thank You Girl'), and Hank's lead guitar part bends and vibrates along with the most seasoned of bluesmen. It's true that the overall vibe of the song remains tame and polished — like it did in the blues-themed work of such «cautious» performers as Manfred Mann — but there's only so much you can ask from a band dressed in bowties. It still packed a mean punch, enough to send it all the way to #5 on the UK charts, despite featuring a sound to which Shadows fans were not at all accustomed.

The band's next step in this direction was, however, a mistake: the faster-paced, livelier 'Rhythm And Greens', released in early 1965, could only be perceived as a joke number — not just because of the title, but also because of the ridiculous vocalizations, consisting mostly of a set of "yeah, baby!"s, "ooh!"s, "aah!"s, and cartoonish whistles. The thing sounded like a mean parody on the loud-and-dirty rock'n'roll sound, completely out of place at a time when it was already obvious that the loud-and-dirty rock'n'roll sound was not a passing fad, but a way to the future, and, most importantly, a pretty dumb choice for an A-side: stick this «Chuck Berry meets Binkie The Clown» ridiculousness in the middle of a filler-choked LP if you wish, but why follow up a perfectly legitimate way to earn your place in the modern musical world with the equivalent of an ignorant old man's grumble? (at least, that's what it *might* feel like even if the band members themselves would probably defend 'Rhythm And Greens' as simply being in good fun).

The band was definitely more in its element on such subsequent singles as 'Genie With The Light Brown Lamp' (an excerpt from a joint «pantomime album» with Cliff Richard on the adventures of Aladdin), a nice fast-paced number with a good contrast between the sharper, bluesier verse and the poppier, more colorful chorus. After that, 'Mary Anne', written by Jerry Lordan (who'd previously given them 'Apache' and several other compositions), was a nice change of pace, featuring group harmony singing *à la* Searchers which, by this time, Hank and the boys could do surprisingly well, but without too much distinctiveness. Finally, in May 1965 it happened: 'Stingray' was the first Shadows song to feature a heavy, jarring fuzz effect on the lead guitar, sending out a sign that the old-timers may have caught the young Who at the Marquee once or twice (the tone is more or less the same as Entwistle's bass on 'The Ox', which came out later but must have already been in the band's repertoire in one form or another by early 1965).

It's not any sort of tremendous progress, given the overall cautiousness of the recording, but it does signify that at least in

theory, The Shadows were open to reform; the one thing that they were *not* open to is loosening their collars, meaning that both the singles and the LPs continued to be tightly disciplined, glossy and «polite» — and, consequently, less commercially successful in an era when the people were more hungry for ‘Satisfaction’ than the likes of ‘Stingray’. **The Sound Of The Shadows**, released on the heels of ‘Stingray’, was anything but not diverse — with folk, blues, Latin, and even occasional proto-psychedelic motives, one could never accuse the band of slacking in their creativity — yet the quintessential «stiffness» of The Shadows was firmly in place. The album still made it into the Top 5 on the UK charts, but this was probably due more to the overall UK LP market being generally underfed compared to its US equivalent; certainly there was no such thing as downplaying The Shadows’ singles while waiting for a Shadows’ LP, especially since, according to the standard UK custom, the singles and the albums rarely, if ever, overlapped.

The most curious thing about the record is that there are three vocal numbers this time, and none of them are Merseybeat-style pop-rockers like last time around: instead, continuing the line of ‘Mary Anne’, The Shadows take an even heavier interest in folk, country, and folk-pop music, recording Hank Cochran’s ‘A Little Bitty Tear’, Hedy West’s ‘Five Hundred Miles’, and the Everlys’ ‘Let It Be Me’ — all three numbers featuring soft acoustic arrangements and joint harmonizing from both guitarists and the bass player. It’s all done in good taste, and it’s nice to know that the band had its own hobby, but in all honesty, with Dylan going electric and with the actual folksters beginning to look into a more «baroque» representation of their material, this chosen style feels about two years out-of-date and totally superfluous.

What does *not* feel superfluous are their idiosyncratic takes on the folk idiom: a track such as John Rostill’s ‘Windjammer’, despite the somewhat excessive orchestration, features a beautiful «guitar lead vocal» with an expressive tone that nobody except for Hank Marvin could produce even as late as 1965. His sustain control, coupled with a honey-like timbre of the guitar, turns what could have been a completely passable and generic slow folk instrumental into a near-psychedelic delight for the senses. The same goes for the faster-paced ‘Lost City’, contributed for the band by Russ Ballard (later of Argent fame) — sort of a thematic sequel to ‘Atlantis’, but with a more Western feel to it, although when Hank starts using weird proto-wah-wah effects on the guitar, he still somehow puts the whole thing underwater for a while.

These might be two of the best instrumental numbers here, but the overall quality of the remaining non-vocal tracks is still pretty high: with the exception of the rather jokey ‘National Provincial Samba’ and the rather sleepy and melodically retrograde ballad ‘Blue Sky, Blue Sea, Blue Me’, I sincerely enjoy just about everything, from the opening cover of Ary Barroso’s ‘Brazil’ (playful, tasteful, and romantically expressive) to the oh-so-Shadowey take on ye olde time banjo musicke (‘Cotton

Pickin') to the upbeat pop-rock rearrangement of the old standard 'Deep Purple' to the tongue-in-cheek vaudeville blues of 'Dean's Theme' to the straightforward power-chord based rocking of 'Breakthru' (with the most energetic drumming part on the album) — have I forgotten anything of importance? Probably not. Even so, it's difficult to pretend being particularly *excited* about this kind of material. In the context of all the other things going on in the spring and summer of 1965, **The Sound Of The Shadows** would hardly even *expect* you to get excited. It might not be an old man's sound, but it is the sound of somebody who, let's put it this way, is content to give an occasional tip of the hat to «counter-culture» without ever truly embracing the counter-culture as such.

Then again, what else could we hope to get from The Shadows? To me, it's just curious — if not exactly «fascinating» — how they exploit all those new guitar tones, fast rhythms, and stylistic trends in their own gentlemanly fashion (much like The Ventures overseas, though The Shadows have never had such an encyclopedic collective mind as their spiritual brethren from Tacoma) while still somehow creating the impression of time standing still. That's what **The Sound Of The Shadows** is all about: *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Perhaps you do need The Shadows, after all, standing behind the backs of all those hyperactive, trend-setting, rule-changing heroes of the Sixties, if only to cut back on all the brouhaha from time to time and remember that, after all, it's just entertainment.

