

The Essential Simon and Garfunkel (2007)

Written by bluelover

Saturday, 21 August 2010 20:09 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 July 2017 13:15

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CD1

01. *The Sound Of Silence*
02. *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M. (live)*
03. *Bye Bye Love*
04. *Bleecker Street*
05. *I Am A Rock*
06. *A Most Peculiar Man (live)*
07. *Richard Cory*
08. *Kathy's Song (live)*
09. *Scarborough Fair/Canticle*
10. *Homeward Bound*
11. *Sparrow (live)*
12. *Leaves That Are Green (live)*
13. *He Was My Brother*
14. *The 59th Street Bridge Song (Feelin' Groovy)*
15. *The Dangling Conversation*
16. *A Poem On The Underground Wall (live)*
17. *Blessed (live)*
18. *Cloudy*
19. *Blues Run The Game*
20. *A Hazy Shade Of Winter*

CD2

01. *Mrs. Robinson*
02. *Bridge Over Troubled Water*
03. *At The Zoo*
04. *Fakin' It*
05. *Old Friends*
06. *Bookends Theme*
07. *Punky's Dilemma*
08. *Overs (live)*
09. *A Church Is Burning (live)*
10. *America — 3:36*
11. *El Condor Pasa (If I Could)*

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12. *Cecilia*
13. *Keep The Customer Satisfied*
14. *So Long, Frank Lloyd Wright*
15. *The Boxer*
16. *Baby Driver*
17. *The Only Living Boy In New York*
18. *Song For The Asking*
19. *For Emily, Wherever I May Find Her (live)*
20. *My Little Town*

The most successful folk-rock duo of the 1960s, Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel crafted a series of memorable hit albums and singles featuring their choirboy harmonies, ringing acoustic and electric guitars, and Simon's acute, finely wrought songwriting. The pair always inhabited the more polished end of the folk-rock spectrum and was sometimes criticized for a certain collegiate sterility. Many also feel that Simon, as both a singer and songwriter, didn't truly blossom until he began his own hugely successful solo career in the 1970s. But the best of S&G's work can stand among Simon's best material, and the duo did progress musically over the course of their five albums, moving from basic folk-rock productions into Latin rhythms and gospel-influenced arrangements that foreshadowed Simon's eclecticism on his solo albums.

Simon & Garfunkel's recording history actually predated their first mid-'60s hit by almost a decade. Childhood friends while growing up together in Forest Hills, NY, they began making records in 1957, performing (and often writing their own material) in something of a juvenile Everly Brothers style. Calling themselves Tom & Jerry, their first single, "Hey Schoolgirl," actually made the Top 50, but a series of follow-ups went nowhere. The duo split up, and Simon continued to struggle to make it in the music business as a songwriter and occasional performer, sometimes using the names of Jerry Landis or Tico & the Triumphs.

By the early '60s, both Simon and Garfunkel were coming under the influence of folk music. When they reteamed, it was as a folk duo, though Simon's pop roots would serve the act well in their material's synthesis of folk and pop influences. Signing to Columbia, they recorded an initially unsuccessful acoustic debut (as Simon & Garfunkel, not Tom & Jerry) in 1964, *Wednesday Morning, 3 AM*. They again went their separate ways, Simon moving to England, where he played the folk circuit and recorded an obscure solo album.

The Simon & Garfunkel story might have ended there, except for a brainstorm of their producer, Tom Wilson (who also produced several of Bob Dylan's early albums). Folk-rock was taking off in 1965, and Wilson, who had helped Dylan electrify his sound, took the strongest track from S&G's debut, "The Sound of Silence," and embellished it with electric guitars, bass, and drums.

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It got to number one in early 1966, giving the duo the impetus to reunite and make a serious go at a recording career, Simon returning from the U.K. to the U.S. In 1966 and 1967, they were regular visitors to the pop charts with some of the best folk-rock of the era, including "Homeward Bound," "I Am a Rock," and "A Hazy Shade of Winter."

Simon & Garfunkel's early albums were erratic, but they steadily improved as Simon sharpened his songwriting, and as the duo became more comfortable and adventurous in the studio. Their execution was so clean and tasteful that it cost them some hipness points during the psychedelic era, which was a bit silly. They were far from the raunchiest thing going, but managed to pull off the nifty feat of appealing to varying segments of the pop and rock audience -- and various age groups, not just limited to adolescents -- without compromising their music. Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme (late 1966) was their first really consistent album; Bookends (1968), which actually blended previously released singles with some new material, reflected their growing maturity. One of its songs, "Mrs. Robinson," became one of the biggest singles of the late '60s after it was prominently featured in one of the best films of the period, The Graduate (which also had other Simon & Garfunkel songs on the soundtrack).

It was unsurprising, in retrospect, that the duo's partnership began to weaken in the late '60s. They had known each other most of their lives, and been performing together for over a decade. Simon began to feel constrained by the limits of working with the same collaborator; Garfunkel, who wrote virtually none of the material, felt overshadowed by the songwriting talents of Simon, though Garfunkel's high tenor was crucial to their appeal. They started to record some of their contributions separately in the studio, and barely played live at all in 1969, as Garfunkel began to pursue an acting career.

Their final studio album, Bridge Over Troubled Water, was an enormous hit, topping the charts for ten weeks, and containing four hit singles (the title track, "The Boxer," "Cecilia," and "El Condor Pasa"). It was certainly their most musically ambitious, with "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and "The Boxer" employing thundering drums and tasteful orchestration, and "Cecilia" marking one of Simon's first forays into South American rhythms. It also caught the confused, reflective tenor of the times better than almost any other popular release of 1970.

That would be their last album of new material. Although they didn't necessarily intend to break up at the time, the break from recording eventually became permanent; as Simon began a solo career that brought him as much success as the S&G outings, and Garfunkel pursued simultaneous acting and recording careers. They did reunite in 1975 for a Top Ten single, "My Little Town," and periodically performed together since without ever coming close to generating albums of new material. A 1981 concert in New York's Central Park attracted half a million fans,

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and was commemorated with a live album; they also toured in the early '80s, but a planned studio album was canceled due to artistic differences. ---Richie Unterberger, itunes.apple.com

Simon & Garfunkel, czyli Paul Simon i Art Garfunkel, to amerykański duet, który tworzył w latach 60. i 70. Ich muzyka określana jako folk-rock zdobyła dużą popularność, co przekładało się na wyniki sprzedaży longplayów. Utwory takie jak "Mrs Robinson", "I Am a Rock," czy "A Hazy Shade of Winter" na stałe wpisały się w historię światowej muzyki rozrywkowej.

Ich albumy były bardzo oryginalne, a najsłynniejsze to "Sounds of Silence", "Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme", "The Graduate". W roku 1970 ukazało się ostatnie wydawnictwo duetu zatytułowane "Bridge Over Troubled Water". Niestety wspólna działalność Simona & Garfunkela nie doczekała się kolejnych płyt.

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